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# Deek

MAGAZINE



## The **Fraud** Incident

inside:

*State of the Fraud, Lars Vegas*

*Interviews with Henry Rollins, Gwar, R.U. Sirius*

also:

*cheating, backstabbing and twice as many lies\* as the leading publication!*

Issue

**19**

November 2005





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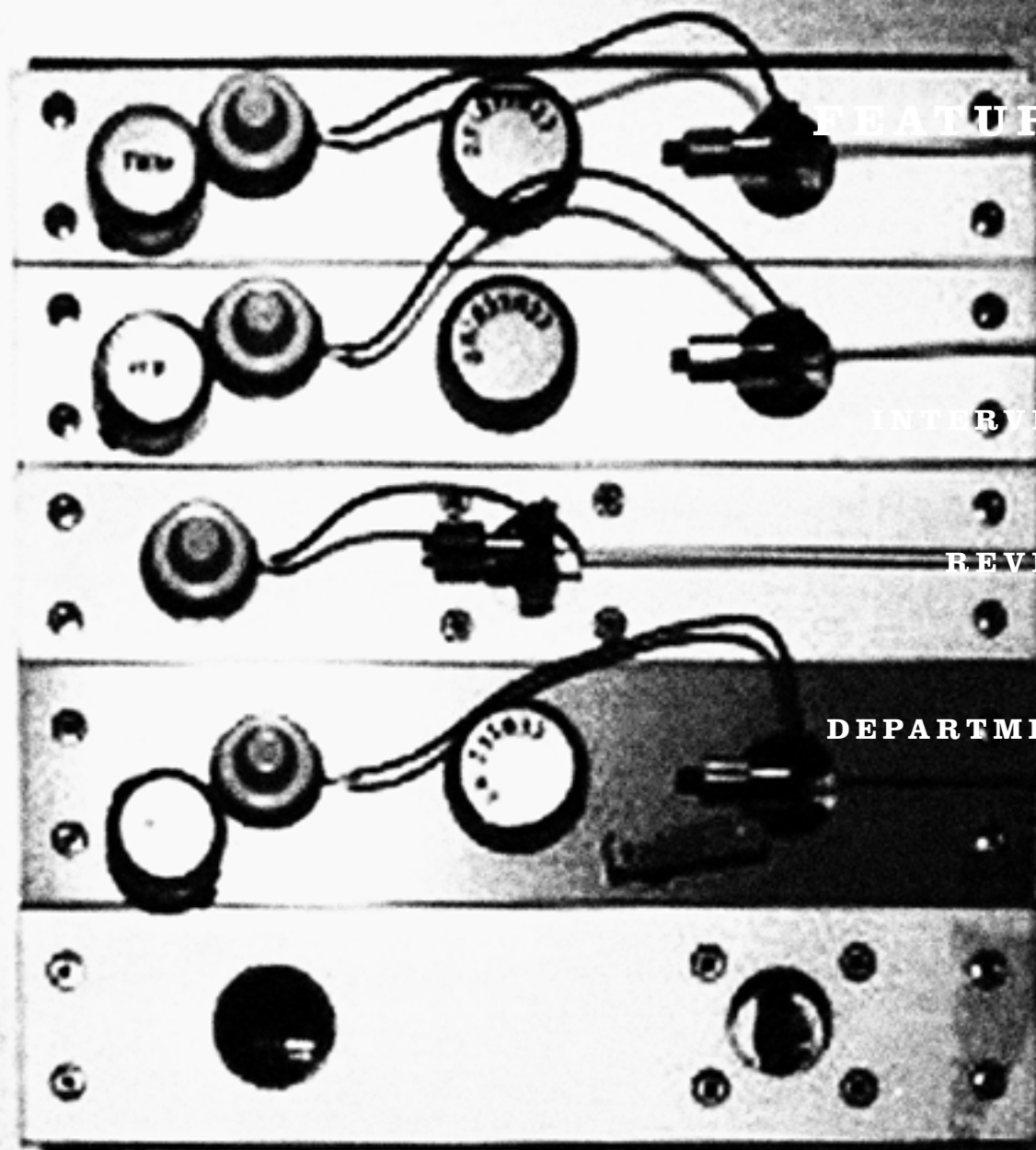
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\* "twice as many lies" is a gross approximation. Deek accepts no responsibility for this validity of this claim or this Incident at all.





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# Deek MAGAZINE

POPULAR UNDERCULTURE

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Nova Keenan

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BISCOTTII AND GINGER ORANGE FURR BALLS FROM: Margo List

### Submissions

Deek Magazine is more or less submission friendly.

But, quite obviously, we can't just guarantee we'll print just anything – we have *standards*! And though those standards are often very low, we prefer that you create something Incident-specific (as it were), with the support and love of the editorial staff. To gain support, contact the respective department:

Writers should contact [words@deekmagazine.com](mailto:words@deekmagazine.com);  
Visual artists should contact [art@deekmagazine.com](mailto:art@deekmagazine.com).  
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Big Bird has a serious coke habit and he needs your help.  
That's not at all true.

And neither is this:

The Following Is A Story About The Ritualistic Sacrifice Of The No-Longer-Funny Ironic T-shirt Frank Wore One Too Many Times (And The White Rat That Ripped Us Apart). It's midnight. Stacey, Sam and I laugh maniacally before a raging bonfire on the rocks next to our garage. Frank, awakened by the fire light and the noise we're making, looks out his third-story window and sees that we're holding his overworn T-shirt – a red one that says "Justin Hawkins Loves God Rawk" – to the blaze, threatening him, glowering, the three of us snorting, cackling. Here, he suddenly understands what we've plotted for him: The destruction of his facade; the elimination of his individuality. We are going to torch his no-longer-funny T-shirt, and he can do nothing about it. As Frank lurches down the steps – five at a time – neighbors hear one, single, terrified, blood-curdling scream escaping from his lips in what seems like slow motion, before he finally gets outside, races toward us and falls to his knees in front of the inferno, crying "Pleeeeeease NOOOOO!"

We keep laughing, harder now. Sam tosses the shirt into the flames. Frank screams "Whyyyyyy! Whyyyyyy God, WHY!!" and then swears, through tears, that he will never clothe – or love – ever again. He collapses to the cement in a heap, whimpering. The camera cuts to Sam, whose eyes reflect orange and red. Sam looks down at Frank, smirking. Calm, emotionless, Sam says: "Hey. I told you the rat was mine." Then his smirk fades; hatred invades Sam's expression. "Hey—" he yells, leaning over Frank ominously.

"Didn't I tell you she was mine?"

Frank is left huffing for air, agonized, shaking. He says nothing.

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# 412.231.2898



# Letter from the Editor

Hello.

Even though (or, perhaps, *because*) much of Deek magazine is assembled, month after month, with convenient, well-told lies, we think it might be a good idea to examine a lie or two and hold it over your head like a carrot.

Over the past month we’ve looked at the **Bush administration**; we’ve gotten our fortunes told by psychics; we’ve studied **Orson Welles**; we’ve smoked, we’ve **boozed**; we’ve looked at **Jews for Jesus**; we’ve dealt with **media pranks** and **satirical motivation**; we’ve shoved ourselves into uncomfortable situations and so on and so forth to show you a little about what kind of fraud surrounds us, and how we can linger without driving ourselves completely insane.

And, hopefully, that’s not all. We’re also going to push the idea that reality is more or less fungible – up for grabs, either in form or by substitution (see “**State of the Fraud**” on page 25). For us, see, it all boils down to a pile of sketchy ideas we encounter every day – a kind of Reality Gruel we can observe first with disdain, then with a reserved air of frustration, then with apathy. And if that happens, “we” become “you,” and you’ll undoubtedly get to the point where you’re on some online dating website, trying to figure out how to describe yourself honestly, then completely wiggling out and writing something like this:

General interests: Drrrrrrreadful emo music, Diet Pepsi, Prada, argyle, Starbucks, the mall; big, stupid-looking fake tits, scribbling my personal thoughts on my internet journal, tasteful nudity, sewing, Oprah Winfrey, sweaters, needlepoint, tennis, The Strokes, machine guns, Eddie Bauer, closet homosexuality, astrology, widespread suffering, Foreigner, Cindy Adams, warm cocoa, threesomes, crossword puzzles, playful torture, The Mob, breathing heavily, desperate indignation, arbitrary hatred, socks, Simon Cowell, bringing The Arts to life, scowling, watching things destroyed over and over again in slow-motion, love notes, tenderness, cowering in fear, doing my laundry, soaps and soap operas, whining, tack hammers, eternal sadness, The End, Babar, kittens, shopping sprees, mopping, throwing things away, anything special, mouthing the phrase “Super-duper” again and again while causing excruciating pain in someone I secretly despise, thus coaxing the secret into the open, making life better for everyone forever and always.

And hold buttons and sweet serenity.

And Sade.

You don’t want that, do you?  
No.  
So check out the interviews with **GWAR’s Oderus Urungus**, **Henry Rollins**, **RU Sirius** and **Lars Vegas** – the world’s most infamously mobile graffiti dude.

And so on,



Stroud  
words@deekmagazine.com



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To comment on art, send an e-mail to [art@deekmagazine.com](mailto:art@deekmagazine.com)  
To comment on something else, send an e-mail to [deek@deekmagazine.com](mailto:deek@deekmagazine.com)  
We must warn that anything you send deek could potentially make it onto this page without warning. Letters on this page are unedited, but many have been shortened due to space constraints. Sorry.

FUCKED UP LETTER OF THE MONTH

Dear Deek:



Love,

Fritz Myers and  
Adam Reese  
Los Angeles, CA

# Letters to the Editor

RE: THE ATTORNEY GENERAL’S PORN STASH

How quickly things change. It seems like only a few days ago this country was lodged up its own ass. We were in the middle of a War on Terror (or was it a global struggle against extremism?), stuck policing an entire country where the violence was only getting worse, and oh yeah: something about a flood.

Then I find out that Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, proving that no truer successor to John Ashcroft could possibly be found, has requested that eight FBI agents, assisted by a support staff and guided by their very own supervisor, start digging up dirt on the people who produce and distribute our pornography. The ravings of the liberal media notwithstanding, this illustrates quite conclusively that our problems with terror and violence are at an end, and I commend the administration for bringing us through the storm – practically without our knowledge!

It pains me to say it, but this administration just isn’t getting the credit it deserves. Where many people saw only egotism and stubbornness, it was in reality a Christ-like prescience that allowed Mr. Bush to foresee a Middle East free of dirty, stinky Islamists, and now he’s turned that same prescience toward his own people’s future – a future where, finally, we don’t have to *touch* each other anymore; where we’re free to interact with one other solely as honest, God-fearing capitalists and where reproduction is handled in a sterile, morally sound environment by an unfeeling army of CloneBots.

I, for one, commend Mr. Bush’s foresight and am looking forward to a peaceful and proper future for us all. In the meantime, I’ll be doing my part to help move things along. Why, just this morning I was appalled to find myself erect upon awakening, and I’m proud to say I took immediate action. After all, with forward thinkers like Mistery Bush and Gonzales in charge, it’s not like I’ll be needing *that* much longer.

God Bless You, Bush Administration.  
And God Bless America.

– Mike Cooper  
[cooper@theforce.net](mailto:cooper@theforce.net)

INVADING CARTHAGE, SPREADING THE GOOD NEWS

[taped voice message] So, uh... I’m not sure, uh... someone apparently came into the newsroom late last night and dropped off some of the Deek Magazines... And there was some confusion as to whether or not it was... I, uh... There was some speculation as to... We can’t really have that, and... Please call me at [412-xxx-xxxx] and... Please call me as soon as possible. Thank you.

– Francine Bratwurst  
On the inside

POT

Dear Deek:

hey yo deek i was in this bar the other night and stumbled upon a saying you guys ould write: when a dude gets all up on yer shit you can threaten him through his grandma: “dude ill fuck you so fucking hard ill knock your gramma into another hospice” hey ho my bro here jsut cooked up some more black tarfor the intravenous asshole puckering up from the base of my forearm. SUUHWWEET! GO STILLURSSS!!!!

– stupid stownerdammit  
[stupidstowner@yahoo.com](mailto:stupidstowner@yahoo.com)

Dear Deek:

We’re a group of students, actors, writers, activists and even some graduate students from around the Pittsburgh area. We formed the first “Stoner Blog” of its kind to make sure the high are fairly represented in the nascent and developing “cyber” portion of society. For too long have we been stared at, hastled or unjustly thought about when all we want is to buy our gushers and Stouffer’s french bread pizza in peace. This is like our Neo, or alternatively, our exquisitely naked Austrian sent from the future to rough up anyone who tries to mess with us or bust us for just hotboxing our lives with carpe diem. There’s plenty more where this came from, man.

– high hal  
[tequilaakimbo@yahoo.com](mailto:tequilaakimbo@yahoo.com)

‘T’M SO SAD MY PENIS IS VOMITING IN GRIEF’

Dear Sir:

And what did Ron English do to persuade you to publish that incendiary stink-pottery? Does he offer a dollar menu for his carefully peer-reviewed and stoichiometrically elegant creations? That is a “rhetorical” question, mind you, and I neither expect you to understand its full implications, nor grasp the gravity of your wrongdoing. Allow me to explain.

Otto Von Bismarck once explained that there are two things one cannot bear to think about, lest you turn gay: how sausages are made and how tards are disciplined at their “special [sic] or exotic” schools.

He alludes to a charged category of ideas, a truth whose unifying schema is that it is as scary to know as it is appealing to ignore or otherwise pretend not to exist. Ray Crock was no fanciful dandy like Mr. Stroud and that loathsome Jesse Hicks; he saw the world in its Hobbesian gruesomeness: blood, tears and inefficient production of foodstuffs. In this pre-McDonalds world, the farmer ruled with the consent construed by pastoral narratives celebrating the embittered yet persevering farmer; his hoe was both life-giver, aerating precious soil, and life-taker, slashing through meat and crushing the impudent bones bloodily encased beneath.

– Ronald McDonald  
[mcdcorporate556@yahoo.com](mailto:mcdcorporate556@yahoo.com)

HEADY QUESTION AT 3 A.M. ON A TUESDAY

Dear Deek:

Are we in the “EvilMedia” group or the “NotEvilMedia” group?

– Chris Potter  
[cpotter@steelcitymedia.com](mailto:cpotter@steelcitymedia.com)

ET CETERA

Dear Deek,

Why did you leave out your signature DOs & DON’Ts section in the last issue? Oh wait, I think I’m confusing you with another magazine... p.s. give me a column.

– Gavin McInnes  
[endlessincrease@yahoo.com](mailto:endlessincrease@yahoo.com)

Dear Dick/Geek:

A suggestion for future DEEK issues: (1) start publishing real, coherent letters to the editor, and include a response if you must; (2) unless there is a serious reason to use a pen name, show the writer’s real name on articles. The content is fine.

– David George  
Via the internet

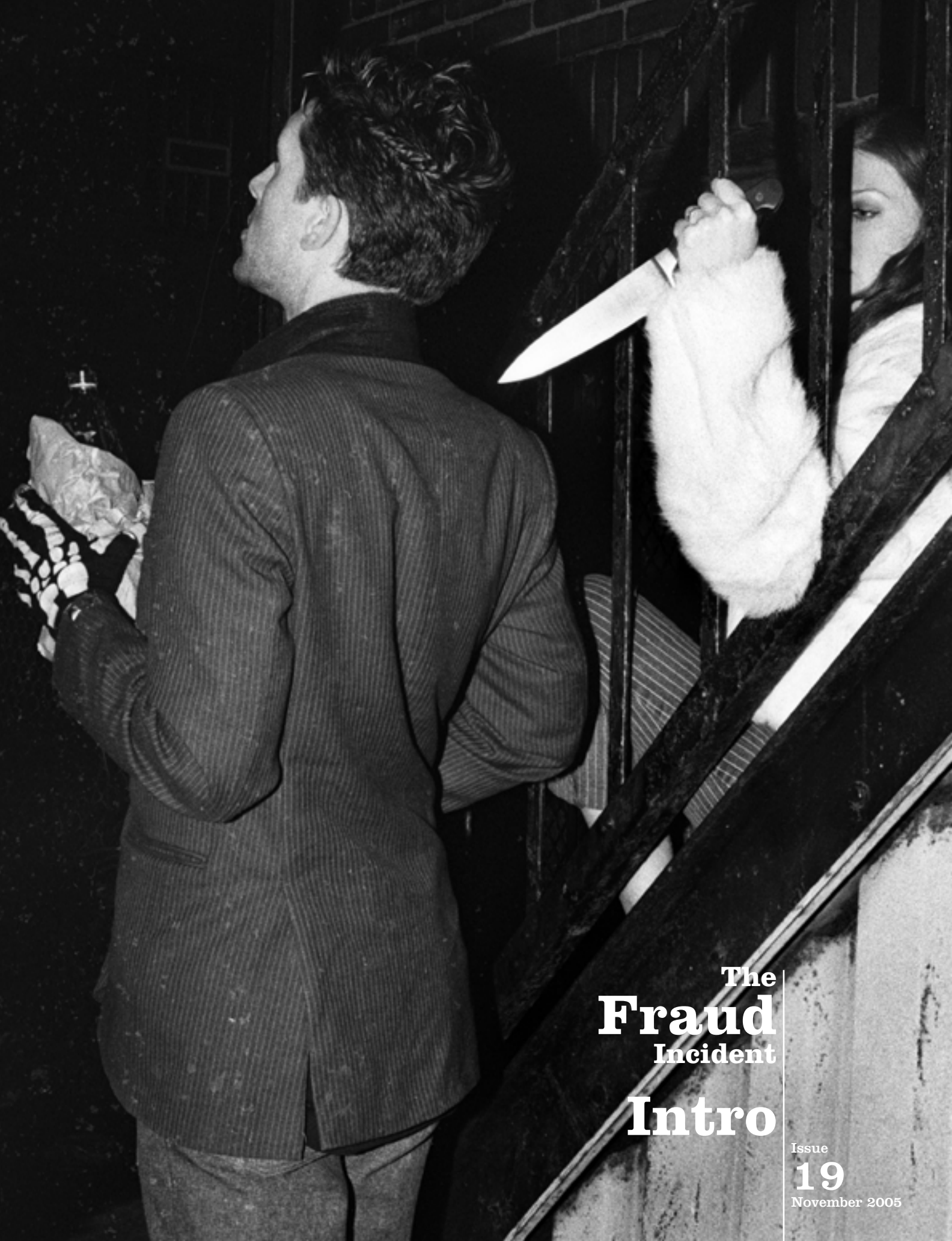
*All of our letters are, unfortunately, completely real. The pen names, well... that can be argued.*  
—Ed.

