

# PLAYBOY

ENTERTAINMENT

NOVEMBER 2004

**INTERVIEW**  
**OLIVER**  
**STONE**

**BROOKE**  
**BURKE**  
**NUDE**  
**WILD OFF E!**

**MISS UNITED**  
**STATES TEEN**  
**NAKED**

**PLUS IDENTITY THEFT**  
**DREAM BOATS BAGHDAD**  
**AFTER DARK ALL NEW**  
**MANTRACK TABOO SEX**  
**20Q JOHN CARMACK**  
**PLAYBOY FASHION**  
**HOLY WAR**

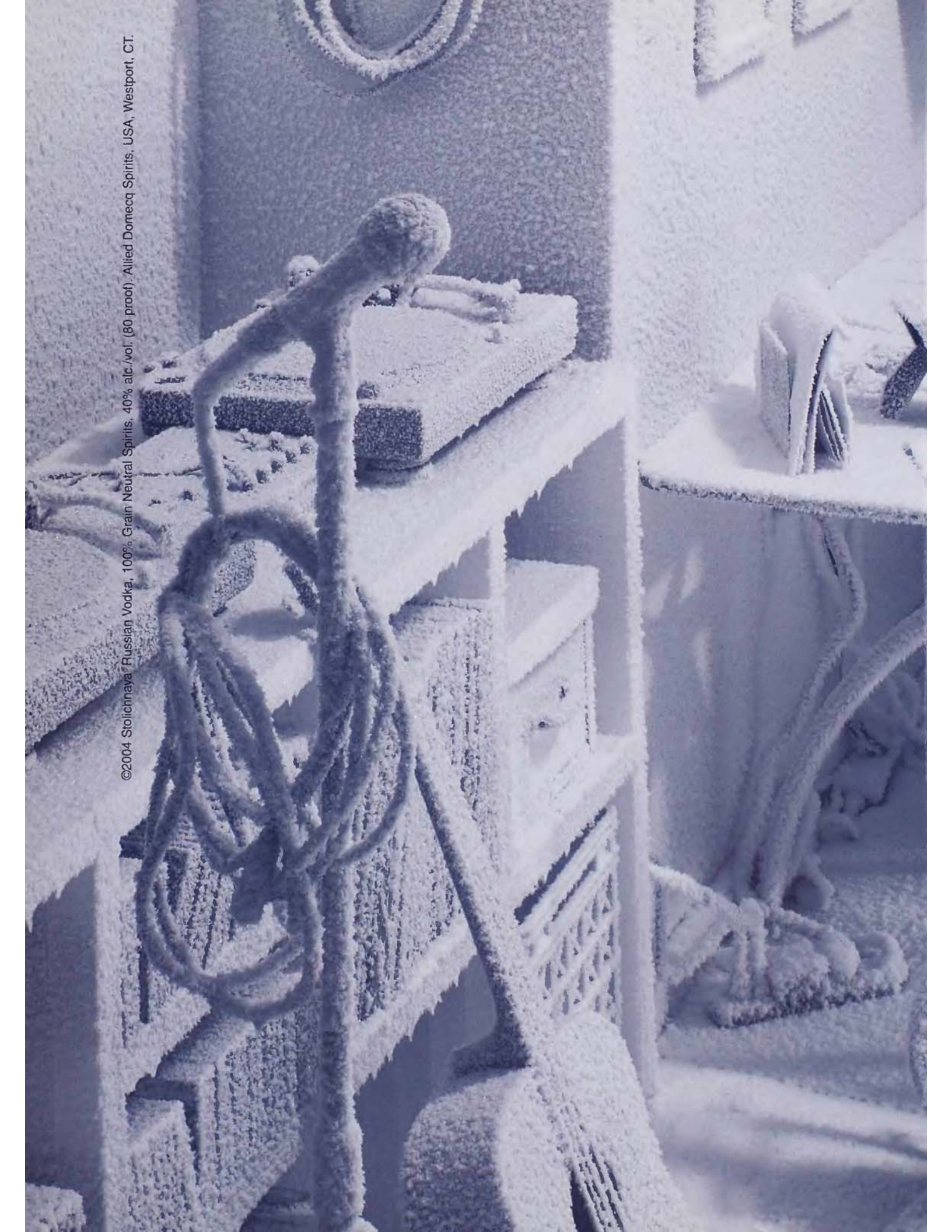
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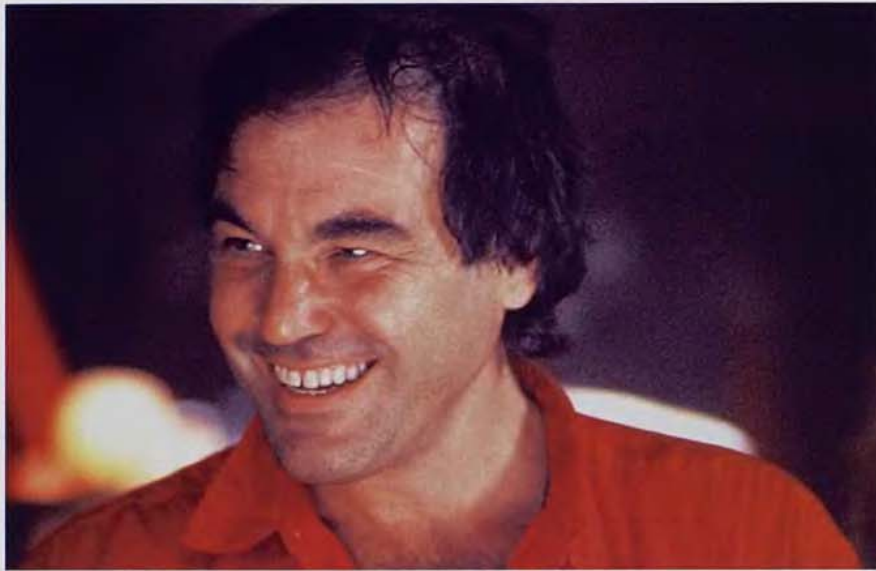
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IT'S BETTER IN THE DARK.  
-KENNETH COLE

BLACK -KENNETH COLE, THE FRAGRANCE FOR HIM.

BLACK  
-KENNETH COLE



Whether he's addressing violence in *Natural Born Killers*, presidential conspiracies in *JFK* or the Vietnam war in *Platoon*, **Oliver Stone** makes powerful movies that receive as much scathing criticism as they do critical acclaim. Contributing Editor **David Sheff** traded viewpoints with the controversial director for this month's *Playboy Interview*. "I expected he'd be shrill and a bit nuts," Sheff reports. "Instead he was thoughtful and gracious—and a little crazy, but in a way I could genuinely relate to. His detractors often try to intimate that he's paranoid, that he fits a stereotype. But that's just not true." Stone's opinions are as varied as his films. "It was a challenge to keep him on any one topic, but that's one of his charms. His passion takes him in completely unexpected directions."



This month's fiction, *St. Mark's Day*, is by **Rod Liddle**, one of Britain's up-and-coming men of letters. In it, Liddle adopts the perspective of a fly. "My apologies to any American readers unfamiliar with some of the creatures involved," he says. "St. Mark's flies are funny. They have big undercarriages—royally cumbersome but rather pretty. And I built an idea of how they might behave were they semi-human."



"I've never been so curious to hear the reaction to anything I've written as I am about this," **Toni Bentley** says about *Taboo Sex*, an excerpt from her memoir, *The Surrender* (Regan Books). The taboo? "I wasn't against anal sex before I tried it, but it wasn't like, 'Oh, I have to do that.' Then I had a powerful sexual experience, and that led to an incredible urge to record and understand my erotic journey."