Dear Deek:

I was not particularly expecting Deek to be the type of mag that it is. Very non corporate! i dig it.

– Rion Stassi  
Via the internet





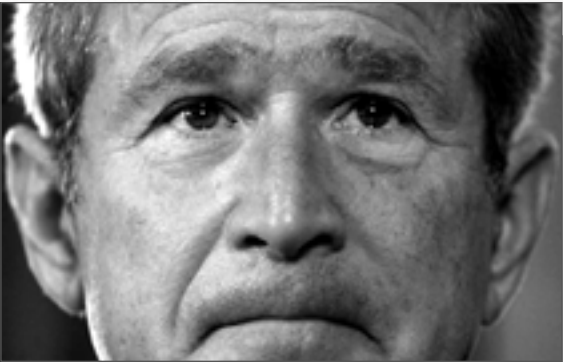
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November 2005

# Bin Laden captured, actually Cheney

ISLAMABAD – In a shocking twist to the war on terror, Osama Bin Laden was captured Tuesday and identified as Vice President Dick Cheney. The identification occurred when Bin Laden was apprehended inside a haunted cave somewhere on the Afghan-Pakistani border. When investigators removed his turban, his entire face was attached. Beneath was the grim spectre of Cheney. “I was flabbergasted,” said investigator Fred Jones. “We were investigating the mystery of the haunted cave and stumbled on him by surprise. No one had any idea who he really was, except, of course, Velma.” Jones is referring to fellow sleuth Velma Dinkley, who said she knew something was “fishy” when she discovered a large pile of Halliburton stock in the cave, along with several cases of Spam and a package of uranium labeled “Find in Iraq.” “Everyone knows Muslims don’t eat pork,” she said. “The pile of stock had to have belonged to one of the larger shareholders and who else really wants uranium to be found buried in Iraq? It all pointed to the vice president.” Cheney’s ruse began sometime in 2001, when the government captured the real Osama Bin Laden in Oman. He kept the arrest a secret and donned the Bin Laden costume to keep fear for terror, and the price of Halliburton stock, profitably high. “I would’ve gotten away with it too,” grumbled Cheney, adding, “if it weren’t for those meddling kids.”

Cheney’s remarkable likeness to Bin Laden baffled investigators



Bush terrified of hearing the phone ring yet *again*.

## Bush screening calls for Chinese creditors

WASHINGTON D.C. – President Bush has been instructing his aides to screen all his calls for creditors from the People’s Republic of China, a nation the United States reportedly owes over 200 billion dollars. “The tricky thing is the time difference,” said one aide. “They adjust their schedule and know to call right after the President’s morning cartoons. He’s always more agreeable then,” adding, “that’s when Harriet Miers told him the result of her search for a Supreme Court nominee was actually her. And when Cheney told him during 2000 that he found himself to be the best qualified candidate for vice president.” Economist Porter Samovar, a professor at the University of Plano in Texas, feels the debt to the Chinese may have severe repercussions, including the possible repossession of the United States’ West Coast. “The Chinese government can certainly make an argument that their labor was what allowed the West Coast to flourish in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century,” he said. “If Bush doesn’t get on track paying back this debt they could conceivably take a portion of California worth the owed sum, which is standard in the lending process. Or, they could break his legs.”



## Tupac found dead in Malibu home



MALIBU, Calif. – World-famous gangster rapper TuPac Shakur was found dead in his Malibu home on Saturday. Police believe the rapper choked on a ham sandwich as he fell down a small flight of stairs into his recording studio.

“His producer went by to pick up his latest posthumous album; that’s when he found Shakur lying on the floor and called 911,” lead detective Allen Girshbaum said. He added: “This is a tragic loss for the hip-hop community.” Shakur, who had been releasing films and albums ever since his fraudulent death in 1996, was one of hip-hop’s most recognizable figures. According to an anonymous source who helped plan the fake shooting, Tupac had a lot of life left in him. “He went too early once again. Now the world will never know the full potential of this musical legend.” Seven thousand more Shakur albums are slated for release over the next four thousand years. ©



PUNK

Jews for Jesus

Our Mission: We exist to make the messiahship of Jesus an unavoidable issue to our Jewish people worldwide.

This web site is one way we are celebrating three decades of ministry for the Lord under the banner of Jews for Jesus. We started with a handful of Jewish believers sharing their faith in Jesus on the campuses and streets of the San Francisco Bay Area in the early 70s. Today, Jews for Jesus is an international ministry with a staff of 214 spread out over eleven countries and twenty cities. Since we started, over 800 people have faithfully served on our staff and have helped to make the messiahship of Jesus an unavoidable issue to millions of individuals. And together, we rejoice over what God has done!



JEWSFORJESUS.COM

Serving with Jews for Jesus

That’s what Jews for Jesus is all about. And if that gets your heart pumping and you spiritual juices flowing, think about partnering with us. Right now we’re looking for passionate Jewish and Gentile believers who want to do direct, personal evangelism with love and boldness.

Judaica

There’s an old saying that goes, “Two Jews, three opinions.” Judaism is by no means a monolith; it has changed and will continue to change for years to come. Chances are if you go to a handful of Jewish web sites, you’ll find dozens of explanations of what it means to “be Jewish” and “live Jewishly.” These days, the Jewish experience varies from extremely religious to atheistic and all points in between and our observances, practices and ways of life often reflect this diversity.

Answers

A question is a question when a person really wants to know an answer, right? Some people throw up questions like roadblocks and they probably won’t like what’s at the other end of these links. But if you are one of the people who are genuinely curious about how Jewish people can believe in Jesus, if you really want to get somewhere in your understanding of what he could mean to you and why, you can probably find answers to some of your questions here. We hope these links prove helpful. If you have another question that you do not see addressed, we would like to hear it and have an opportunity to send you a thoughtful answer.

Jews for Jesus Resources

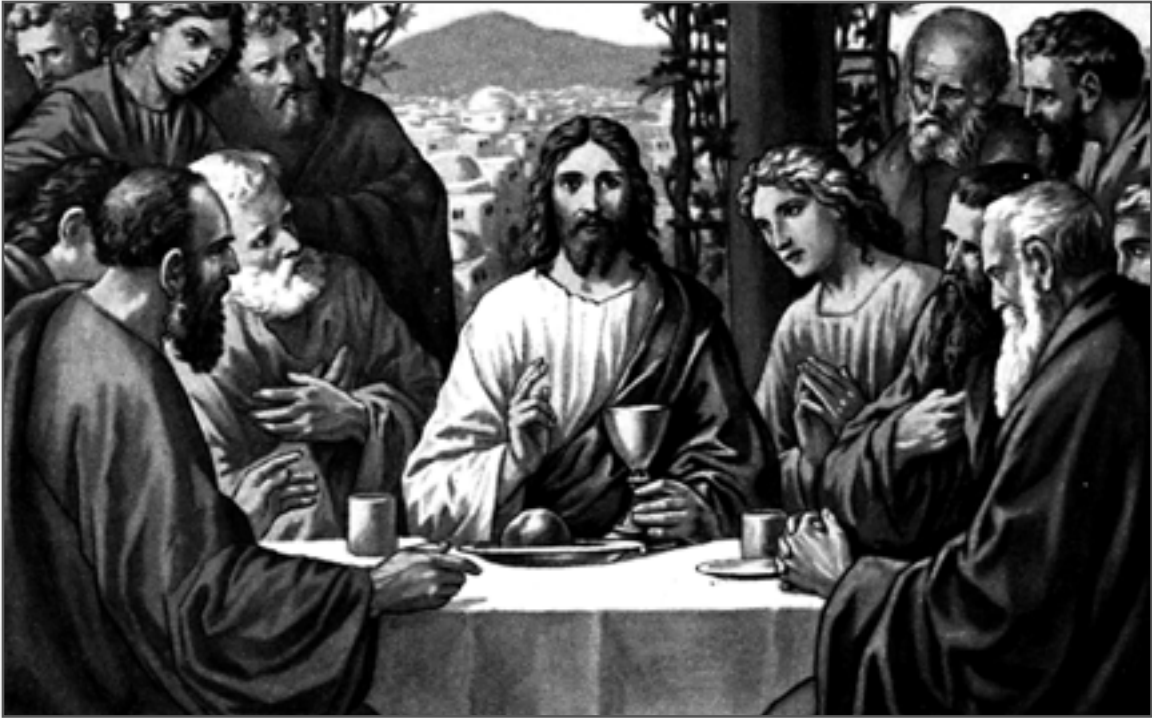
Come on in and get your hands dirty. There is plenty here to help you grow in your walk with Y’shua (Jesus).



**Core Values**  
Understanding that we are under the authority of God and His word desire to honor Messiah Y’shua and are dependent upon the enabling power of the Holy Spirit

Jewish people tend to dismiss evangelistic methods and materials that are couched in Christian presuppositions and lingo, because they reinforce the assumption that Jesus is for “them” not “us.”

**We commit to:**  
Direct Jewish evangelism as our priority. An apostolic lifestyle of availability, vulnerability and mobility. Striving for excellence in all that we do. Deploying only front-line missionaries who are Jewish or married to Jews. Principle-based operations and practice. Accountability to our mission family and the body of Messiah. Integrity and faithfulness. Creativity in our staff. Stepping out in courageous faith and taking risks for God



When JC gets a little wine in him, all of a sudden he’s the life of the party.

...from the desk of Jesus

Let’s do a simple logical exercise: Christians believe in Christ; Jews do not. The instant a Jew decides to believe in Jesus, that person ceases to be Jewish and becomes Christian. Thusly, a Jew for Jesus is as genuine as a \$3 bill, as Jewish as the Pope, as real as Darwin’s Theory of Evolution, et cetera, et cetera...

Well, it’s just not true, my friends. Take it from me, I was the first Jew for Jesus. A Jew can totally believe in me and maintain the rest of his religion without contorting his spirituality into a hysterical irony – like vegetarians for meat, or cowboys for Indians, or shoots for ladders, or Jews for Jesus for Not Jesus.

Let me take a moment to quell a small rumor about Jews for Jesus. Yes, it’s a real religion, not an utterly disrespected and far-out splinter group from “normal” Judaism that belongs somewhere on the Crazy Religion Totem Pole between Branch Davidians and Movementarians. Yeah, that’s ridiculous. And Jews for Jesus can still get a JCC card.

The truth is that Jews for Jesus are all pioneers of gray-area theology and get the best of both religions – no hell; yes matzo balls; no communion; yes pretty, zaftig Jewish women. And, yes, back-to-back days of Sabbath!

Yet, there are a lot of things about them I don’t understand. Do Jews for Jesus believe I died for their sins, too? Because, to be frank, I didn’t really intend to die for the sins of every religion... just one. Why would a Jew believe in Jesus? Are they baptized? Do they consider Israel their homeland, or is it instead somewhere in between, like Algeria?

When the next Holocaust comes around, what line will Jews for Jesus stand in? To the left, death camps, to the right, work camps, and you Jews for Jesus can play Parcheesi or something over there until we figure you guys out. Come on! Is the glass half Jewish or just half-baked?

I guess even I have questions about what a Jew for Jesus really is. Don’t get me wrong, I still love the adoration – but they make no sense. Sometimes, I just want to do some casting of the first stone on one of them.

Maybe I’m looking at it the wrong way. Maybe it’s something simple, like increasing the number of women a single man can... you know... get busy with. I mean, mom and dad had it easy. Dad just laid her in a lake and didn’t even take her out to dinner. Now-a-days, you need a gimmick just to get your foot in the door, let alone enjoy some water sports.

Maybe it’s something even simpler, like fear of hell. I know I’d be scared if I was telling me I was going to hell if I didn’t believe in me. That’d be reason enough to at least cover my bases, just in case, for everlasting salvation from being pitch-forked in the eye all day by Pauly Shore while being forced to listen to a book-on-tape of *Dungston Checks In*.

Well, even though I don’t get them, I say let’s take in these Jews for Jesus, or shun them as the freaks they are – both are acceptable. That’s a great name, by the way. I wished they’d start calling more things [blank] for Jesus. Like *Girls Gone Wild...for Jesus*.

At the end of the day, I guess I can proudly say I’m Jesus for Jews for Jesus for J... no I think that’s it. Well, I also think they’re really, really stupid. I can be both, right? ☺

COUNTERPUNK



# What My Spam Is Saying:



## Spam: Hello !.. Me: Hey, wassup?

ByRyFmehwoO CScpWR ciVbwW jbRwLNS  
NoMGzGc YtlMaNfUAF BwBNfwiJwY bTxmABYY  
rxmvGGfbD kwmxlKJ yNzp eXLHZxBn kSXlMB  
kgjBWzT HZbODptCCD aNefPyhv mwtSS qrXaGIDlfX  
rcZddtiy DdPRA RgdN ofFr KhiHSvMb OwbiBKVP  
Whoa, are you ok, there? It looks like you just passed  
out on your keyboard. Repeatedly. Or are you making  
fun of the way 14 year-old girls talk online? LOL!  
Had problems "getting it up"? Take Viagra...  
Eeeee, no thanks. If anything, I have trouble  
"keeping it down," wink wink, nudge nudge!  
LOL! Seriously though, my erections are fine.  
Imagine a new huge Pecker full of energy.  
Just huge. Smash the ladies like crazy!  
I, uh, wow, yeah. Yeah, I can imagine. I'm imagining  
it now, in my mind. "Smash the ladies," though?  
I don't know about that...going on some sort  
of Hulk-like rampage with my fear-inducing  
member? Is that the dating scene of today?  
If your a lady, take a "monster!"  
That just seems nonsensical. A "monster"?  
Take it where? Wait, are you to be  
speaking with the innuendo?  
Sensational revolution in medicine! Enlarge  
your penis up to 10 cm or up to 4 inches!  
I think I'm beginning to see a pattern here...  
If you suffer from small penis size, inability  
to maintain erection, incomplete erection  
or diminished sexual drive, there is now  
reliable, results-oriented help available  
Seriously, stop it.  
Not for you now then continue.  
Good, ok. Glad I made myself clear on that.  
Now what were we talking about?  
let s have sex 1  
Not sure that was it...  
Gq LoywspH Ldhqrej Lnahqhowl Jguceuch  
Vxco Kibdagknkm Aguxnrlmry Ydv Drtr Kp  
Rylmttx Xaqxpi Omi Xpxka Toijsek Ishog  
Hghyikg Gprvwanxyv Ms Ojmuelruml  
Please don't be like that. :(  
your life boring?

I probably wouldn't be sitting home on a  
Saturday night reading my spam if it weren't!  
LOL! Cry! Big streaming tears! Of despair!  
well then become a cop Do you think that  
you're the type? Do you think you have  
what it takes? Do you feel a need to serve  
the public trust and protect others?  
That's not really where I expected you to go with that.  
The World Famous Jack Rabbit Vibrator. Sex In  
the City stars all use it. It's had global acceptance  
after it appeared on various episodes. Women  
are loving it. Men love using it on women. It  
adds a great experience for any situation.  
All of the Sex in the City stars? Even Bea Arthur?  
Hang on, is that Sex in the City I'm thinking of,  
or something else? What's the one where a rich  
white family adopts an inner-city youth and  
hilarious hi-jinks ensue? Is that Sex in the City?  
Do you buy pills at your local pharmacy?  
No.  
Yes? You're paying too much!  
I feel like what we have here is a  
failure to communicate.  
Imagine a new huge Pecker full of energy.  
Just huge. Smash the ladies like crazy!  
Nooooooooo!  
Do you want a high quality replica?  
Of my lady-smashing Pecker?  
Imagine a new huge Pecker full of energy.  
Just huge. Smash the ladies like crazy!  
OK, that was my fault. I did bring it up.  
You want to submit your website to search  
engines but do not know how to do it?  
Yes, the interwebs confuse and astound me.  
If you invested time and money into your  
website, you simply MUST submit your website  
online otherwise it will be invisible virtually,  
which means efforts spent in vain.  
But I spent my entire marketing budget on  
these customized victrola records! I have famous  
megaphone crooners lauding my site! Are you  
telling me I'm about to be eclipsed by yet another  
technological fad? It's enough to make me throw  
my eight-track player to the floor in disgust!  
I, David Pennington would be happy to  
assist you with all your future options. I  
look forward to speaking with you.  
I am on my way to your house right now. ☺

# My Psychic Advisor

By Joseph L. Flatley



So... you're psychic?  
How's that work?  
It's an energy level. Premonitions,  
looking at you, talking to you...

Are you born like that?  
Yes, there's no school, you can't  
do it out of a book. If you read  
cards by the book, you get the  
same reading over and over again.  
The cards have to talk to you.

Is this something that's  
in your family?  
Yeah, I come from a psy-  
chic family. My grandmother,  
my mom, my sisters...

Wow, that's amazing. You  
have a slight accent. Are you  
from around here, or...?  
Yeah, I was born and raised  
in the United States. But my  
family is from Romania.

- From the author's interview with Tina, owner of The Psychic Shop, on October 11, 2005.

The Romani (Rom) are an ethnic group numbering roughly one million in the United States. Known pejoratively as Gypsies, they are found all over the world. For the most part, the Rom remain separate from the world of the gadje (non-Romanies) with their own language, customs, social and political structure. Their disputes might be settled by the kris romani (Gypsy court); if they get in trouble, bail might be posted by the rom baro (Gypsy king); and their Saturday night might be spent listening to records by Gypsy guitarist Django Reinhart.

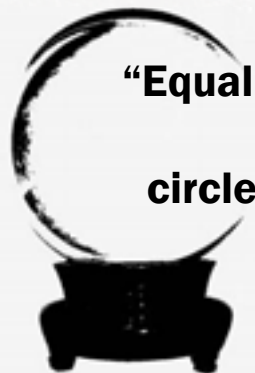
The Romani aren't from Romania, although plenty have settled there and many more have continued on to the United States. Nor are they from Egypt (the origin of the word "gypsy"), though they have settled in both lands in the past. According to the most recent evidence, the Romani are believed to have left Northern India in the 11th century in retreat from the advance of Islam. And most Rom are not con artists and criminals, just like most Italians aren't Tony Soprano. But this doesn't mean you won't find a hurtful Rom stereotype out there in the flesh, if you go looking for it. And I found one, Tuesday night at The Psychic Shop.

The Psychic Shop is a renovated storefront on East Carson Street. When Tina answered the phone that evening, it sounded like she had dozed off while watching "Love Story." A few minutes later, when she opened the door for me, she was quite

chipper, and downright charming with her fuzzy slippers and light (think "Natasha" from Rocky and Bullwinkle) eastern European accent.

She waved me into the darkened room, hermetically sealed from the street, where my mind was immediately put at ease by the new age music, incense and laid-back vibe of the place. It was not unlike being at a new age book store devoid of books. There was relatively little clutter, a table full of candles, and what appeared to be a large King James Bible, open to the centerfold. If human nature doesn't change, if history is the same experiences cycling endlessly through different environments, than this is the Ikea Age equivalent of the old Gypsy tent: a whole other world constructed out of synthetic textiles, thermo-seal windows, machine-spun tapestries and a Bose Wave Radio.





“Equal parts empathy, neurolinguistic programming and bullshit, the Reader talks the Client in circles, ‘gleaming information from the sitter, then feeding it back as mystical revelation.’”

–Joe Nickell

She asked me to sit at a desk, flanked by two mummies like you see in the old monster movies, while we began the reading under the watchful gaze of a large Sphinx tapestry in the back of the room.

A Psychic Reading is a dance, an interaction: the confidence swindle is never anything that is done to you, it is something that you and the swindler do together. The reading is a process, not unlike falling in love or being sold a used car.

The basis of the reading is a technique known as the “cold reading.” Equal parts empathy, neurolinguistic programming and bullshit, the Reader talks the Client in circles, “gleaming information from the sitter, then feeding it back as mystical revelation.”

Tina started with the Tarot cards. She had me hold my question in my mind as I shuffled and cut the deck. She then placed the cards on the table in what is known, in Tarot lingo, as a Ten Card Spread: ten cards that succinctly sum up my predicament and the factors (physical, spiritual, vegetable) that have lead up to it. Once we have seen the problem for what it is, I can look to the future – with my psychic advisor – and learn how to get myself out of this mess!

As the reading progressed, Tina made a few stabs at sussing out my private life - she asked me about people I didn’t work for, and about relationships that didn’t exist. On one occasion, she asked me about a fair-haired, fair-eyed authority figure, maybe an employer, a male, who likes the outdoors. I assured her that I didn’t know anyone fitting that description. She pressed on: was it a friend, a family member?

“That kind of sounds like my old boss,” I offered. “Were you two close?” she asked. “Yeah, we’re friends.” “Oh, that must be it.”

You see, in order for the Reading (or the fraud) to work, you have to be a willing accomplice. In fact, the interaction between the Reader and the Client is similar to psychotherapy, except that the tools of the Reading are not used to help the client gain insight into their predicament; they are used by the reader to establish bona fides in the mind of the Client, “proof” that the psychic will then use to sell the client on continued – and costly – advice.

And the advice that she offered, in general, was pretty much of the Hallmark Card variety, full of “you can do it” and “hang in there,” but a little more wordy (confusing). For instance, she offered this nugget of wisdom regarding my current life situation: “There’s been stumbling blocks in your path of life and you’re not going as fast as you want because there’s been stumbling blocks and you’re trying to reach out for something... this is a relationship, you either made a commitment and you’re sorry you made it or you were gonna make it and something happened that it did not turn out as well as you expected it and it has left you in a bad place because that hurts.”

Her Hallmark-isms, however, always contained a darker, more paranoid aspect:

“You weren’t mentally the way you should be because you have been having too many negative energies and you’ve been feeding off negative people...” Here she began to describe the person who is draining me of my “energy.” This person, she says, she cannot see exactly he or she is, yet; but this person is out there, and they’re hurting me. Causing untold pain, suffering and anguish in my life. She doesn’t describe the person as malevolent as much as confused... and it could be anybody! A “friend” or loved on who is conflicted and maybe doesn’t even realize how they’re affecting me. That this evil may be unaware what it is doing is what makes the whole thing so insidious.

“I would like to do a larger reading with you. Really look at your past, past lives, see what this problem, where your energy is being drained. We go into your inner past life to find out if you got a bad karma, if the aura is broken... I can give you candles, bath salts, meditations to repair your aura. The basic kit, I will make it for you to your specific needs, I charge \$250.00.”

At this point, I break off the encounter. Had I continued I could look forward to more spells, more revelations, more chakras and karmas and much more money spent.

The Psychic Reader and Advisor is selling something very attractive: certainty in an uncertain world. But the “Psychic” is to spirituality what the Stripper is to Marriage; they offer an illusion, nothing more. It is like hiring someone to blacktop the driveway but coming home to find the gravel painted navy blue. And I must admit, the reading left me somewhat depressed. My evening with Tina really brought into focus how there are no easy answers in life, a thought which can be quite sobering when you live in a time obsessed with the easy answer.☹



Smoke & Booze for the Common Man

# Swisher Sweets & Vladimir Vodka

By Ralph “Bucky” Gainsborough

Now, you might think that just because I’m a practically illiterate circus freak and freelance alligator wrestler with a drinking problem that I don’t have any class. Well, for your information, punk, I have all kinds of standards for things. For example, I will not eat anything that has been on the floor for more than three days, drink anything from a leather glove, or smoke anything without a government-issued warning scrawled over three quarters of it. The fact of the matter remains: Sometimes it’s just difficult to uphold such standards on a Deek Magazine stipend.

Thus, I reach my lowest day. On this day I performed a medical procedure on myself that involved smoking an entire box of Swisher Sweets and drinking a handle of Vladimir Vodka. The following chronicles what I remember:

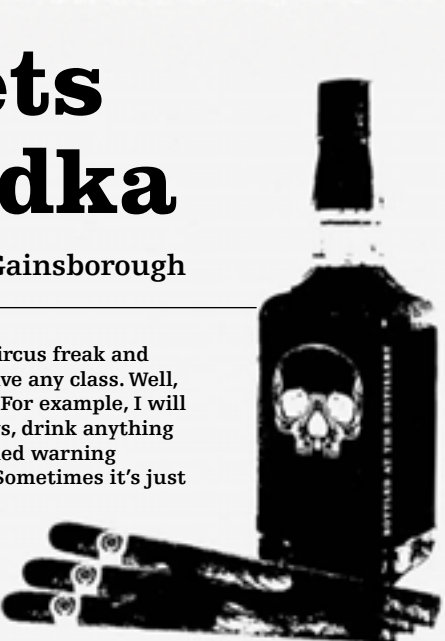
## Swisher Sweets

(Roughly 25 cents per cigar, ring size, length and style arbitrary and irrelevant)

All right, I’m just going to come out and say it. Smoking Swisher Sweets is comparable to smoking a rank banana peel, discarded waffle runoff and assorted nuclear wastes wrapped in a fetid, un-raked leaf from the backyard. As you smoke it, you will constantly consider suicide. Hell becomes a welcome reward to escape the assault on your senses, beginning with a smell that is unrivaled in any rendering plant or sulfur mine in America.

Furthermore, Swisher Sweets could easily be used as torture devices to end the War on Terror. Forget tying up helpless prisoners and using sexual abuse and violence; just put 10 of them in a room at the same time and make them all smoke Sweets. In no time, they’ll be demanding to perform cunnilingus on Condi Rice and calling it ice cream.

The only reason that I rate the Swishers a more-than-generous 1/5 remains that some of my friends... oh, who am I kidding ... *I* could see a practical application for the use of the wrapper as a cradling apparatus for illegal and potentially dangerous drugs. Beyond this application, I promise you from the bottom of my filthy little heart that there is no reason, under any circumstance that you should ever be in the same room as a Swisher Sweet.



## Vladimir Vodka

(\$9 for a gallon)

As opposed to the previous review, Vladimir has a slightly more practical application. If mixed (heavily) with select liquids so that the burning sensation fades, Vladimir will get you drunk.

Otherwise, Vladimir should be nicknamed “Liquor for Hardcore Masochists,” for its wretched taste, rank odor, and otherworldly morning-after headache. But on the bright side, it remains far cheaper than any riding crop or ball gag out there, so maybe we could go 2.5/5 for the “destitute submissive” demographic.

The major reason why I chose Vladimir for this review has been because of the overwhelming number of college students who actually purchase and – God forbid – consume Vladimir in astronomical quantities on a regular basis. I’ll let you in on a little secret: Alcohol has been proven to kill brain cells, but Vladimir can be directly blamed for your D+ in Chemistry. So next time, remember to tip your bartender and ask for Finlandia or some other vodka with some modicum of decency and self-respect. Just like you.☹



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# We Got Mooned

## NASA and the Great Moon-Landing Hoax.

On September 19<sup>th</sup>, NASA announced that, in a bold and innovative new project, America would return to the moon. Thirteen years from now, at a cost of \$104 billion, astronauts may once again land on that cold, dead rock.

That is, if you believe they ever got there the first time.

Supposedly, man landed on the moon on July, 20<sup>th</sup>, 1969, a mere eight years after the NASA began Project Apollo. President Kennedy, in a speech before Congress in May of 1961, lit a fire under NASA with his immortal words, "...I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to the Earth. No single space project in this period will be more impressive to mankind, or more important in the long-range exploration of space; and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish..."

Difficult to accomplish, indeed. And at a cost of \$40 billion (almost 13% of what we'll have spent in Iraq and Afghanistan by the end of the year), poking the man in the moon right in his smug little face wouldn't come cheaply.

In fact, Ralph Rene, a self-taught physicist who's consulted for the Rand Corporation and NASA, and who's also the author of *NASA Mooned America!*, believes it was a little *too* difficult and expensive. The moon landings, he says, are the greatest fraud ever perpetrated on the American people.

Firstly, why would NASA (possibly with the help of our spooky friends at the CIA) do such a thing? A number of reasons: To gain prestige by beating the Soviets; to distract the public from the war in Vietnam; and/or to simply justify a huge budget, the profits of which lined the pockets of the military-industrial complex.

OK, those seem like compelling enough motivations. After all, the government is just looking for a chance to screw us all! But what about the evidence?

How about this, Doubting Thomas? Moon photos – faked! True: In many of the "moon landing" photos, cast shadows seem to stretch at two different angles, an impossibility unless the astronauts brought their own spotlights. Given that the only light source on the moon is the sun, the shadows should all have the same angle. So-called experts ("fools," I call them) try to explain away these discrepancies by saying that if

the shadow of an object falls on an uneven surface, it will appear to be at a different angle. The moon, they say, isn't a flat plane; therefore, some shadows move with the bumps and crags of it its surface.

Whoa! Easy, eggheads! Don't start threatening me with your slide rulers! I'm just telling you what my eyes see, because my eyes *do not lie*.

But ok, let's say I give you the photos. We'll put those aside for now. How do you explain this: The video of the moon landings, supposedly shot in zero gravity, looks exactly the same as it would on Earth – *if I double the speed!* See, NASA figured they could make it look as though the astronauts were cavorting in deep space by showing the films in slow motion. Nice try, wisenheimers. Another little bit of video trickery by *your* US Government: If I play the Zapruder film backwards, the bullet flies out of Kennedy's head and *back* into "Oswald's" gun. It makes you wonder what they're trying to hide.

My theory is this, right? NASA, realizing they could never actually land on the moon, hired Stanley Kubrick (who was working on *2001: A Space Odyssey* at the time – coincidence?) to direct a series of "moon landings" at their secret Area 51 base. Need proof? Try this on for size: The craters in the Nevada desert outside Area 51 look *exactly* like the craters on the moon. You don't think all craters – big holes in the dirt – look the same, do you? Verdict: Conspiracy.

Perhaps the most compelling evidence, though, is this: If you listen to Neil Armstrong's famous, "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind," quote *backwards*, it sounds a bit like, "Man never space walk." Think about it. No, seriously: *Think about it*.

**Complexity:** Forty billion dollars, a massive government bureaucracy, over three decades of fraud, an entire planet swindled – they killed Stanley Kubrick to keep him quiet!

**Plausibility:** Why else would Stanley Kubrick be dead? You know Fox did a whole hour-long special devoted to the Moon Hoax, right? Who you gonna trust?

### Where it will help you score:

My great-grandmother is one of the 6% of Americans who, according to a Gallup poll, don't buy the "moon landing" snake oil. She's also a bit of a swinger. You call me – I hook you up. ☺



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- ☐ 18 OR YOUNGER
- ☐ 19 - 25
- ☐ 26 - 35
- ☐ 36 - 45
- ☐ 46-55
- ☐ 56 - 65
- ☐ 65 AND BEYOND

#### WHAT IS THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION YOU HAVE RECEIVED?

- ☐ SOME HIGH SCHOOL
- ☐ HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE
- ☐ SOME COLLEGE
- ☐ COLLEGE GRADUATE
- ☐ SOME GRADUATE WORK
- ☐ GRADUATE DEGREE

#### DO YOU INTEND TO FURTHER THAT EDUCATION?

- ☐ NO
- ☐ YES, GET A DIPLOMA OR GED
- ☐ YES, START ON A COLLEGE DEGREE
- ☐ YES, FINISH A COLLEGE DEGREE
- ☐ YES, START ON A GRADUATE DEGREE
- ☐ YES, FINISH A GRADUATE DEGREE

#### WHAT LOCAL PUBLICATIONS DO YOU REGULARLY READ?

- ☐ DEEK
- ☐ THE POST-GAZETTE
- ☐ THE CITY PAPER
- ☐ LOCAL RAGS (PITTSBURGH OR, UM, WHIRL)
- ☐ LOCAL WEBSITES
- ☐ THE TRIBUNE REVIEW

#### IN THE NEAR FUTURE, MIGHT YOU BUY...

- ☐ JEWELRY
- ☐ A CAR
- ☐ A COMPUTER
- ☐ STEREO EQUIPMENT
- ☐ TICKETS TO SOME SORT OF EVENT
- ☐ REAL ESTATE

#### DO YOU EAT OUT?

- ☐ DAILY
- ☐ EVERY FEW DAYS
- ☐ WEEKLY
- ☐ SEVERAL TIMES A MONTH
- ☐ MONTHLY
- ☐ ONLY ON SPECIAL OCCASSIONS
- ☐ NEVER

#### DO YOU DRINK (ALCOHOL)?

- ☐ OFTEN
- ☐ EVERY FEW DAYS
- ☐ WEEKLY
- ☐ SEVERAL TIMES A MONTH
- ☐ MONTHLY
- ☐ ONLY VERY SPECIAL OCCASSIONS
- ☐ NEVER

#### PLEASE CHECK THE WORDS THAT BEST DESCRIBE DEEK:

- ☐ EDGY
- ☐ HIP
- ☐ SMART
- ☐ FUNNY
- ☐ UNIQUE
- ☐ STIMULATING
- ☐ ADDICTING

#### WHAT IS THE YEARLY INCOME RANGE OF YOUR 'HOUSE'HOLD?

- ☐ 14,999 OR LESS
- ☐ 15,000 - 29,999
- ☐ 30,000 - 44,999
- ☐ 45,000 - 59,999
- ☐ 60,000 - 79,999
- ☐ 80,000 - 109,999
- ☐ 110,000 AND BEYOND

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The  
**Fraud**  
Incident  
**Fashion**

Issue  
**19**  
November 2005

*Fashion*

# Preparation Fake



Down the hatch!

The ripe age-old trick  
hides thin with thick  
With all that sex appeal  
A few buttons may split  
Before she takes your banana  
For a chocolate dip!

Ian "Flaco" Bonnet wears a T-shirt from  
Bureau, Jeans by Avalon Exchange. Banana  
by GetGo. Boxers and Glasses are his own.







All Stuffed Up.

Teary eyed at the drop of a hat  
Lend a shoulder to cry on  
Or a bosom at that  
for weeping at funerals?  
He's dying to know  
Just where all of those tissues go

Nikki Allen wears dress and necklace from HEY BETTY!  
Tissues by Kleenex.



Found out!

Now both of them know  
One has a tasty snack  
while other blows his nose  
Cure for hunger  
and cure for a cold  
no longer a need to wonder  
go get it on, you two sex mongers

Ian wears a T-shirt from Bureau, Pants by Avalon.  
Nikki 's shirt, jacket, pants and shoes by Avalon,  
Necklace by HEY BETTY!