**Dade Orgeron** created the futuristic art that appears with *The Identity Addict*, a profile of a prolific thief able to pass himself off—electronically, at least—as various celebrities in order to access their fat bank accounts. "The identities were being stolen by electronic means," Orgeron explains. "But I wanted my piece to express that in terms of cybernetic modification to a human being."



"It's strange to come back out of that environment," says reporter **Nicolas Pelham** about Iraq. He explores a unique aspect of that country for *PLAYBOY* in *Baghdad After Hours*. Pelham is a foreign correspondent whose work has appeared in *The Economist*, the *Financial Times* and *The Guardian*. Here he gives an insider's view of nightlife in a war zone. "If I hear a car backfire, I think it's a mortar round," he says. "The whole presence of Iraq stays with me for a long time whenever I leave." In Pelham's mind, those memories will plague people in the region for a long time: "It's going to get worse. People are still worried—Iraqi friends I had there were worried about being seen with me. They've gotten out of the frying pan only to get into the fire."



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# PLAYBOY

## contents

### features

#### 72 BAGHDAD AFTER HOURS

*By day in Iraq, soldiers battle insurgents, contractors dodge kidnappers and journalists rush to the sites of car bombs. But after sunset they let loose in an entirely different world. Here's our report on Iraq at night.* **BY NICOLAS PELHAM**

#### 88 DREAM BOATS

*We sailed the seas to find the world's finest yachts. Don't want the headache of a \$50 million float? No problem—you can lease these luxury cruisers by the week. Here's picturing you and your party posse bobbing in an oceangoing Jacuzzi.* **BY JASON HARPER**

#### 94 HOLY WAR

*George W. Bush gave up drinking for Jesus. Fair enough. Other implications of W's faith aren't so innocuous: He blocks federal funding to groups that support abortion, opposes research that could save lives and sees violence in the Levant as part of God's master plan. When will America realize that homegrown religious zealotry is threatening our country?* **BY ARTHUR SCHLESINGER JR.**

#### 112 THE IDENTITY ADDICT

*From September 2000 to March 2001, a high school dropout stole the identities of more than 200 people on the Forbes 400 list and pocketed \$260 million before a simple mistake landed him in prison. He agreed to sit down with our reporter and reveal a fraud system that he says is simple enough for a 12-year-old to master. All it takes is gloves, a cell phone, the ability to schmooze bank officials and a color printer.* **BY MARK BOAL**

#### 118 20Q JOHN CARMACK

*The Doom video game franchise has earned more than \$200 million. We sat down with its eccentric creator and talked about his quest to fire into space the first nongovernment-sponsored craft, the best video games ever, his ability to count cards and the secret to working 80 hours a week.* **BY JASON BUHRMESTER**

#### 127 CENTERFOLDS ON SEX: DIVINI RAE

*This sexual acrobat treads the fine line between rough and gentle sex.*

#### 128 TABOO SEX

*The former ballerina is quite a sensation in bed, but not just because of years of pelvic exercises, pirouettes and stretches at the barre. In this erotic essay, she traces her love affair with taking it in through the out door, from her first experience to the transcendent encounters that enabled her to find God.* **BY TONI BENTLEY**

### fiction

#### 84 ST. MARK'S DAY

*At Flyworld® bugs fornicate and frolic. But even flies suffer from midlife crises, and the head of one dipterous family doesn't want to join the fun.* **BY ROD LIDDLE**

### interview

#### 63 OLIVER STONE

*The controversial director is the ruler of biopics about such leaders as JFK, Nixon, Castro and, for his new film, Alexander the Great. In a cigar-smoking Playboy Interview, Stone gets out from behind the camera to document his own positions. Learn whether he'll make a movie about Bush, what Platoon would be like if set in Iraq and whether his dad really hired a hooker to devirginize him.* **BY DAVID SHEFF**