Photographed by Nate Bog(os/uszewski).  
Styling, hair and make up by Supreme Fashionista Tiffany Boden.  
Commentary by Elizabeth Marklewicz.  
See more Nikki Allen on November 17, 2005; she's performing spoken word at Shadow Lounge, at 5972 Baum Boulevard in East Liberty, 15206.  
Hear more Ian on myspace.com/whitetailnoise.  
Check out more clothes at avalonexchange.com, rockthebureau.com and HEY BETTY! at 5892 Ellsworth Avenue in Shadyside; phone 412-363-0999  
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The  
**Fraud**  
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Issue  
**19**  
November 2005

# State of the Fraud

From the President on down, we are a nation of fakers.  
But who's really being fooled?

By Jesse Hicks

Illustrations by Kendall Fortney



Getty Images

## Episode 1: Home on the Range

*"White House officials do not deny that they craft elaborate events to showcase Bush, but they maintain that these events are designed to accurately dramatize his policies and to convey qualities about him that are real."*

- The Washington Post, December 4, 2003, referring to President Bush's Thanksgiving Day appearance in Baghdad, armed with a golden-brown, fake turkey.

In 1999, Connecticut-born George W. Bush, who grew up in affluent Midland, Texas and Houston (pop. 5,180,443 as of 2004) before, among other things, attending Yale, decided to buy a ranch. In those early days of his first Presidential campaign, then-Governor Bush purchased a 1583-acre plot of land just outside Crawford, Texas. (The ranch is actually closer to Waco, Texas, but you seldom hear White House Press Scott McClellan say, "The President is vacationing on his Waco ranch, which, incidentally, was built by members of a religious community from nearby El Mott, Texas." Nor will McClellan refer to the ranch as a "compound.")

The property, known as Prairie Chapel Ranch, is a former pig farm. According to Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino, there are now "four or five" cattle on the ranch. (*Ranch*, n. "An extensive farm, especially in the western United States, on which large herds of cattle, sheep, or horses are raised.") The President, who wears a cowboy hat but cannot ride a horse, paid an estimated \$1.3 million for this rustic "slice of heaven," as he calls it.

His home there is a 10,000 ft<sup>2</sup> limestone single-level with a pool, just like the cowboys of yesteryear used to have. Though its completion was planned for November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2000 -- Election Day -- the house didn't open until after the President's inaugural. In 2001, President Bush explained his "Western White

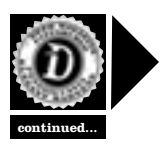
House" governing style by saying, "I think it is so important for a president to spend some time away from Washington, in the heartland of America."

Not coincidentally, historian Douglas Brinkley explained to *The Los Angeles Times*, "...[A] lot of Americans like seeing him in blue jeans with a big belt buckle, walking down a dirt road or clearing brush. It's become a stage set for him."

It would be unfair to mention here that Charles Manson, another controversial leader, also lived on a movie set, the Spahn Ranch in the San Fernando Valley. Unfair and irrelevant, because Manson -- who once said, "I may be Jesus Christ. I haven't yet decided who I am" -- implied that he knew the will of God, and by combining the *White Album* with the Book of Revelation and heroic doses of LSD, predicted a coming race and nuclear war. On the other hand, President Bush, like all American presidents, is a secular humanist who considers religion at best a comforting superstition. He is a man who would never tell a group of Amish leaders on July 9, 2004, "I trust God speaks through me."

An entirely unfair comparison, so let's not make it here. A question one might ask, though: Is there a problem when the President of the United States, whose job, one might argue, is to confront reality in all its complexity and inconvenience, spends much of his time on a movie set, a place by definition unreal?

*"Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain."*  
- The Wizard of Oz, 1939





Episode 2: The Faith of a Patriot

*“But as specific orders began arriving to the firefighters in Atlanta, a team of 50 Monday morning quickly was ushered onto a flight headed for Louisiana. The crew’s first assignment: to stand beside President Bush as he tours devastated areas.”*

- The Salt Lake Tribune, September 12, 2005, detailing FEMA’s use of over 1,000 firefighters as unpaid extras in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.



thinkprogress.org

President Bush’s cowboy swagger has a long lineage in American politics; Teddy Roosevelt is its first and perhaps most famous incarnation, an asthmatic Eastern aristocrat who went into the Dakota badlands and emerged a full-fledged cowboy, able to rope and ride. Lyndon Johnson owned and operated a 2,700-acre cattle ranch in south Texas, and his country-plain way of speaking clearly influences Bush II. Ronald Reagan also knew how to ride a horse; as President, he often cleared brush on his 688-acre California ranch.

So President Bush takes his place in this cycle of diminishing returns. A faint echo of Teddy Roosevelt, his character also borrows another iconic bit of Americana: the Resolute Man of Faith. Just call him God’s Cowboy.

In combining these two resonant American myths -- with a dash of the modern “CEO-as-leader” trope -- into one convenient package, the President offers Americans everything they want to believe about themselves. With all respect to Frank Norris, who once wrote that “California likes to be fooled” -- and who can argue with their Governor, a cybernetic organism sent from the future where politics is one big special-effect -- it’s *America* that likes to be fooled. We liked to be fooled, mostly about ourselves. We want to look in the mirror and see something greater than simple, human flesh -- we want to see a nation more powerful, more loving, more just, and more merciful. We want Sean Hannity to greet us all as “great Americans.”

And why not? The idea of America has always been more powerful than the reality; the phrase “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” sounds like nothing so much as the license to dream, to build castles in the air. In an age of small myths, when for

most religion has lost its narrative force, community ties have dissolved leaving us all strangers in the crowd, and the great economic and political battles of history all seem decided, it falls to post-9/11 politics to revive that most comforting of American myths: that of the great city upon a hill, exceptional, with the eager eyes of the world focused on its example.

The problem arises when you try to live in those airy castles, in a land built entirely of righteous abstraction. Just as the President’s stage-ranch helps him believe he is a cowboy, the myth of American exceptionalism helps us believe that we *are* that nation we want to see in the mirror. It helps us forget that Abraham Lincoln’s view of America as the “last best hope” was not the picture of a country already accomplished in its goals, but of one still striving towards them. That’s the meaning of the word “hope.” And hope has no place in a fantasy where noble belief trumps reality.

It’s worth quoting the rest of Lincoln’s thought here: “We must disenthral ourselves, and then we shall save our country. Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history.” No matter how many armored fictions we send marching across the world, we cannot stop the turning of the clock; when you try to set up camp in Disneyland, eventually the world comes knocking. We cannot remake our world without unmaking someone else’s, nor can we unburden ourselves of reality, choosing instead to live in a fortress America ruled by a seductive lie, with actors manning the ramparts.

So as Sean Hannity tucks you in snug and safe -- no terrorists under your bed, my quiet Americans! -- remember that for all his storytelling, “utopia,” in Greek, still means “nowhere.”

*“Stay behind my aura!”*  
- Zardoz, 1974



*“I wanted all things to seem to make some sense, so we could be happy, yes, instead of tense. And I made up lies, so they all fit nice, and I made this sad world a paradise.”*  
– Kurt Vonnegutt, *A Man Without a Country*





### Episode 3: The Blinded Leading the Blindfolded

*"The [senior Bush] aide said that guys like me were 'in what we call the reality-based community,' which he defined as people who 'believe that solutions emerge from your judicious study of discernible reality.' I nodded and murmured something about enlightenment principles and empiricism. He cut me off. 'That's not the way the world really works anymore,' he continued. 'We're an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you're studying that reality -- judiciously, as you will -- we'll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that's how things will sort out. We're history's actors ... and you, all of you, will be left to just study what we do.'"*

- "Without a Doubt,"

*The New York Times Magazine*, October 17, 2004.

Unfortunately, you don't have to just take my word for it. The ship of state, rechristened the SS Unreality, its engines stoked by ideologues and True Believers, has already beached itself upon the rocks of uncomfortable reality. I'm talking, of course, about Iraq.

President Bush has faked us – and himself – into believing he is a cowboy, specifically one in the Dirty Harry rather than Gene Autry mold. A studious examination of the Book of Revelation has convinced him of the righteous inevitability of his triumph over evil. Reality notwithstanding, he seems to think it's going pretty well. Some people disagree, but the fun in making your own worlds is that we each get one. You stand over there, in your world, where the liberation of Iraq has become a q-----. I'll be over here in mine, where every time an insurgent car bomb goes off, it sprays bystanders with daisies. That's called "having faith." Otherwise known as "staying the course."

And now we come to the final stage of the trick. It's one thing to live on a fabricated ranch and imagine yourself a cowboy. It's another to blindly parrot the "this is the greatest country in the world, bar none, without exception, all the time every time!" line and resist even a sideways glance into the shadowed corners of the American psyche. Keep the world in soft focus and you can live your dreams forever.

Just be careful when you try to make those dreams into reality. The two don't mix well; the final

and most dangerous delusion is that naked power and indomitable will can bend the world to your whim. That's a rarity, and as Pol Pot and Mao can tell you, people usually wind up dead. Or as George Packer put it in his history-thus-far of the Iraq War, *The Assassins' Gate*, "firepower and good intentions would be less important than learning to read the signs." No matter how well-armed your illusions, they'll always bump up against something you can't fake, or spin, or ignore. In short, the cosmic bummer that is the world as it is. But as Lenny Bruce once said, "Let me tell you the truth. The truth is what is. And what should be is a fantasy, a terrible, terrible lie someone gave the people long ago."

This is a lesson that President Bush and innocent Americans are just now learning. It's a difficult one, and I don't envy their painful return to the reality-based community. It's fun to believe things. More fun still to trick others into believing them, then line your pockets with the money they didn't really deserve anyway. But like a visit to Disneyland, it eventually comes to an end. You can only ride the teacups so long before you get sick.

When I last saw President Bush, he was having an "unrehearsed" (scripted! Ha! Words are meaningless!) conversation with a group of US soldiers stationed in Iraq. He stumbled through his lines, fumbled for the right words, and generally looked out of his depth. He looked like a man disoriented and empty, as though the string connecting his soul to his body had been cut. He looked like a man no longer able to fool anyone. Not even himself. ☹

*"There is nothing wrong with your television set. Do not attempt to adjust the picture. We are controlling transmission. If we wish to make it louder, we will bring up the volume. If we wish to make it softer, we will tune it to a whisper. We can reduce the focus to a soft blur, or sharpen it to crystal clarity. We will control the horizontal. We will control the vertical. For the next hour, sit quietly and we will control all that you see and hear. You are about to experience the awe and mystery which reaches from the inner mind to... The Outer Limits"*

- The Outer Limits, circa 1963





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**Deek**  
MAGAZINE

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Still Lovers – Page 108

Lily lies with her owner outside, as he writes and reads to her. He is a writer and he has used Lily as his muse. He is deeply in love with her and does not think his novel could have been written without her inspiration.



©Elena Dorfman/Redux Pictures

## Gallery: Elena Dorfman

Exploring the reality of guys and dolls



©Elena Dorfman/Redux Pictures

A fine art and magazine photographer since 1989, Elena Dorfman has spent most of her career examining extreme circumstances and unusual subjects such as family life in war times in Eastern Europe, surgical practices in Mongolia, and the lives of cloistered nuns as they struggle to maintain their communal faith in the 21st century.

Her work has appeared in *The New York Times Magazine*, *Marie Claire*, *GQ*, and *Elle*, among others. Dorfman has authored two books of photo essays: *Here & Now*, and *The C-Word: Teenagers and their Families Living with Cancer*.

Her body of work, *Still Lovers*, which looks at the intimate lives of men and women and dolls, has been exhibited - with the work of Hans Bellmer - at Modernism, in San Francisco. Dorfman was also included in, *Locating Intimacy*, a group exhibition at Camerawork, in the fall of 2003. *SexTV Toronto*, has aired a half hour program based on Dorfman's photographs and subjects.

Images from the series *Still Lovers* have been recently acquired by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. (Born Boston, MA. 1965. B.A. Sarah Lawrence College) ©

Find the book at [still-lovers.com](http://still-lovers.com)  
Find the dolls at [realdoll.com](http://realdoll.com)





# Lars Vegas

## The Terror of the Sublime

By Carl Weathers

**"I'm going to need the higher-wattage halogen," the hanging man yells up to me, his voice echoing off the surrounding cement.**

Right now it's 2:37 a.m. and Lars Vegas [not his real name; that's a whole other complicated question we'll get into later] just went off the roof of a 12-story abandoned book bindery. Black-clad, with a miner's light strapped to his head and a customized paint sprayer slung across his back, he disappeared over the side of the building like a SWAT leader ending a hostage crisis.

Meanwhile, I'm left shivering on the roof to keep watch over the rappelling equipment and lighting gear.

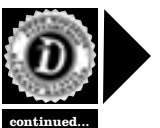
The muse has descended to Vegas – 20 minutes ago we were aimlessly cruising in a nondescript white van, listening to *Mahler's Tenth* and searching for the perfect canvas. "I need something ruinous tonight," he says, his ice-blue eyes busy as he speaks. Mostly he drives in silence, nestled into a pocket of introspection that breaks, typically, in a wave of speech; he's a solar battery of ideas, picking up the resonances in his environment and unleashing them in new, unexpected forms.

That, of course, is the definition of art. But where most artists work on a scale of feet, Vegas works in yards. Where others create in a studio, he turns the entire outdoors into his workshop. His specialty: Multi-story, abstract murals painted under cover of darkness. He shows up in a different city almost every month, does his thing for a while, then takes to the road again. People wake up the next morning, go to pick up their *Post-Gazette* or *Los Angeles Times*, and Vegas's work is there, an alien artifact dwarfing all who see it.

Tonight I ask him, for perhaps the tenth time, to explain his work. What comes out is, "Cities are the nodal points of the collective unconscious. In this great density of humanity, dreams take on new shapes; it's in cities that our new worlds are born. My work taps into that, as a kind of psychic acupuncture on the collective unconscious. I midwife new realities into being." This is the tenth different explanation I've heard from him.

Then he silently pulls into the gravel lot, eyes the broken windows and rusting metal hulking before us. Satisfied, he starts unloading. In fifteen minutes we're on the roof, and he is asking for more light.

**This all started two months ago.**





In my neighborhood I started noticing a series of ornately cartoonish slogans: “Wake up and smell the chaos!” “Dieses ist Seelemord.” “Reality is provincial.” “Who is John Galt?”

There seemed nothing spectacular about the content, but the presentation caught my attention. No matter where these little bits of urban enlightenment appeared, they were styled to look as they whey belonged there. More specifically, each was a miniature *trompe l’oeil* that seemed to rise out of whatever surface it’d been painted on. I’d find “Exterminate all rational thought!” protruding from a park bench. A bus seat would read “Evolve!” as though the sentiment had pushed its way out of the fabric.

I started searching graffiti message boards, avant-garde chat rooms, Situationist discussion lists – anywhere I might find a clue. Eventually I came upon a group of people who’d noticed the unique style in metropolitan areas across the U.S. No one had any idea who had made them or why; some speculated it was a new marketing ploy; others thought it must be a nationwide collection of graffiti artists. We traded pictures and theories, scrutinized the most minute details. It all got a little cultish, honestly.

One Monday, while at work, I trolled through the usual postings. “New sighting – NYC,” “Lichtenstein influence?”, “Avant-pop marketing meme/old hat” – the usual collection of conjecture, hunches, and little new information.

It seemed more important to talk about the mystery than to solve it. I mentioned this on one thread, adding that I’d considered writing an article about the whole thing if I ever met our mysterious author/authors. I posted the message and went to lunch. Two hours later, came a response: “Where & when?”

A week later I met Lars Vegas in a downtown parking lot. He was there before me, even though I arrived 15 minutes early.

I don’t know who I pictured, but the truth stood in front of me, maybe six-feet tall in a black motorcycle jacket, thick dark hair hanging down to his shoulders. Even with the sun setting behind him, he wore black aviator glasses – later, he confessed his eyes were overly-sensitive to sunlight. His face had the slightly sallow, greasy appearance of a chronic fast-food indulger.

He didn’t move until I was almost directly in front of him. Not a nod of recognition, or any sign that he was breathing. I must’ve looked quizzical, because he stepped forward, extended a gloved hand, and said, “I’m Lars Vegas.”

“Is that your real name?” I blurted. He cocked his head, “It is now.” Then he walked to the driver’s side of his van and opened the door. “Are you coming?”

The first thing I realized about Lars Vegas: this van was his headquarters. Along both sides were row after row of spray paint; shelves underneath held his customized tools. A laptop whirled away in the back. I saw where he’d worked out new ideas, covering the van’s interior with phrases such as, “Art is terror. Sacrifice yourself to the sublime.” Then he pulled out of the parking lot and put on The Doors’s *Waiting For the Sun*.

I started with the typical questions: How long have you done this? Why? How’d you get into it? For the first few hours I didn’t get much of a response; we drove through *Waiting For the Sun*, the entirety of *Tristan and Isolde*, and *The Velvet Underground and Nico* with only monosyllabic dialogue between us. As “The Black Angel’s Death Song” came on, I tried another variation on the, “So how does a guy end up driving across the country leaving cryptic slogans in his wake?” when he cut me off.

“I used to be in day-trading,” he said, in a Texarkana drawl.

“Numbers. Symbol manipulation. Lines of green, numinous signs crawling their way across my terminal for eight hours a day. Pattern recognition. Turning faith into gold.”

I waited as the Velvets moaned about stone glances and split didactics.

“I was very good. I could always see the wheels behind the numbers. Intuitively. A good trade was like a piece of music. Precise,” he said.

“On another level I began to suspect I was part of a wide-scale experiment in emotional vivisection. The people around me had a perpetually glazed look. The dead eyes of addicts. I didn’t know why. As I sat in my cube one day, I started to hear the walls closing in. I found myself physically unable to hear. It was like being underwater. It terrified me. I closed all my positions and walked out.”

When he talked about himself, it came out halting and detached.