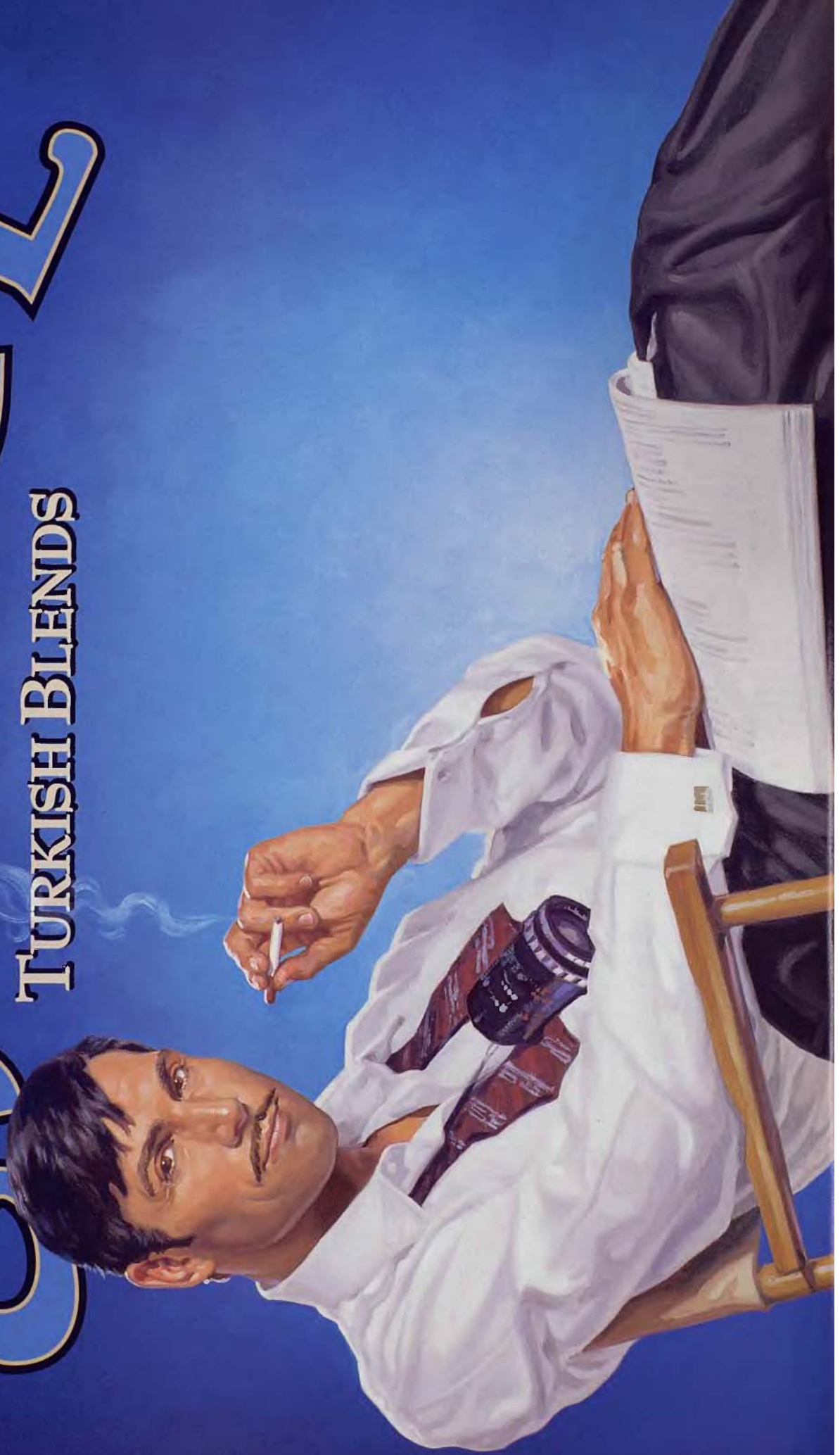
## cover story

Since Brooke Burke posed in our May 2001 issue—at the height of popularity of TV's *Wild On*, the show that beamed her from the world's beaches into our hearts—we haven't stopped daydreaming about her charm and beauty. So we sent Senior Contributing Photographer Stephen Woydo to track her down and prove she's still wild. Our Robbit blushes.



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# PLAYBOY

contents continued



## pictorials

- 78 AMERICAN BEAUTY**  
*It's legal to gaze at these beautiful pictures of Miss United States Teen—she's all grown up.*
- 98 PLAYMATE: CARA ZAVALETA**  
*She was the queen of Road Rules: South Pacific. The only rules on our pages? No clothes.*
- 132 BROOKE BURKE**  
*In her welcome return, a different exotic location, same flawless body.*

## notes and news

- 13 MANSION FIREWORKS AND FISTICUFFS**  
*Lovers and fighters joined Hef for the Fourth of July and Fight Night. Among the stars in the ring were Mia St. John, Matthew Perry and Andy Roddick.*
- 55 THE PLAYBOY FORUM**  
*The great oil wars will make Iraq look like Grenada; a lawyer explains how to avoid getting busted for having sex outdoors.*
- 171 PLAYMATE NEWS**  
*Brande Roderick gets behind the camera; Playmates star on Entourage; Julian McMahon's favorite Playmate.*

## departments

- 3 PLAYBILL**
- 17 DEAR PLAYBOY**
- 21 AFTER HOURS**
- 41 MANTRACK**

- 51 THE PLAYBOY ADVISOR**
- 110 PARTY JOKES**
- 147 WHERE AND HOW TO BUY**
- 175 ON THE SCENE**
- 176 GRAPEVINE**
- 178 POTPOURRI**

## fashion

- 120 TWEEDS**  
*Once the fabric of the upper crust, these rich wools are finally ready to join the party. BY JOSEPH DE ACETIS*

## reviews

- 31 MOVIES**  
*Liam Neeson plays Dr. Sex; Jamie Foxx is a Ray of sunshine.*
- 32 DVDS**  
*Lock the first three seasons of Seinfeld in the vault; study Ingmar Bergman's best film; find Angelina Jolie's famous bod unveiled.*
- 34 MUSIC**  
*Mos Def returns to the lyrical fray; Fatboy Slim drops beach-rockin' beats; Nick Cave harks back to past greatness.*
- 36 GAMES**  
*DOA Ultimate is very much alive; FIFA Soccer 2005 scores big.*
- 38 BOOKS**  
*Philip Roth imagines a fascist America; a history of hip; portraits of porn stars—with their clothes on.*

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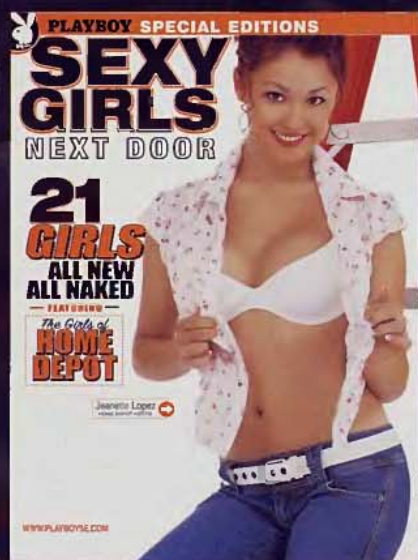
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# THE WORLD OF PLAYBOY

HEF SIGHTINGS, MANSION FROLICS AND NIGHTLIFE NOTES



## MANSION JET-SETTERS

The Rabbit Head icon is flying high, thanks to an extraordinary group of Navy jet fighters, the VX-9 Vampires (left). The pilots presented Hef with a photo of the fighter planes in action (below). "We believe the Bunny signifies our rich tradition of excellence in F-14 fighter tests," they say.



## IDOL WORSHIP

What do Ryan Seacrest and Hef have in common? One hosts *American Idol*, and the other is an American idol. Hef chatted it up on Seacrest's show, *On-Air* (above); with girlfriends Kendra, Bridget and Holly (below).