“That was, what, four years ago. I took the money and walked out. It’s not difficult to disappear in America if you want to. I’ve become a connoisseur of non-existence.”

When he talked about his art, it was often in a long stream of techno-/psycho-/art- babble that would give L. Ron Hubbard pause. I asked him about that. He said, “That’s because I have no identity of my own. Whoever I am at a given moment gets splayed across a dead building and goes unsigned.”

So why “Lars Vegas”? “That’s what you call someone built in the middle of the desert, half mirage and half wasteland.”

And then he showed me his portfolio. The sloganeering was a distraction, something to keep him occupied until night fell. His real work happened after dark: The portfolio was filled with glossy blow-ups of murals two or three stories high, each an intricate design of near-fractal precision. Yet they were organic, the internal repetition a natural rather than algorithmic outcome. Each took on archetypal, suggestive figures. In short, they were astounding.

To himself more than you me, Lars Vegas said, “I believe not in epiphanies, but in eventualities. In the short term, reality prevails, but in the long run, bet on art. The universe’s long arc bends toward the improbable.”

Dawn breaks and Vegas applies the finishing strokes to tonight’s work.

It’s a maelstrom of color, a two-story testimony of one man’s soul. I simply have nothing to say; Vegas steps forward and adds a two-foot long stretch of cerulean blue. He steps back again, taking a long look at his creation. At this moment he is completely unreadable. He could be filled with awe, satisfaction, despair – any combination of these and more. It’s a moment long and impenetrable.

Then it passes. He turns and goes back to his van. In a flurry of gravel Lars Vegas leaves, heading east on a black asphalt vein into the welcoming rays of the rising sun. ☼



# Henry Rollins

25 Years of Bullshit

Cultural icon Henry Rollins has been in the game a long time. From heading the legendary punk band Black Flag in the early '80's to establishing his own publishing house, 2.13.61, to touring with Rollins Band, and appearing in numerous film and television roles, Rollins has brought an intensity and dedication to every project he pursues. This fall he embarks on a spoken-word tour, "25 Years of Bullshit." He spoke with Deek from Austin, TX, about his progress as an artist, what it means to be an actor, and entertaining the troops fighting a war you don't believe in.

*So it's tough to know where to start with you – music, film, politics: you pretty much have an opinion on everything.*

Don't you? *(laughs)*

*I did want to talk about this: You've done six USO tours, entertaining the troops fighting a war you don't really believe in.*

Well, I believe in the troops. I believe that they are sent anywhere they're told to go. Just because I don't believe in everywhere they're sent doesn't mean I have a problem with the men and women of the American military.

*How's the experience been over there?*

I've been to Iraq only once. But I've been to a lot of other places – they send you to a lot of places and they don't like to send you back to the same place too often; they don't want you to meet the same troops, you know, they want new people seeing you. The mood of the troops is great. They're just young, very motivated people getting through this very intense thing as best they can.

*I'm sure they're glad to see you.*

Oh yeah, yeah. Fairly far and wide.

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continued...





But I’ve never seen places like Afghanistan or Iraq before. It’s just a different environment, very eye-opening.

*Do you tone down any of the politics when you go over there?*

No, for me it’s not really a topic for discussion. These guys, every once in a while when you’re just hanging out with one of them, they’ll say something like, “Well, you know, I’ve been in Iraq for a year and I think it’s bull,” but I never bring it up first. I just don’t think that’s really *on* in that environment, that anyone really needs your opinion on *that* in that particular time and place. Whatever I think of the President telling me on the news that I have to recognize Iraq as the central front of the war on terror, I don’t really need to bring that up to the soldier who’s actually in the middle of it, because you wouldn’t want to say anything that would be deleterious to morale, or anything that would be in any way detrimental to this guy staying focused and getting home in one piece.

## As if anyone would take me seriously anyway.

I’m just saying, it’s a conversation you could have in the relative safety of some American location, when the guy’s home, you can go “Well, you know, I voted for Bush and I think you’re wrong!” Well, I think you’re wrong. So there. *(laughs)* But when you’re out there in the middle of all that, I don’t think it’s really the topic.

*The readers of Revolver magazine just nominated you as their President, but you seem more in the mold of the court jester, the Lenny Bruce character who has the license to tell the truth. Do you have any interest in politics?*

Oh, no, Never. I think politics is too mired in... politics. I think it’s stuck with people trying to get elected again and again and they have to not piss off anybody too much, so there’s a lot of compromise. I think real substantive change usually comes from the private sector. While people fell over each other, blaming each other – FEMA, homeland security, all these people were doing whatever they were doing – private Americans stepped up with over 1.3 billion dollars in contributions. And that’s just the money part. There’s so much volunteering going on; here in Texas, where I am, so many people opened their doors to strangers! “Come on in!”

## So I always will be more interested in what I can do as just a citizen and not as a politician.

*How does that tie into what you do as an artist, to your idea of creativity?*

Well, I’m basically an angry American, and everything I do kind of stems from that. It’s always been in the lyrics, it’s always been in my attitude. It’s all kind of enmeshed.

*You never seem to lack for that kind of intensity.*

No. I always try to push things. It’s the only way I can live and be interested in the next day. Complacency really scares me. I’m like anyone else: I’m lazy. I can sit and watch A&E for hours at a time. I’m a champion ice cream eater and oversleeper.

But I think there’s more going on. I’ve always admired people who move vigorously and who are restless. People like Henry Miller, or Man Ray – they just never... they always hustled and bustled, and lived a vigorous life. You see them when they’re old and they look like they took that body and took it out into the territory, to quote Mark Twain.

I’d rather that than that look you see on some people: There’s not a crease on them and they haven’t risked much. And I’m not putting them down – that’s for them to do. I’d rather be able to risk and feel some pressure – that need for confrontation keeps me going.

*Does it surprise you to have that level of creative freedom at your age?*

Every day. Any time they show up. Like last night, the place was packed. Wonderful audience. I like them more than they’ll ever like me, though they’ll probably never believe that, and I need them more than they’ll ever need me. I say, “Hey, thanks for coming,” and they say, “Yeah, you’re welcome, no problem.” But really – I thank them for coming.

*I think it’s hard for people to grasp the importance of that with any performer, but especially with you, as someone who has a very solitary side.*

Yeah. Most of the people I meet in my life are people at my shows, because a lot of the year I’m on tour. Most of the time the people I see most commonly – road manager Mike, the women who work at my office, and my manager – and that’s it, really. I don’t really hang out. When I’m in Washington, D.C., where I come from, I visit old friends of mine, who are still friends of mine, so I’ll see people from the old neighborhood once to three times a year. And it’s great when I see them. Some of these people I’ve known over thirty years and they’re still really cool people and they all still live nearby. You can walk street and just see people you know, which is really fantastic because most of the year I spend in places where people know me but I don’t know anybody.

But most of the time I’m on my own, by choice. I live alone; I don’t have a wife or any kids. That’s due to a lot of factors. Doing a lot of writing, that’s a pretty solitary experience. I was raised in a very solitary way. I was an only child – my mom was a very ambitious woman; she worked very hard to keep us fed. She’d come back from downtown – she worked under the White House – she’d come home by public bus very late in the evening, and by then I’d already cooked my can of Spaghetti-O’s. So I kinda lived with records, and with books. As I do now.

*Relating to people through your works seems like a somewhat removed social existence.*

Absolutely. It’s a one-way conversation. The performance is – there’s not a great deal of interaction. With the band you go out there and kinda bang people over the head with your music. It’s not like they get to come up on stage and play it with you. With the talking shows, you’re laying this thing on them. It’s not like you say one paragraph and then heave the mic over to the guy in the third row and go, “Ok, your turn, pick up the story!” So it’s not interactive. You interact with a handful of people on the tour bus after the show. You know, I answer all the mail. You write me with a direct question, I’ll answer. I’m not untouchable. You can get to me. I’ve always done that.

It’s a very – not exactly a controlled environment, but it’s not like real life. Say there’s a guy who likes women. He’s got to figure out how to go to the right watering hole, or do whatever, and go up and say, “Hi, I’m Kenneth, what’s your name?” Since I was twenty years old, rarely have I met a woman who didn’t know who I was first.

And that’s not because I’m so famous. I’m not. It’s because I meet women at the workplace, like a lot of people meet each other. I meet people who go, “Oh, you’re Henry Rollins,” and the conversation from there is you. So you really wonder at this point, you know, how many girls you’ve ever been out with, was that relationship ever just boy-meets-girl, or was it girl-meets-guy that she knew from some stupid magazine?

So there’s a lot of artifice in all this. That makes it fairly interesting to keep it real and to keep yourself real when what’s around you is a great deal of artifice. It’s easy to get lost in it; it’d be very easy for your ego to consume you. You know, “You’re great, your books really helped me!” – well that’s a nice thing to hear. I’m glad that something I did, did that for this fellow. I hear it a lot. But it doesn’t affect the way I write, and it doesn’t make me feel like I’m better than anybody. There’s a lot of people I’d like to think for their work being there for me. Everything from a Dinosaur Jr. record to David Bowie to Francis Bacon. There’s a lot of people to thank; you get a lot of inspiration from a lot of people all the time.

*Despite the one-way conversation and the artifice, you still put yourself out there pretty honestly.*

## I think at the end of the day, I don’t have any great truths to reveal that would shock or amaze. I’m a fairly PG, PG-13 person.

There’re no dead bodies in my back yard, I don’t have boy-porn on my laptop. I’m not a creepy person. I’m at least a weirdo – thank goodness, may that never change – but not dangerous around your kids. Not someone you have to lock your doors around; I don’t want what’s not mine, nor am I some weirdo, sicko type.

So why would I hold back any truth? There’s nothing that I have to keep buried, secreted away in a closet. So with that I can go boldly forward with an opinion. Any political opinion I have – how much different is it from some guy on a website? I’m pretty cut-and-dry, easy to understand from all those points.

I’m not very radical – I don’t want anybody assassinated! I just want Cheney and Bush out of office so we can stop sending good American boys to get killed in the killbox called Iraq.

But that’s me and millions of people. And if you look at the President’s approval ratings – or his level of customer dissatisfaction at this point – it’s so wonderful to finally be in the majority. It feels good. It’s new to me; I’ve never been in a majority in my life.

But it’s hard to enjoy that seeing why people are dissatisfied. They’re bummed out because good American boys and girls are coming back in bags and boxes.

*Even if you’re not in someplace as exotic as Kabul or Baghdad, as someone who spends most of his time touring across America, you must have a different perspective on the country.*

America’s a fascinating place too. It’s an amazing place. Fascinating culturally; it’s so diverse and changing from mile to mile. If you get bored here, you’re blowing it – you just haven’t been outside!

You know, I’ve been criss-crossing America for 25 years now. I really love this place, because I know it very well. I’ve met more Americans than George W. Bush, that’s for sure, and I’ve seen more of America. A lot of truck drivers, you know, they can tell you a thing or two about America. And I really enjoy that – I’ve earned that, I’ve earned those miles.

*When you look back on those 25 years, what are you most proud of?*

After 25 years, I’m still doing it, and still *into* doing it. That’s what makes me the proudest. Pride isn’t something I spend a great deal of time involved with. It’s confusing, because it makes you jump out of your seat when you should sit down and shut up, most of the time. It’s like people pull guns out of their pants pockets because somebody said something bad about their hometown.

I wouldn’t want to have more pride than gratitude. It’s only other people who give you the 25 years. You don’t earn it as much as it’s given to you. Without an audience, a guy like me doesn’t have a job. If there’s no one saying, “Yaaa!” I’m that tree that falls in the forest. That’s why I say thank you, and they say thank you back, but I need them more than they need me. They can go to

the show, they can not go to the show – if they don’t go to the show, that’s a big problem for me.

It’s a weird gig, living on other people’s approval, yet not doing anything to gain their approval besides being yourself. It’s a very strange line to walk. You can be very successful by trying to estimate what is appealing – that’s Mariah Carey’s world, that’s Britney Spears – that doesn’t interest me. I’m not putting it down; there’s some talent in that world as well, but it’s not honest enough for me. It’s not really letting the chips fall where they may.

Mick Jagger has to go sing “Satisfaction” every single night, otherwise everyone says “Boo” and they don’t buy a t-shirt. If I wrote “Satisfaction,” I probably would go out and sing it every single night, but I wouldn’t want to be in that position. That sounds like being a kept woman: “They love you, but you’ve got to do this, this, and this, or then they turn their steely knives upon you and you’re slaughtered at the watering-hole at sundown.” Ozzy’s gotta do “Paranoid” every night or they go, “What the fuck were you doing?”

I’d rather be like Miles Davis, where they said, “How come you didn’t play ‘My Funny Valentine’?” and he went, “Hey man, fuck you.” *(laughs)* All my heroes let the chips fall where they may. ☺

*Read more at DeekMagazine.com and 21361.com. Please.*



Rollins is continuing his spoken word tour following the February 2005 release of the *Shock & Awe* DVD



The Fraud Incident



# Fireside with GWAR's Oderus Urungus

I guess you could say that Gwar – a satirical thrash metal band formed in 1985 by a group of artists, musicians, and dancers at Virginia Commonwealth University – were, at one point, leaders in shock rock... But I don't even know if shock rock ever existed, so we'll leave that one alone (based on this interview, I trust you'll be able to determine for yourself what's shocking and what's not). The band is best known for their elaborate sci-fi/horror film inspired costumes, graphic stage performances (combining scatology, sadomasochism, rape, and violence with mock executions), fire dancing, fake pagan rituals, and other raunchy themes. With lyrics ranging from offensively political ("Back to Iraq and my life is a wreck / I wanna kill the President but I'll settle for a check") to silly ("Yes this Arctic wasteland was once a paradise / But soon we sickened of it because it was too nice), Gwar is anything but predictable. Deek got a chance to sit down with Gwar's lead singer, Oderus Urungus (real name: Dave Brockie), at Mr. Smalls' Theatre last month.

Deek: Do you mind if I record you?

Oderus: Yeah dude, you better – how else are you going to tell what I said?

Deek: True.

Oderus: [growls, falls into some sort of accent – like John Cleese's French guard in "Monty Python's Holy Grail" combined with... equally hazy Russian and Italian accents, sort of] You can use shorthand; some try this. It is very stupid.

Deek: Okay. Well, I guess we start this with: Who are you today?

Oderus: I am Oderus Urungus, the lead singer of Gwar. Very nice.

Deek: Who is your inspiration, Oderus?

Oderus: My inspiration is, uh... Hitler... the Nazi pope, Godzilla, uh... pesticide... PCP, alcohol, grotesque sexual acts, the Hindenburg balloon, uh... grass growing out of... mole. That is it.

Deek: Your stage performances are so elaborate – really very moving. How do you unwind after a show?

Oderus: Go to place where many Jews are... come with gun. Shoot them.

Deek: Do you mind if we take some pictures?

Oderus: No pictures.

Deek: Are you sure?

Oderus: No. [breaks out of character, loses the accent] Not with me like this, man.

See, I'm pretending I'm from outer space, so you can't really take a picture of me working on my art project.

But later when we're all dressed up in our gay festoon finery I'll be more than happy to pose with my butt hanging out. I made a pact with myself not to do any out-of-character interviews because I am

boring. [accent on] But if also though, you want to take picture when I'm not looking... you can do.

Deek: Alright well... reflect for us on twenty years of murder and mayhem.

Oderus: I have been alive 400 billion years, so on Earth... twenty years is less than a molecule of shit to me. You humans seem to make a big deal about it. I think it is very stupid. Twenty years is still far too long to spend on this miserable, insufferable planet and I can't wait to escape once and for all. As far as the abject slavery and torment that we've heaped upon you people, I'd say your human race has been far too accepting of it.

Deek: You've killed so many people. What was your favorite – your most stimulating – kill?

Oderus: When I kill, I like to kill with my... pen-iss. I like to blow and drill own hole in body. Insert pen-iss – explode; make a sexy liquid animal explosion inside of mother.

Deek: Do you remember your first kill?

Oderus: I killed as I was born. I was lowered onto a penis in front of 8,000 screaming midgets. I farted. Loud. And toxic filth spewed forth from my asshole. Um... killing whole studio audience. In my country, my wife, she spread lard on her nipples to make the, uh... butter camel slough trough, and make the stubble less... uh [growls] bulbous to drain. Drain the scrotal... uh, what is word...?

Deek: Scrotal's fine...

Oderus: Yes. This is what my country... [a young, pale, thin blonde with tattoos and lots of black eye shadow walks into the room and sits down on a couch next to two other girls listening to the interview; Oderus looks at her... let's say he looks at her *hungrily*, not finishing his sentence]

Deek: You're from Antarctica, right?

Oderus: [looking back at Deek] Not lately. Yes. But in my country we milk penguins for their juice. And then we sell it to Chinese people. *Make them strong!* So they can destroy the west. [Two of the girls get up and start walking out the door] Where are all the sexy women going? [to Deek] Look, you've driven all the sexy women away! [the girls stop at the door, look back at Oderus; they say they're going to get a sandwich; he pauses, nods in their direction] You pick me up two nipple chip lard butter with beaver trough slowing speckle juice. Get 2! [to Deek] Do you have more questions?

Deek: [laughing] Someone told me to ask you about Marilyn Manson – whether or not you think he's a fraud. Do you?

Oderus: Eeh, I think Marilyn Manson is very sexy with a face like a horse. Uh, rich? Yes.

Random roadie, walking through the dressing room: Ask him about Denny's.

Deek: Uh, Denny's?

Oderus: [growls, breaks out of character] I like the breakfast with one egg in the center of the plate with nine sausages pointing at it. They call it the gangbang. Love that one. [the blonde girl gets up, starts walking out. Oderus goes back into character] Where you go sexy woman? Can you stay with Oderus for a little while? Drink a beer with him...?

Blonde girl: I will. I'll be back later.

Oderus: You later come back with me to rub lard on camel nipples?

Blonde girl: *My* camel nipples?

Oderus: [to Deek] That's my wife. She makes excellent sexy jam mold mouth.

Deek: [laughing] Well that's interesting. Bringing your wife into the picture, let's...

Oderus: She's dead. Wild pig eat her.

Blonde girl: [imitating his accent as well as she can] Yes, I am dead.

Deek: She's really doing well for a corpse.

Oderus: I reanimate her body.

Deek: Is she able to procreate?

Blonde girl: Ask me, not him!

Oderus: I like to make her very drunk [he grabs a bottle of beer, opens it with a pen cap, hands it to the girl] Yes, we make many babies to feed to our friends at baby cannibal gyro loft.

Deek: Do you keep any of them around?

Oderus: No, they sell like hotcakes. If you eat baby, it make life very good. [Blonde Girl turns around and starts walking out the door again] Goodbye, my dear. [she faces him] You are already getting a little drunk, I see. I like it! [she smiles, turns and walks out the door] Come back – you don't need your friends any more! [pauses and reflects] While you're out, pick up the lard butter for the camel nipple! [to Deek] Yes? More?

Deek: Politics.

Oderus: I hate them. I hate politics. Politics, uh... politicians should be crucified, all of them. They are stupid, along with the lawyers and the priests and the celebrities. Especially the celebrities. They have award shows where in one bag back stage they get more things that cost money than most people get in whole life. They get award and wear fancy clothing. I think maybe they should have award show for man who kills them. With gun. When they come and walk down red carpet. Boom! [makes machine gun noises] and explode! Like movie "Team America." Good movie. But not so much about the Jews in it...

Deek: What's with the Jew references? Why is that—

Nothing. I love them. I am Jewish.

Deek: Then why do you kill them?

Oderus: Because there is no man who knows more about the evil of the Jew than me... who is Jew! With horns and teeth that suck baby blood and take all the money. And never give it back. Big [pauses] boobs, too.

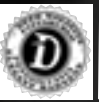
Deek: What kind of women are you into?

Oderus: [breaks out of character] Sluts. Backstage, basically. Girls who just kinda show up and hang around all day that don't really have any purpose. We'll get 'em drunk and sorta lead them somewhere – anywhere: a mop closet, a bathroom... Today, we're lucky because there are all these rooms upstairs, so

Music



Rumors circulated that GWAR's most recent album, *Live From Mt. Fuji* was actually recorded closer to Troy Hill in Mr. Small's studio. Deek attempted to confirm this but found that the informant had been killed.







were gonna try to get ‘em up there later. Basically the criteria for having sex with a woman – the one thing we insist on – is that she has to be a woman. And, personally, I think it’s better to have sex with a woman who really *wants* to have sex with you. That’s the one thing. As long as they want to have sex with me, I’ll have sex with them. I mean, and that way I’ll prop up my incredibly feeble masculinity by having totally anonymous and disease-filled sex with people I don’t even know.

Deek: Well I guess that probably makes it worth while.

Oderus: Eh, I don’t even really notice any more.

Deek: And the disease is part of—

Oderus: [breaking back into character] The wife likes the disease. No. Is wonderful [breaks out of character]

When you’ve been doing this for 20 years, it’s good to know that sex is still pleasurable. [laughs]

Deek: Throw out a number. How many women do you think you—

Oderus: [accent on] Impregnate. I urinate semen all over the crowd. Anyone who even looks at my penis becomes pregnant. If you think about it, you get AIDS. Uh... every night... Some people have orgasms, I have organisms.

Deek: [laughing] Jesus. I guess I had some honest, serious questions for you, but...

Oderus: [accent off] Yeah, we can do a couple of those.

Deek: Okay. We were speaking with someone recently who does media pranks. And one of the main points that came out during that discussion was that, unless there’s some sort of message – an idea, a statement, some sort of positive expression – sheathed in the prank, then the prank becomes nothing more than filler: Like “Punk’d” or reality television or... hitting yourself in the head with a small hammer. You guys... I mean, you’re 4 billion years old, you kill everybody, camel nipple, satire, all that. But what’s the—

Oderus: [accent on] We try to inspire many women to rub camel dung in their vagina – to make art out of a beaver. With pheromones rubbed around their stomach area. [accent off] I don’t know. I mean... GWAR has always really defined what it wanted to do, and it didn’t really matter what

was happening around us. We have an incredibly myopic vision of the world and we don’t know what’s going on out there. [looks around him] This is pretty much all I’ve seen all day, so I... I decided

to stop watching the news about five years ago and, uh... that’s why I think Iraq is on the moon. I just don’t believe anything that anyone says to me any more and I don’t believe anything I read or hear or see. The only thing I believe is what I dream. So I’m basing all my decisions off of my pornographic, sexually violent dreams. [accent on] If you want a straight answer, I do not know how to give so well. [Balsac the Jaws of Death – a GWAR guitarist – walks into the room] Ahh, this is Balsac coming in from the fields. He’s been plowing all day.

Balsac: [sits down on the couch] I don’t plow.

Oderus: [to Balsac] How’s your wife?

Balsac: She’s okay.

Oderus: Did she give you the mouth sex all day?

Balsac: [dejected] No.

Oderus: Did she give you get the sexy animal liquid explosion?

Balsac: No.

Oderus: [rolls his eyes, looks back to Deek. Accent off] Anyway. Yes.

Deek: What about Springer? You were on Springer. How was that?

Oderus: [accent off] He was really great, personable, he hung out with us all day and asked all these questions about the costumes and talked to us about coke and... we harassed his staff for beer money, somebody knocked his glasses off, we threw quarters at the crowd, but yeah... he was great – far better than Joan Rivers who we did a couple years back, who has got to be some kind of... [accent on] biological construction; they keep her on ice between taping. We met Engelbert Humperdinck that day... fought his security detail...

Deek: I’m surprised you didn’t kill him.

Oderus: He ran.

Deek: [laughs] Boo.

Oderus: Next question.

Deek: Well, what do you think about organic living?

Oderus: What is it?

Deek: I don’t really know. Has something to do with only purchasing eggs lain by chickens who roam free in the sun.

Oderus: Is this living making your clothing out of roots?

Deek: Kind of.

Oderus: Not like... so much. I am, uh... more into... not that.

Balsac: It’s an excuse to charge more for inferior products. We had organic wine that tasted like crap.

Oderus: As far as being organic, I guess it depends on what organ we’re talking about. And how gigantic it is.

I think the hippy people should be put in camps

and... much like the Jews were... killed... make them to wear grass on their genitals... and put them to work making... toadstools with butter.

Deek: What kinda jobs did you guys have before this?

Oderus: I was a public school teacher. ☹

*It has been argued that “GWAR” is an acronym meaning “God What an Awful Racket,” but it’s unclear. Another rumor states that the name may have come from an early club gig, when a fan yelled “You should call your band...” and then vomited before he could finish his sentence. Find out more about Gwar at [www.gwar.net](http://www.gwar.net).*

Music Reviews



Sadface And the Teardrops Feel Like Rain

Sounds like: *High school poetry written by Rimbaud, early Sonic Youth, and sometimes Tom Waits singing with the Eagles of Death Metal.*

Music’s good for: *Asking yourself: just what is irony, really?*

This could be the album that puts Sadface on the radar of every Elvis Costello-loving hipster in America. For years, Sadface have pioneered a genre they call “iremo” – ironic emo that, they believe, crosses back into the realm of true sincerity, short-circuiting the modern impulse to turn everything into artifice. By *admitting* the artifice, the sentimentality, even the sheer maudliness of their music, Sadface claim to do what the Sex Pistols did for punk rock: Show that talent and musicianship have nothing to do with communicating true emotion. Whereas the Sex Pistols did it with anger and really, really poor instrumentation, Sadface does it with melancholy and really, really downer lyrics.

Whether it works is a matter of personal preference. Song titles like, “My Heart is On Loan from the Bank at the End of the World,” and, “If You Really Like Me You’ll Check This Box and Leave the Note in My Locker (It’s Just Easier That Way)” make it sound as though Sadface is aiming for the Dr. Demento, novelty-song audience. And the lyrics – “Hey/Do you remember that time/we hugged really genuinely/on your front porch/before you stopped calling me/that meant something special to me” delivered in an Elliott Smith warble as a flute trills quietly in the background – they certainly question the divide between insincerity and poorly-expressed sincerity. Should we place more emphasis on the clunky way in which Sadface expresses its emotions, or on the intuitive, powerful reaction we, as audience members and fellow human beings just trying to make our way in this crazy world, have to those emotions? It’s a question America has been waiting to be asked.

– Leonard Brezhnev



Landing Strip S/T

Sounds like: *Simple, Modey Lemon, Larry and the Beef Ramen Noodles for Breakfast*

Music’s good for: *Getting really irritated when you see that there’s a lecture going on at some huge university called “Wondering What You’ll Do In ‘The Real World???’” – quotations and triple question marks included – hosted by some corporate pawn who just happens to be in Pittsburgh. Then, after the initial irritation wears off, thinking to yourself, in earnest, “Is ‘The Real World’ representative of an Earthly existence free of pretense, falsehood, or affectation? Or are we talking about a reality television show?”*

Pittsburgh’s Landing Strip believes in the old motto of “less is more” with Jake Leger on guitar/vocals and Keriann Hansen on drums.

If The White Stripes become obsessed with Everquest and internet porn it is quite possible their next record may sound like this. Selected lyric on “The Wizard”: “Horny young wizard/seek a princess/ you must be able to/fill up his magic cuuuupppppppp.”

This release may have come off better as an EP, with too many of the tracks feeling skeletal, but last I checked it was selling for a fiver... which means go check it out.

– Peter Divito



The Organ Let The Bells Ring 7”/ Memorize The City Single

Sounds like: *Third Sex, Stars, Two Ton Boa*

Music’s good for: *Having someone tattoo a picture of your dog – a graceful Afghan Hound – predictably yelping and distressed, getting raped by an orangutan. And then, for extra fun, having an arrow tattooed pointing to the dog that says “hipster.”*

By now you’ve probably heard of Arcade Fire, but most likely Vancouver’s The Organ has flown under your radar. The Organ follows up last year’s brilliant debut, *Grab That Gun*, with two magnificent singles: “Let the Bells Ring” and “Memorize the City”. These two songs could be considered the best material The Smiths never wrote. Hand a copy of “Let the Bells Ring” to that crappy 80’s night DJ who plays the same mix week in and week out and ask them to play this rare gem for you – no one will be the wiser. When the song is done, slap the DJ as hard as you can and scream, “Fresh for 2005, suckas!”

Those who don’t like violence and deception could just wait for indie night and throw on Dustin Hawthorne’s (Hot Hot Heat) “Memorize The City” remix, which turns a murky, bleak number into a certified club banger.

– P.D.



continued...





Deerhoof  
*The Runners Four*

**Sounds like:** Erase Errata, Xiu Xiu, The Aislars Set, The Clean

**Music's good for:** Getting extremely preachy. Then funky!

Deerhoof's last record, *Milk Man*, did not rock. It was cute in a bizarre way, but it didn't deserve the praise heaped upon it. *The Runners Four*, however, is fucking amazing. If you were to compare Deerhoof to a film it might just be *Spirited Away* – something else you should check out, which throws ideas we understand into a world beyond us; events that feel totally out of place while we're awake, but extremely normal when we dream.

Satomi's vocals are top notch, the guitar parts are near flawless and, while previous Deerhoof efforts sounded a bit clouded and disorganized, *The Runners Four* finds their perfect balance.

– P.D.



Hella  
*Homeboy EP/Concentration Face DVD Kill Rock Stars*

**Sounds like:** Lighting Bolt, Boredoms, Black Dice

**Music's good for:** Broken-glass breakdancing

Finally achieving massive status as the opening act for The Mars Volta and System of a Down, Hella has become a two-headed monster of mythical spazz-rock proportions. For those who are way too dense and unappreciative of good music – can you feel my sarcasm? *Can you?* – Hella is a duo featuring drummer Zach Hill and guitarist Spencer Seim. Generating chaotic noise/math/post-yourmom explosions, Hella are perhaps the arrival of a supernatural, netherworld entity, here to blow your brain out of your skull.

The 4 nitroglycerine blasts on *Homeboy* showcase the whirling insanity of these two crazy bastards. Gone are some of the more blippy guitar elements of previous Hella offerings and, instead, now you've got an onslaught of sound from start to finish, with Hill's ability to create a percussive whirlwind that never, ever stops, and more of an emphasis on electronics.

The second part of this release is a live DVD. Comprised mostly of clips from their recent Japanese tour, it'll certainly open the eyes of anyone who hasn't yet seen Hella live.

– Z.B.



Logh  
*A Sunset Panorama*

**Sounds like:** Codeine, Tarental, Seam

**Music's good for:** A drink and a smoke and a nap.

Like Sigur Ros and Mogwai, Sweden's Logh craft delicate and long-winded post-rock, relying on subtlety and minimalism to create vast, swelling songs. The only problem is they don't do it quite as well as the aforementioned bands. On *A Sunset Panorama*, Logh has fallen in to bland pop drudgery. Their previous full lengths had given the band a well-received audience, but there doesn't seem to be many endearing qualities to pull any new listeners in on their latest release. Those who already consider themselves fans may not be disappointed with the ethereal sounds on this album, which range from dream pop to simplistic drone. Fans of Archer Prewitt, Flying Saucer Attack, Movietone, or any of the 90s post-rock movement may find something interesting in Logh, but nothing to make you put away your Slint records.

So yeah. Not to completely downplay this band's Hydra Head debut (because it is a well-crafted album)... it's just been done before, just as well – maybe even better.

– Zach Braden



Chris Leo/Vague Angels  
performing the album  
*Truth Loved* by The Breaks,  
from Chris Leo's novel  
*White Pigeons*

**Sounds like:** Ted Leo & the Pharmacists, Native Nod, The Pixies

**Music's good for:** Expanding upon your hipster resume.

The Leo family has become pretty freaking prominent in the indie world these days. After the huge success of brother Ted and his band The Pharmacists, Chris Leo has taken a slightly different approach to crafting quirky, catchy indie pop: a veteran of influential bands The Van Pelt and The Lapse, Leo's latest project is actually a multimedia novel entitled *White Pigeons*. This album encompasses chapter 7 of the book, in which Leo, along with a revolving cast of musicians (including brother Danny on drums for several tracks) take on the role of the fictitious band The Breaks. The music itself actually sounds like is not a far cry from any of Leo's other musical endeavors, but it's slightly more mellow, and maybe more mature. Much is written in the same vein as brother Ted's rollicking, blissful pop tunes; Chris has the same type of blend, but tends to perform with a slightly rougher edge – think vintage Stooges, combined with more avant elements like Blonde Redhead and Sonic Youth. Leo still employs his half-sung, half-spoken vocal approach, perhaps finding a perfect fit with the whole novel thing going on. From simply listening to the album, I have no idea what the book is about. But then again, to just listen to the album, I don't need to. It certainly has its own legs as a musical endeavor from an indie-rock veteran.


– Z.B.

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# Orson Welles, The Unrepentant Charlatan

By O.W. Jeeves

In 1941, at the age of 25, Orson Welles co-wrote and directed his first movie, *Citizen Kane*. Welles, who'd already made a mark on radio and the stage, was wooed by RKO Pictures into coming to Hollywood, where he had unprecedented creative control, including final cut on *Kane*. The film, which many consider to be one of the best and most influential in cinema history, received nine Academy Award nominations; Welles, in his first starring role, was nominated for Best Actor.

At the Academy Awards ceremony, it was booed during each of its nine nominations. William Randolph Hearst, whose life the movie had been in part based on, banished its mention from his editorial pages. Commercially, the film did poorly; Welles's three-picture, no-studio-interference contract quickly soured.

His next film, *The Magnificent Ambersons*, was hacked to pieces by RKO's studio heads and has never widely appeared in its original form; his third RKO movie, *It's All True*, had its funding abruptly pulled, and the studio ejected Welles from their headquarters. Word got around Hollywood that Welles was a tempestuous genius who'd never turn in a commercially successful movie.



Without major studio backing, the director bounced from project to project, hustling where he could, using acting jobs to pay for his own projects. He spent decades in the wilderness, practicing his art in solitude, or with a handful of close friends. He later reflected, "I started at the top and have been working my way down ever since."

This brings us to 1974 and *F for Fake*. The final movie Welles would both write and direct before his death in 1985, it was finally released on DVD this year, in a double-disc Criterion Collection set. The two films bookend his career in both chronology and theme: Where *Citizen Kane* is a pure expression of Welles the artist, *F For Fake* is a revealing portrait of the man behind the art. It's a love letter to magic from a man who spent a lifetime worshipping it.

continued...



Trenton Evening Times, front page, part 1, October 31st 1938



PITTSBURGH  
**Hip Hop**  
FILM FESTIVAL

REPRESENTING A SCENE NOT HEARD  
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**Letter to the President** (2005):  
Directed by Thomas Gibson; narrated by Snoop Dogg; featuring 50 Cent, Michael Eric Dyson, Mystic, Ghostface, Gary Webb, Notorious B.I.G., KRS-ONE. 90 minutes

**Hip Hop Colony** (2005):  
Directed by Michael Wanguhu; A documentary detailing the art form of Hip Hop in Kenya, East Africa. Best Urban Documentary Award at the Houston Black film Festival.

**Freestyle** (2005):  
Directed by Kevin Fitzgerald; explosively documenting the story of a group of underground hip-hop MCs & DJs from the early 1980's to the present day. 74 minutes.

**Bomb the System** (2005):  
Directed by Adam Bhala Lough; the first feature in over 20 years to delve into the world of graffiti art. Best Feature at the San Francisco Film Festival. 93 minutes.