## THAT'S ALL HE WROTE

"The most important room of the house has always been the bedroom," says Hef in his *Little Black Book*. At Barnes & Noble he signed the tome along with *Playboy: 50 Years: The Cartoons* (below).



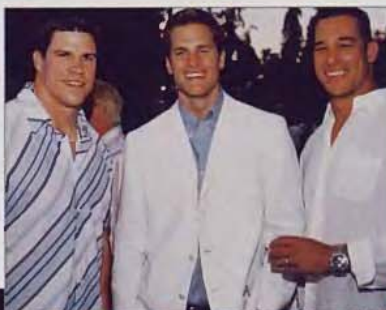
## IT'S NOT TV. IT'S DENNIS MILLER

Believe it or not, Hef had never met Dennis Miller before appearing on the Emmy-winning comedian's eponymous CNBC talk show to promote *Hef's Little Black Book*. "I'm surprised they didn't have to bring the book in on a forklift," said Miller, a longtime fan.

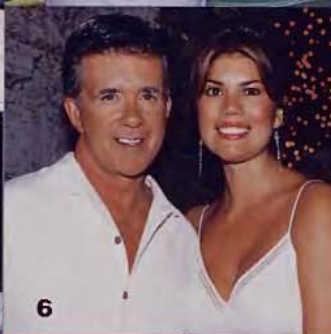


## A KNOCKOUT NIGHT

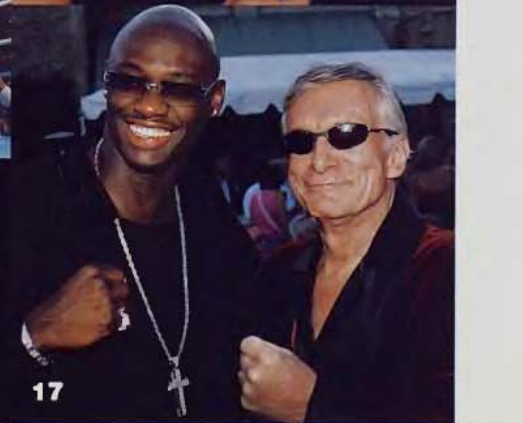
Hef hosted an ESPN Fight Night with Super Bowl-champion Patriots Ted Johnson, Tom Brady and Christian Fauria (right); Freddy Hernandez defeated Jesus Soto-Karass in the main event (below); Richard Seymour and Rodney Harrison with Bunny Ring Girls (below right).



# MANSION FIREWORKS AND FISTICUFFS



Playboy's Fourth of July celebration was followed by an ESPN Fight Night. (1) Stacy Burke, Holly and Kendra, poolside and patriotic. (2) Andy Dick and Sarah Tiefertalder. (3) Jon Lovitz and Bridget, dressed as Miss Liberty. (4) Matthew Perry playing volleyball. (5) Jonathan Silverman and a former *Friend*. (6) Alan Thicke and Tanya Callau. (7) Hef and his girls, enjoying the fireworks. (8) Bill Maher and Devin DeVasquez. (9) PMOYs Jodi Ann Paterson, Heather Kozar and Brande Roderick on Fight Night. (10) L.A. Lakers Kareem Rush and Luke Walton with Bunny Ring Girls. (11) Kerri Kasem (Casey's daughter), ultimate fighter Chuck "Iceman" Liddell and boxer Mia St. John. (12) Michael "Let's Get Ready to Rumble" Buffer. (13) A preliminary bout with Al "Speedy" Gonzales and Raul Cazares. (14) Redskin LaVar Arrington and Trisha Johnson. (15) Football icon Joe Theismann with a guest and ESPN's Linda Cohn. (16) Tennis ace Andy Roddick. (17) Light heavy-weight champ Antonio Tarver, who knocked out Roy Jones Jr. in the upset of the year.