**Scene Not Heard: Philadelphia Women in Hip Hop** (2005):  
Directed by Maori Holmes; One of the most unique aspects to the Philadelphia hip hop scene is the proliferation of women that it has produced as emcees, vocalists, poets and deejays. 30 minutes.

**Inventos** (2005):  
Directed by Eli Jacobs-Fantauzzi; Cuban Hip Hop provides a unique insight into the realities and politics of contemporary Cuba. Best Student Film at Pan African Film Festival. 50 minutes.

**Enough is Enough, the Death of Jonny Gammage** (2005):  
Directed by Billy Jackson; recognizes the humanity of Jonny Gammage the person, as it examines Jonny Gammage the incident, the icon, the name that has become inextricably linked with the struggle to end police brutality. 60 minutes.

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The film began as a project by François Reichenbach: A straight-forward documentary about infamous art forger Elmyr De Hory. De Hory, a mysterious Hungarian who lived on the island of Ibiza, had become known as “the man who holds the art world to ransom” after authorities traced a large number of impressive forgeries back to his brush. The elderly fraud carried himself like a landed baron, throwing great parties for Ibiza’s jet-set while French and European police worked to put him in jail.

Among those party-goers was Clifford Irving, who’d written Elmyr’s biography, titled, appropriately, *Fake! The Story of Elmyr de Hory, the Greatest Art Forger of Our Time*. With a title that bombastic, it’s hard *not* to assume the contents were an equal mix of fact and fantasy; Elmyr was a notorious self-promoter, and as his fame grew, so did his legend. Irving, perhaps enamored with that degree of self-reinvention, later hatched his own plan: He would rise from the ranks of b-list writers to become the “authorized autobiographer” of reclusive billionaire Howard Hughes.

He wouldn’t do this by actually meeting Hughes, of course. Instead, he’d fake everything – interviews, legal documents, personal correspondence supposedly from Hughes. The billionaire, Irving reasoned, was so publicity-shy that he’d never come forward to denounce the fraud. He sold his publisher, McGraw-Hill, on the idea, and soon they had a draft and were selling excerpts to news magazines.

It didn’t last long, though. Soon Hughes responded, via telephone, saying he’d never heard of Irving and certainly hadn’t hired him to pen an autobiography. The voice on the telephone convinced the media and the authorities; Irving soon found himself in jail for fraud.

When Welles saw Reichenbach’s footage of all this, he couldn’t resist. He took to the editing room and created an entirely new movie, a “film essay” on the power of art, magic, and the need for lies that finally tell

the truth. Elmyr, Irving, the art world and its experts – it all became a backdrop for Welles’s thoughts on the fine line between fraud and magic. In the hands of a lesser talent it would’ve fallen apart, but the great director’s touch is on every frame of the film.

Even more interestingly, Welles makes no bones about showing you *exactly* what he’s doing. In several scenes he breaks through Reichenbach’s footage to show himself sitting at the editing dock pondering his next move. He doubles-back, digresses, drops in blunt foreshadowing and camera tricks, but never does the movie lose its playfulness, its need for mischief; it’s a remarkably self-aware film for its time, but Welles was ahead of the curve. He put every bit of his boundless enthusiasm into the frame.

At the same time, in playing with the divide between stories and reality, fakes and facts, he emphasizes the power of great art to transcend those divisions. One of his characters asks, “If there weren’t any experts, would there be any fakers?” but he knows the real joy lies in their interaction, the constant struggle to define humanity, even though finally, that too will end. It’s the activity that Welles admires, the creative raging against the ever-dying light. In his deep, famous voice, he intones, “Our works in stone, in paint, in print, are spared, some of them, for a few decades or a millennium or two, but everything must finally fall in war, or wear away into the ultimate and universal ash – the triumphs, the frauds, the treasures and the fakes.” Time makes ash of us all, but it’s good that we are here.

One has that same bittersweet sense of hope in watching *Orson Welles: One Man Band*, one of Criterion’s extras. It recollects Welles’s career as a cinematic maverick and innovator, but it also implies the great what if: What if he’d actually been able to do it his way, all the way? Viewed from the outside, his career looks like a series of heartbreaks, plans left unfulfilled, promises revoked. Virtually none of his movies were free of studio interference, yet he kept going, doing what he needed to while admitting, “In other words, I’m crazy,” he said. “But not crazy enough to pretend to be free.”

Freedom’s a relative thing; this is not a world of absolutes. If Orson Welles was never free *enough*, we can’t blame him or this best of all possible worlds. But in his unparalleled creativity, his drive and his refusal to be compromised, he was freer than most. Most importantly, he was free to *see* in a way that most of us don’t. As he put it, “There are never many, never enough of them, but there are men born into the world with a gaze fixed on the widest possible horizon. Men who can see without strain beyond the most distant horizon, into that unconquered country we call the future.” ☺



*F is for Fake* is finally available on DVD, via Criterion no less



Left: Welles’ 1938 broadcast of War of the Worlds brought terror to American home like nothing before. Right: Trenton Evening Times, front page, part 2, October 31st 1938



# Movie Reviews



*The Yes Men*  
Starring Mike Bonanno and Andy Bichlbaum.  
Columbia Tri-Star Home Video, \$19.95  
www.theyesmen.org

*The Yes Men* opens on two men in a bathroom. One is undressing; the other kneels in front of him complaining about time zones. “It’s an hour’s difference. The time zone is different here. This is unbelievable – how the fuck can that happen?” As it says this, he helps the other man into a gold lame bodysuit. That’s your introduction to Mike Bonanno and Andy Bichlbaum, a pair of anti-corporate activists who found themselves in possession of the GWBush.com domain name just as then-Governor Bush began his race to the White House. Bonanno and Bichlbaum, along with the help of programmer Zack Exeley, took the opportunity to create a site that, on the surface, appeared to be the official headquarters for all things Bush-related. Only on closer inspection would visitors notice the site’s upfront references to past drug use by the candidate, his deplorable environmental record in Texas, and indebtedness to various lobbying groups. In short, the site highlighted GWB’s true credentials. It also provoked Governor Bush to comment, “There ought to be limits to freedom.” After their skewering of Bush provoked an impressive media response, the two realized they were on to something. They pulled a similar prank on the World Trade Organization, registering GATT.org – the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade being the collection of international agreements that set the foundation of the WTO. Soon enough, the two, now calling themselves The Yes Men, were receiving invitations to speak at

trade and economics functions around the globe. *The Yes Men* follows their project, the goal of which is to “create public spectacles that in some poetic way reveal something about our culture that is a problem,” according to Bonanno. They talk to corporate executives about destroying local customs to improve productivity and the need to “streamline the grotesquely inefficient system of elections” through vote-auction.com, which promises to deliver more votes for your corporate dollar. In one lengthy presentation to a group of textile manufacturers in Finland, they describe American slavery as providing jobs for “hundreds of thousands of workers previously unemployed in their countries of origin,” before explaining the WTO’s view of the future:

“I myself am an abolitionist, but in fact there is no doubt that left to their own devices markets would have eventually replaced slavery with cleaner sources of labor.”

It’s cheaper, they explain, to leave the slaves at home, in undeveloped third-world countries. “Had the leaders of the 1860’s United States understood what our leaders understand today, the Civil War would never have happened.” At this point, the gold lame body suit – the WTO Management Leisure Suit – appears. Sadly, no one in the room even blinks. Only later, at an economics class in Plattsburgh, NY, do The Yes Men get the response they expect. After explaining to the students that a partnership with McDonald’s can provide Third World countries with recycled burgers (literally made of shit), the two are pelted with inflatable globes and booed off the stage. It’s exactly the response they want for telling the truth.Ⓜ

END OF MOVIES SECTION

# Stand up and fight for your non-beliefs

An Interview with R.U. Sirius  
By Jesse Hicks

R.U. Sirius is probably best known as the co-founder and original editor-in-chief of *Mondo 2000* magazine, the subversive cyber-culture magazine that predated *Wired* and featured writers such as William Gibson, Bruce Sterling, and Rudy Rucker. *Mondo 2000* pioneered a unique blend of computer culture, psychadelia, avant-garde art, and sex that put the term “cyberpunk” on the map. His latest book, *Counterculture Through the Ages*, a historical survey of counterculture themes in everything from early Judaism to the Enlightenment, was just released in paperback. In addition to hosting weekly podcasts on his mondoglobo.net website, this November R.U. will teach a course at the Maybe Logic Academy (www.maybelogic.net), called the Question Authority Project. He talked with Deek about the countercultural spirit, the future of cyber-culture, and finding passion in non-belief.

I read that one reaction you’d hoped for from the more hip, less mainstream section of your readership was passion “objection.” Have you gotten much of that response?

No, not as much and not as interesting as I would hope it would be. I think the environment for public discussion changed when the internet moved away from the bulletin board model – where lots of different people would post topics and create discussions – to the blog model, where an individual has his blog and people come in to read it, and possibly post responses, and to engage in conversation around that. That may be part of it. I was on The Well for a long time, which I got a little bit tired of, but there would be really detailed and intricate discussions on The Well. I did appear on The Well representing the book, and that was kind of interesting, but on the whole there’s been less passionate response than I’d hoped for.

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I think people's attention these days is so distracted and drawn to so many different possible areas that a lot of discourse tends to lack real depth.

Mostly what you get is people whining about the commodification of hip culture. That's the big bugaboo of people who identify with alternative culture: that the subcultural movement and expressions that they like get fed back to them in television advertisements and that sort of thing.

That's an interesting enough topic; Tom Frank has written interestingly about it. But it's also a pretty limited topic. I'm trying to show people links between a certain type of spirit that's existed between Sufism on the one hand, and the European enlightenment on the other hand, and the post-Christian transcendentalists on the other hand, and Zen Buddhism in Asia – you have all these quotes from all these people, really manifesting similar attitudes expressed around completely different paradigms and focuses. To me, that's pretty interesting. To always hear people complain about Iggy Pop songs being used in television commercials, and to always get hung up on that discussion – that's a little depressing, actually.

*The three ideas you define as the essence of counterculture – individualism, anti-authoritarianism, and the belief in the possibility of personal and social transformation – you see those as far back as far as Abraham, Socrates, and Taoism. Those movements cast a fairly great shadow down the ages. Today, obviously you see that animating spirit, but do you see something comparable that will cast a great shadow on the future?*

I'm sure there are a lot of things going on right now that will cast a great shadow. I think things are thickening up to such an extent – some people talk about the singularity, where the rate of change will reach a level beyond which it's almost impossible for

us to understand what being a human being is. I think the work that people are doing wiring together human beings through the nervous system of the Internet casts a long shadow. That emerged out of counterculture sensibilities.

That's woven into the technology – the idea of giving individuals power, of decentralizing the power of thought and the power of communication – that's really written into the technology. I think the biggest political shadow will be cast by the "open source" idea, which is kind of a non-coercive communism in some ways. It's post-communism, post-capitalism. It says, "We have an abundance of this stuff we call programming, or thought, or whatever it is that underlies all the things that we might create, and we're going to share it openly. People can use it to make a profit, or use it to make a commune, or use it anyway they want."

I think that's a place where we're headed as human beings. Hopefully as an economy, we're headed towards a gift economy. Open source really models what a post-scarcity economy should be. Technologies like nanotechnology hold forth the promise of actually *eliminating* scarcity, so when you put those two together, you have a potential model for the future. Why can't money be open source? Money is a program. That'd be an interesting leap for someone to take.

Other things that are going to cast a big shadow on the future are the experiments with maximum lifespan and the potentials for performance enhancement in the human mind, including the psychedelic levels of consciousness, the potentials for pleasure, insight, and compassion. I think the self-enhancement movement – which in many ways comes out of the counterculture spirit – is another arrow pointing towards the future.

*Can you tell me a little about your Maybe Logic course, the Question Authority Project?*

Basically it's, "Stand up and fight for your non-beliefs." The Maybe Logic Academy is based around Robert Anton Wilson's idea of "model agnosticism" – the idea of not buying completely into any model of reality, any particular paradigm, but maintaining an experimental attitude towards it. I think the Question Authority Project is an attempt to model that idea as a form of activism, as a counteraction to the tendency towards theocracy, theocratic beliefs, and other very rigid forms of politics that are becoming attractive to a lot of people living in a very complex and confusing time.

The idea came out of a course I was teaching called, Counterculture Through the Ages, about the book. In the process of the course, we thought rather than just talking about counterculture, maybe we should be doing something. We batted around some ideas for pranks and for creating fake counterculture characters – modeled on Hakim Bey or something like that – putting them on the web and seeing what kind of perturbations that would create.

I had this idea in the back of my head for the Question Authority Project, as a political and social organization. I threw that out there and everyone, somewhat to my dismay, went for it. This course is an active course to see if people can work together to realize something like this. The basic idea is really just to create a website that brings together anti-authoritarian activists, to get into non-denominational blogging that would be interesting to anti-authoritarians or non-authoritarians. Something that wouldn't be just a

libertarian blog or an anarchist blog or a civil libertarian blog – not something designed to appeal that one particular slice of anti-authoritarian reality, but something that would have a broad appeal to people open to non-authoritarian positions.

The basic idea is to create a sort of clearinghouse, with links to non-authoritarian websites, and to people who would be willing to speak out and act out as non-authoritarians. Possibly to create a pressure group to get anti-authoritarians into a national dialogue, so when the lunatic talk show host Joe Scarborough is having a discussion of this or that, rather than always having left vs. right, sometimes it might be more appropriate to have the authoritarian and the non-authoritarian view.

So we're going to work on it, work with the class, and see if we can develop some manifestoes, see if we can build the website. We'll see what happens. I don't necessarily think the class will succeed in starting something, but we'll all learn something from the process.

*It seems like now is both a very important time for that kind of work and an extremely difficult time to do it, given that mainstream culture has so absorbed the "question authority" idea in the service of selling shoes. Do you think it's necessary to take back that idea, reinvigorate it, and give it a new life?*

In some ways it has been absorbed by the mainstream, but it certainly hasn't been absorbed to any great extent by the mainstream political discourse. To some extent there's been some reaction to some of the stuff that's happened since the Bush administration got people objecting to the PATRIOT Act and so on.

I think probably for the first time since Richard Nixon's war on crime in the 1960's, you have some mainstream politicians talking about civil liberties.

Up until the Bush administration, there was no help for a politician – it did them no good to talk about being in favor of civil liberties. The way for a politician to get ahead was to be tough on crime, which is precisely the opposite of that.

I think there's an awful lot of room for questioning authoritarian assumptions that are made by the mainstream of this society: That it's good to send teenagers who disobey their parents to boot camp-style places where rough, muscular, bull-necked man scream at them to teach them how to behave, for example. There are so many ways in which the notion that people should impose their will on other people is woven into our culture at the political level.

In fact I think that's what this project worthwhile. At the cultural level, the "question authority" attitude is a pretty mainstream point of view. At the political level, I don't think it is. In specific ways, like being against the President or against the war, being Michael Moore or Cindy Sheehan, that might qualify as a sort of anti-authoritarianism, but if you scratch Michael Moore, you'll probably find he has an authoritarian point of view himself.

So this question of coercion – how much coercion should be tolerated, if any, and under what circumstance, is certainly not part of the political discussion.

*We don't seem to have a place for that third, doubting voice, anywhere.*

It's like I say, "Stand up and fight for your non-beliefs." (*Laughs*) It's not that easy to be passionate about not buying it.

*You point out in the book that the focus on transcending easy dichotomies has almost always been a marker of the true countercultural movements.*

I think that's exactly the case. That's implicit in all the riddles and koans and teaching lessons that you find in Zen, Taoism, and Sufism. You even find it in Voltaire and other places. Socrates, the great doubter, the great questioner of everything – they want to put you in a place where there aren't answers. There are just questions or there's just raw experience. That's definitely a line that runs through the book.

That's a necessary aspect of what I would like in a countercultural movement. I think a lot of what has been labeled counterculture has not been that. A lot of it has been another form of true-believership: New Age forms of spiritual absolutism, political forms of absolutism, various expressions of a lack of tolerance and so forth. There's a strong tendency towards purism within countercultural movements, which brings us back to consumerism and seeing Iggy Pop ads on TV, rather than wanting to have a more expansive dialogue.

*In the book you come down fairly harshly on the 60's and 70's "revolutions" as anti-authority, rather than non-authority, and really full of itself, to the point of considering itself the revolution. Why do you think that particular strain of counterculturalism has become the counterculture in many people's minds?*

I think there's a majoritarian impulse toward concretizing a movement around a dogma, rather than

constantly changing and allowing a creative flow. Everyone wants to hang on to something, saying, "This is the new one, and I'm going to be a part of this movement or this reality," and then not wanting that to change.

It's a fairly elitist thing to say, but it's probably true, that the majority is not that creative. I think probably larger groups of people are becoming more creative, but over the course of history that hasn't been the case.

There's that and then there's real problems. In response to real problems, people will find it important to organize in a very hard, feet-on-the-ground sort of

way, and that will lead to a rigidity of the mind and spirit. It doesn't have to – one can organize against a war or against a President or against a war on civil liberties without becoming part of a new, "alternative" regime. But it's much more difficult.

True believers organize much better than non-believers.

*So can we expect a Question Authority Project candidate for 2008?*

No, nothing like that. I hope this will create a clearinghouse for non-authoritarian views and help to open up the national discourse. And I hope that I don't have to be the leader of it. Hopefully with this class we'll create something, a meme that will go out there and people will be drawn to it, like filings to a magnet. ☺



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# An Open Letter to Chuck Klosterman,

author of *Killing Yourself to Live:  
85 % of a True Story*

By Theo Rathchild



Klosterman on a  
balcony somewhere  
between emo and  
middle age

Dear Chuck,

I feel like we can be on a first name basis after spending almost 250 pages together (and an index, Chuck – an index!) as you weaved your way across this great country of ours in a rented car, alone with your 600 CDs, proving that that most American of Dreams, the Rock Star Death. (Using a GPS system on such a chimerical quest seems like a bit of a cheat, Chuck, but we can let it slide in the interest of Getting To The Story.)