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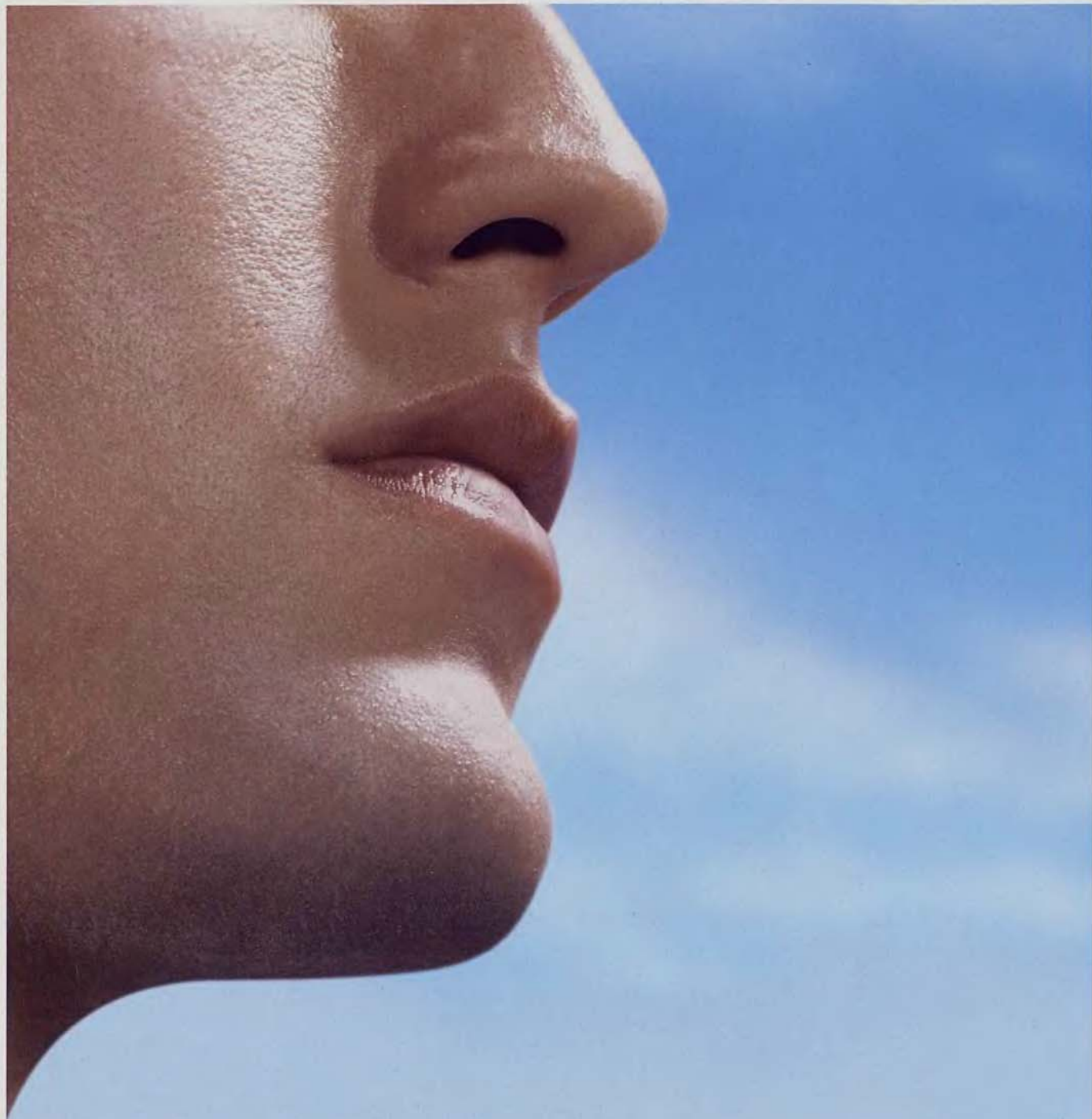
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**SPIKE IN CONTROVERSY**

Spike Lee (*20Q*, August) implies that *Driving Miss Daisy* didn't deserve to win the Oscar for best picture and that Al Pacino's performance in *Scent of a Woman* was less deserving of a best actor award than Denzel Washington's performance in *Malcolm X* the same year. What Spike forgets is that



In lane number one...Spike Lee.

most people go to the movies to be entertained and not necessarily to be educated. Although *Do the Right Thing* and *Malcolm X* may be more culturally significant than such films as *Driving Miss Daisy* and *Scent of a Woman*, they are not more entertaining.