You and I, Chuckeramus,  
(Sorry, Chuckster, I probably  
got a smidge over-familiar  
there, but 6,557 miles  
together in a car will do that)  
took on the big themes:  
love, death, art.

We visited the Hotel Chelsea in New York City, where Sex Pistols bassist Sid Vicious stabbed his girlfriend and fellow smackhead, Nancy Spungen. We (you) briefly meditated on what it all meant. (Not much.)

We visited the Station in West Warrick, Rhode Island, where on February 20, 2003, 100 people burned to death when pyrotechnics ignited by the over-the-hill rock band Great White malfunctioned. In the middle of talking to James, whose uncle had died in the fire, you inexplicably spend two pages defining yourself as a “marijuana person” rather than a “cocaine person.” Why do you do that? Could you please get out of the way so we can hear a story with some emotional force, instead of another pointless digression that brings us back to the real star of the story, you? Down in front, Chuck!

ANYWAY (I’ll go ahead and lift that annoyingly “conversational” writing tic), we could talk about your two-page exegesis on the difference between Foghat’s “Slow Ride” and Edgar Winter’s “Free Ride” as life philosophies or argument for the usefulness of Radiohead’s *Kid A* as the foreboding soundtrack to September 11th. We could talk about the number of pseudo-profundities that you pack into such a small space – “And Your Nemesis can’t be Your Nemesis unless he is also your friend”; “We’re all tourists, sort of. Life is tourism, sort of” – or your tendency to write in-jokes, remind the reader that they are in-jokes understood only by you and your ex-girlfriend, and then refuse to explain them. We could talk

about your patina of glibness that miraculously makes it *easier* to see how self-congratulatory is your “pathos” – someone who fantasizes about their own death for *three-and-a-half* pages only to shrug off the idea isn’t actually looking mortality in the face. (And why, Chuck, do you wait until page 230 to admit, “And it occurs to me that I am not about a serious person, and that I do not, and I have no understanding of death, and that I am looking for nothing.” Sorry to blow the ending, folks.)

We could go on about your visit to  
the site of Duane Allman’s motorcycle  
crash, or your conversation with a still-  
bereaved Kurt Cobain fan, but finally those  
things don’t matter very much to you.

Mortality and its effect on the living – ostensibly the theme of your book – can’t be explicated in any meaningful way by your favorite coping mechanism: an endless barrage of pop-culture references. You fail in understanding death, Chuck, because you are less concerned with finding a truth about mortality and human fragility than you are with amassing an array of trivia to keep that truth at bay.

You’re a death tourist, bouncing from one well-trod landmark to another. You snap your photos; write your pithy comments; never straying into *terra incognita*, that place where your mundane song lyrics might not reach. Pop-culture ephemera are your life preservers, the well-worn rosary you rub nervously when the world refuses to fit your preconceptions.

You don’t really have anything new to say about life and death. You admit that (albeit a little too late). You do, however, have a lot to say about yourself – yourself particularly in relation to a trio of ex-girlfriends you claim to love. Yet even there, in what one hopes would be your most honest and powerful emotional core, you can’t resist the comforting balm of the familiar.

One of the most depressing sentences in your book reads, “What is frightening to me is the realization that the only way I can intellectually organize the women I have loved is by thinking about the members of KISS.”

Frightening, yes. (You do, of course, spend another two pages explaining this emotionally retarded schema, and finally justifying it.) It’s more frightening, even, than your inability to come to *any* considerations about death’s weight on the living – after all, most people can go an entire lifetime avoiding the implications of their eventual end. You, though, compare the women who have touched your innermost essence to Gene Simmons, Paul Stanley, Ace Frehley, and Peter Dinklage, the hard-rock virtuosos who brought the world such eternal classics as, “Rock and Roll All Nite”



continued...





[sic] and “C’Mon And Love Me.” I could call that a shotgun-in-the-mouth-worthy sentiment and you could call me elitist, but that’d miss the point: After a lengthy and, again, cringe-inducing confessional about your past loves, you conclude, “I love KISS because the world makes sense when I think about them. Art and love are the same thing: It’s the process of seeing yourself in things that are not you.” Chuck, did you know that an entire world exists

that’s *not you*? Did you know that art and love don’t have to be exercises in ego-colonization, a relentless assimilation of everything wonderful and strange into the bland, unthreatening worldview that *makes sense* to the frightened personality of The Chuck Klosterman? (That’s why you can’t comprehend death, Chuck. It’s the end of that drive to assimilate, a point you can’t go beyond without letting go of your tender ego.)

You try to defend this view with fake-poignancy, saying, “It is no accident that I can see every woman I’ve cared about through KISS, the one rock band I have cared about more than any other. Sadly, this is my savant-like skill. It’s like the way a carpenter can look at a pile of wood and see a bookshelf, or the way Gutzon Borglum could look at the side of a South Dakota mountain and see Teddy Roosevelt’s face.”

Putting aside that a carpenter or sculptor actually puts something new *into* the world rather than weaving extended metaphors to make himself feel more comfortable in his own skin, you’re still not quite there. The comparison you’re looking for, Chuck, is in the old saying, “When all you have is a hammer, all you can see are nails.” When all you have is a self-absorbed ego, all you can see are extensions of it.

The people you love and have loved are not the members of a multi-platinum selling rock band. (Nor are the people I’ve loved characters in a Kubrickian satire; they actually exist outside us, and are entirely different, and probably better, human beings.) The feeling you get from KISS, the feeling of having everything exactly in its place, isn’t about *them*. It’s about *you*. It’s about making everything fit into *your* world, which is a very small place, existing as it does entirely inside your head.

Every life – and every death – is a conversation with the world, Chuck. At our best we bring something new to that conversation by fully engaging with the world around us. Partly, that means not reducing the people we love to pop-culture clichés, or embracing only the parts of them that makes us feel safe and comfortable. Love is difficult because it forces us out of our easy ruts, into a world totally different than our own. It forces us to confront and accept another, and finally to become someone new. That’s terribly difficult, Chuck, when the only way you can think is in the faded echoes of someone else’s emotions.

Yours,  
Theo Rathchild ☺

# Book Reviews

## Dear New Girl Or Whatever Your Name Is

By Lisa Wagner, et. Al.

McSweeney’s Publishing, \$20

Trinie Dalton spent three years as a substitute teacher in Los Angeles. During that time she confiscated hundreds of notes from her students, intercepting them as they made their way across her classrooms. She got a bit obsessed with the project, which offered a unique glimpse into the lives of students she’ll see for one day and never again.

In *Dear New Girl Or Whatever Your Name Is*, twenty-four artists used the most interesting of those notes as a starting point for enigmatic doodles, surrealist paintings, and evocative collages. The art, like the notes that inspired it, is simultaneously familiar and strange – we all remember penning pearls of wisdom like, “I think you are born gay,” but how many of us then had that sentiment illustrated by way of the portrait of a pregnant woman, a face (apparently a gay face) protruding from her stomach?

There’s definitely a dark undercurrent to the book, with its realistic look at adolescent *sturm und drang*. One illustration reads, “Allison, don’t worry, he still [hearts] you.” Saying this is a cobra creature in a gray shirt. Somehow that sums up the high school experience better than any sociological study. And while you might recognize yourself in some of the notes, it’s hard to identify with, “You can quiet the beast with drugs but he will dream of blood & bone (yours) & when the bell sounds, you are meat (run),” unless Charie Baudelaire went to your high school and was a bit of a bully.

## Indecision

By Benjamin Kunkel

Random House, \$21.95

Benjamin Kunkel’s debut novel is the story of twenty-eight year old Dwight B. Wilmerding, who finds himself adrift in New York City. Almost thirty, he still lives with several roommates, recently got fired from his job, and generally can’t commit to anything. Indecision is both his gift and his curse; unable to decide on anything, he drifts through life Buddha-like, unchanging as the world flows around him.

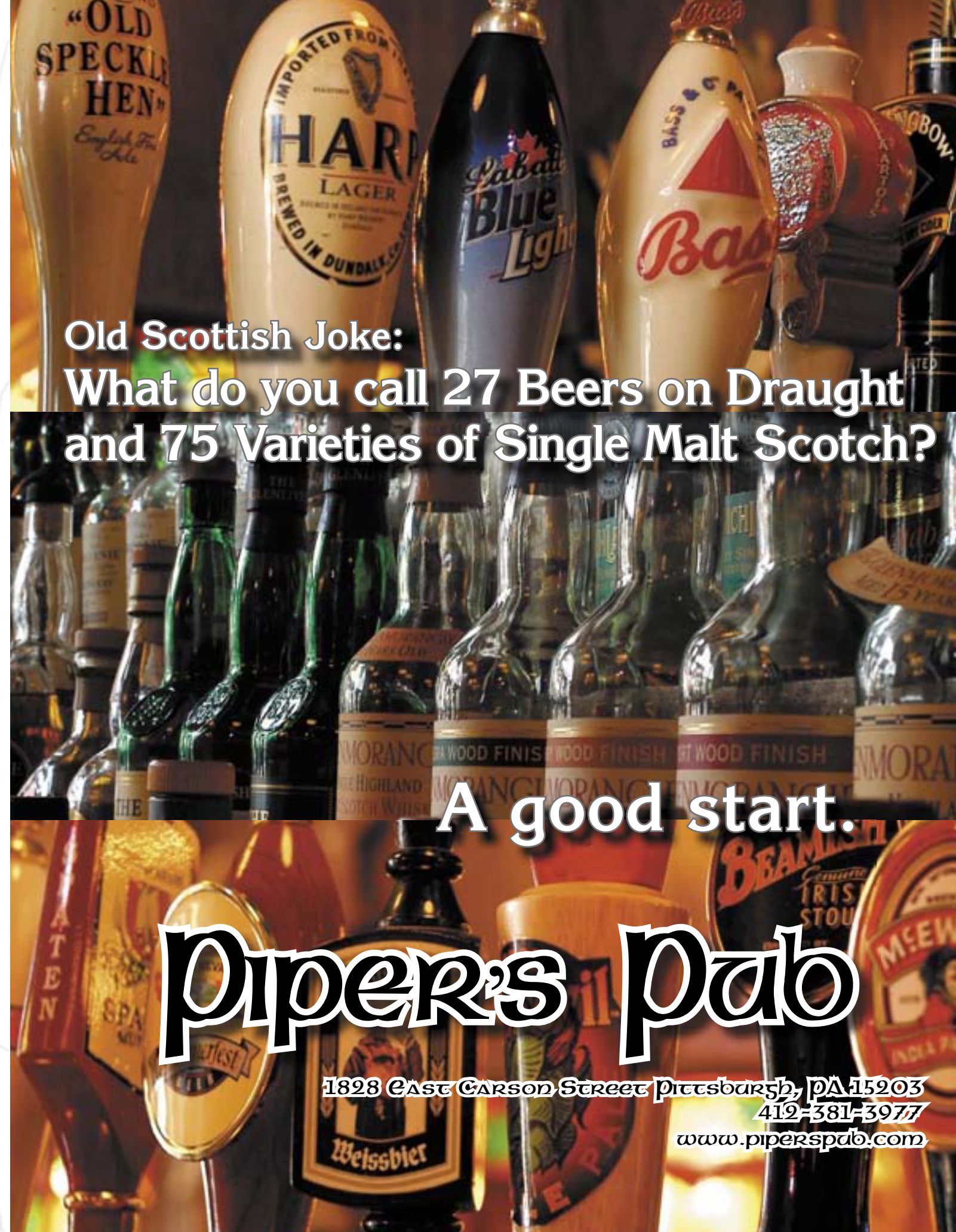
That all changes when a roommate offers him an experimental drug meant to cure chronic indecisiveness. Dwight doesn’t know if he believes in pharmaceutical redemption (he can’t decide!) but soon after he impulsively hops a plane to South America, chasing after his high-school crush, the one woman he was ever *sure* about.

Of course, things don’t work out as easily as all that. Kunkel’s got a lot to say about modern ambivalence in a society that caters to every whim, but his more philosophical points never bog down the narrative. (Well, maybe occasionally – the last third gets a little preachy, and the ending seems fittingly... ambivalent.) Dwight is bit like that guy (or virtually everyone) who graduates from college and spends the next five or six years waiting for the world to come to him. He’s a smart guy, at turns charming and frustrating, witty and naïve, but that doesn’t mean he has everything figured out.

The marketing beasts at Random House have positioned Benjamin Kunkel as the next Jonathan Safran Foer (ye gods, are we really looking for *the next* JSF?), but where *Everything is Illuminated* got wrapped up in its own cleverness, *Indecision* has a willingness to truly take on its themes. It’s an impressive first novel from an author who’s more than the *new new* thing. ☺



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# How to Weaponize Your Blog

By Buck “Lucky” Owens



Newsbreakers: Breaking the latest local news live in your local area



In the fall of 2004, an errant basketball bouncing off the head of a preschooler changed my life. Let me explain. The incident in question was captured in the background of a live television news report aired by the TV station where I worked. Back in the newsroom, the “bad bounce” video was a hit. A pack of newsies squeezed around a monitor to watch the scene play out over and over again. The mishap had captured an audience... *and my imagination*. A month later, with the help of four friends, I set out to express my disillusionment with the state of local TV news. We dubbed ourselves “Newsbreakers,” and began traveling the country appearing uninvited in live reports from Boston to Phoenix, with an absurd cast of characters ranging from a cheese slinging ninja to the over-the-top

televangelist Rev. Utah Snakewater, who drives TV demons out of the tube by way of on-air exorcisms. But a funny thing happened on the way to the live shot. Those who didn’t want to kill us wanted to join us. So if your “Live, Local, Late-Breaking Eyewitness News On Your Side” has got you mad as hell (or just a little irritated) and you’re not going to take it anymore, here’s an action list. Newsbreakers-style.

1. Get With The Program;  
The Buddy System Just Ain’t Big Enough.

Don’t crash a live shot alone. While your on-air person (called “talent” in the news biz for some unknown reason), may appear solo, he or she must have a crew for support. We use at least two people on scene to shoot video, plus another to conduct an ambush interview with the reporter after the live shot. You should plan on staffing your control room with at least one person who can monitor and record the news while feeding information to your talent and crew. In Newsbreakers, we have actors, technicians and organizational people. Look for a team with a variety of talents.

2. Get A Nose For News

It’s painful, but you’ll need to watch a lot of news to learn their habits. Be mindful of how a newscast is organized. Most local news is divided into “blocks.” Live and local usually come first. Learn your hometown team’s traits and tics. Does one anchor go heavy with the fake on-air banter with the reporter in the field? Wasn’t that reporter’s last gig as a member of the traveling youth cult “Up With People?” Go online and read a station’s history and reporter bios. Pay special attention to station promos: They’re rich examples of institutionalized delusions of grandeur set to dance club beats and Pink Floyd laser light show graphics. These people have no shame. Neither should you.

3. Do As They Say And As They Do

If you can learn the stock phrases, it’ll drive your local I-Team mad. “Get this” is an industry-wide favorite. When interviewing a reporter overuse his or her name to the point of conversational lechery. Vaguely attributed quotes go a long way, officials say. “Allegedly” allows you to mutter any old crazy thought that comes into your head, as in “Get this, Bill. Authorities believe that the station’s news director allegedly performed acts of sodomy on the division president in return, Bill, for keeping his job and abandoning journalistic principles. Back to you, Bill.” Once you can talk their news talk, you can walk their news walk. At Newsbreakers, sometimes we wonder if we’re being too rude, self-important, shallow, dishonest or irrelevant with our approach. Then we

ask ourselves, “Would TV news do it?” Therefore, we give you the ambush interview, the inane questions, the hidden cameras, the spectacular video with little context or meaning, the reliance on the emotional over the rational. These are just some of the tools at your disposal. Use them wisely, or completely irresponsibly.

4. Tape Is Cheap, So Roll Your Own

Shoot video on scene. Don’t just rely on the station’s feed. It’s not just an aesthetic imperative, either. Although multiple camera angles can tickle your inner Orson Welles, shooting your own video can keep you in fake press passes for another story. We learned this lesson the first day on the job when an agitated reporter called the police and accused us of assault. The cops didn’t buy that fib once we showed them our tape. The charge was then lowered to harassment, but the station gave up on that ghost when they realized prosecuting a jerk with a microphone could set a damaging precedent for the news industry. Speaking of damage, be prepared to put your neck on the line, or, in our case, in the hands of a raging reporter too quick to flip his wig. That was the scene we captured when we sent a man dressed as a priest and reading a Bible into a live shot in New York City. The reporter, who’s best known as the assbat hack from Bowling for Columbine, tried to strangle our wayward holy man before chasing him through midtown Manhattan. Imagine his surprise when he eye-witnessed our exclusive video of the event.

5. Love The Law And It Will Love You Back

Critics call us criminals. While we chuckle at the outlaw tag, it’s so much more fun to stay on the right side of the law and watch the news ninnies scamper off to their lawyers at a cost of \$300 every time the little hand of the clock lands on a new number. Here are the basics of getting into the television repair business: Don’t touch anyone or anything that isn’t yours. Work on public property. Familiarize yourself with the Fair Use Doctrine. Beyond that, if it feels right, do it. Just be careful not to bounce a basketball off anyone’s head. You never know what you might be starting. ☹

*Buck “Lucky” Owens is the Senior Political Correspondent and Founder of Newsbreakers. He and his team can be found at [www.newsbreakers.org](http://www.newsbreakers.org).*



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