John Brennan  
Oakdale, California

Could you have tossed Lee more of a softball question than the one about his frivolous lawsuit against Spike TV? He wasn't protecting his name, as he claims—he wanted publicity and money. The lawsuit cheapened everything else he has accomplished.

Robert Waller  
Cartersville, Georgia

If Lee has never been to a NASCAR race, how would he know much about it? The idea that racing fans say "yee-haw" or would threaten anyone with lynching is ridiculous. We aren't backwoods racists. In fact, many black faces can be found in the stands. I'd like to invite Lee to accompany me to an event.

Debra Holt  
Alexandria, Louisiana

My impression of Lee has always been that he dislikes white people. But

I also didn't know much about him. So I read his *20Q* with an open mind—until I reached the NASCAR comment. We'll never make progress with that kind of attitude.

Debbie English  
Yorktown, Virginia

Lee has made a career of talking about how unfair it is to judge a group of people based on the actions of a few of its members. If he hates the double standards that black people have to deal with, he should set a better example.

Joe Vasilevski  
Elmwood Park, Illinois

**MOTOWN MYOPIA**

Frank Owen's biased article about Detroit (*Detroit, Death City*, August) is rooted in a deeper problem: his resentment over having a revolutionary father-in-law and a drug-dealer brother-in-law. Because they are from Detroit, he rips the city based on association, not impartial observation. I am not from Detroit, but I travel there regularly on business and have never had a problem. My business has closed offices in Miami, Washington, D.C. and St. Louis because of crime and vandalism after hours, but our downtown Detroit office is doing fine. Has Owen visited any other city? He'll find that they all have problems.

Jeff Edwards  
Charlotte, North Carolina

Owen's article about Detroit is a negative and false depiction based on stereotypes. As a native and resident of the city, I am proud of how hard we have worked to clean it up. Much new growth and development is taking place. The National Urban League convention is in town right now, and the Super Bowl is coming soon—not to mention our new casinos and pro baseball park.

Justin Kosuth  
Detroit, Michigan

The article devolves from a history of Detroit into a personal story about Owen's relatives. Both are tragedies that never should have happened.

Dan Drotar  
Wyandotte, Michigan

*Frank Owen responds: "As I said in my article, conditions have improved in downtown Detroit. But the next time Jeff Edwards visits, he should stop by the neighborhoods surrounding downtown (and by that, I don't mean Grosse Pointe), where he will find a panoply of social ills. Justin Kosuth states there is much new construction, which*

*is true. However, in the 1990s Detroit lost more housing units than any other metropolis. The city tore down more than 21,500 buildings during that time, and it owns about 40,000 vacant parcels. Last year Detroit posted its lowest number of murders since 1967 (361), but this year it's on its way toward 500 and remains by far the most violent major city. Detroiters are an enormously proud people, and I understand why they resent outsiders, especially one from England, criticizing their home. They feel that's their job, though only in private. I also understand why local boosters would be unhappy with the story, but the fact is Detroit is a long way from becoming the world-class city it used to be."*

**GARDEN OF EVA**

Eva Herzigova (*All About Eva*, August) is Venus in human form. Thank you for honoring the woman who made me proud of my 34D tits.

Tara Steinke  
Menasha, Wisconsin

When the Wonderbra ads came out in the early 1990s, friends of mine tried bribing store owners into selling their display posters. Eva doesn't need two ounces of lace, foam and wire to fill out her body.

Jim Glezen  
Phoenix, Arizona



Eva provides her own support.

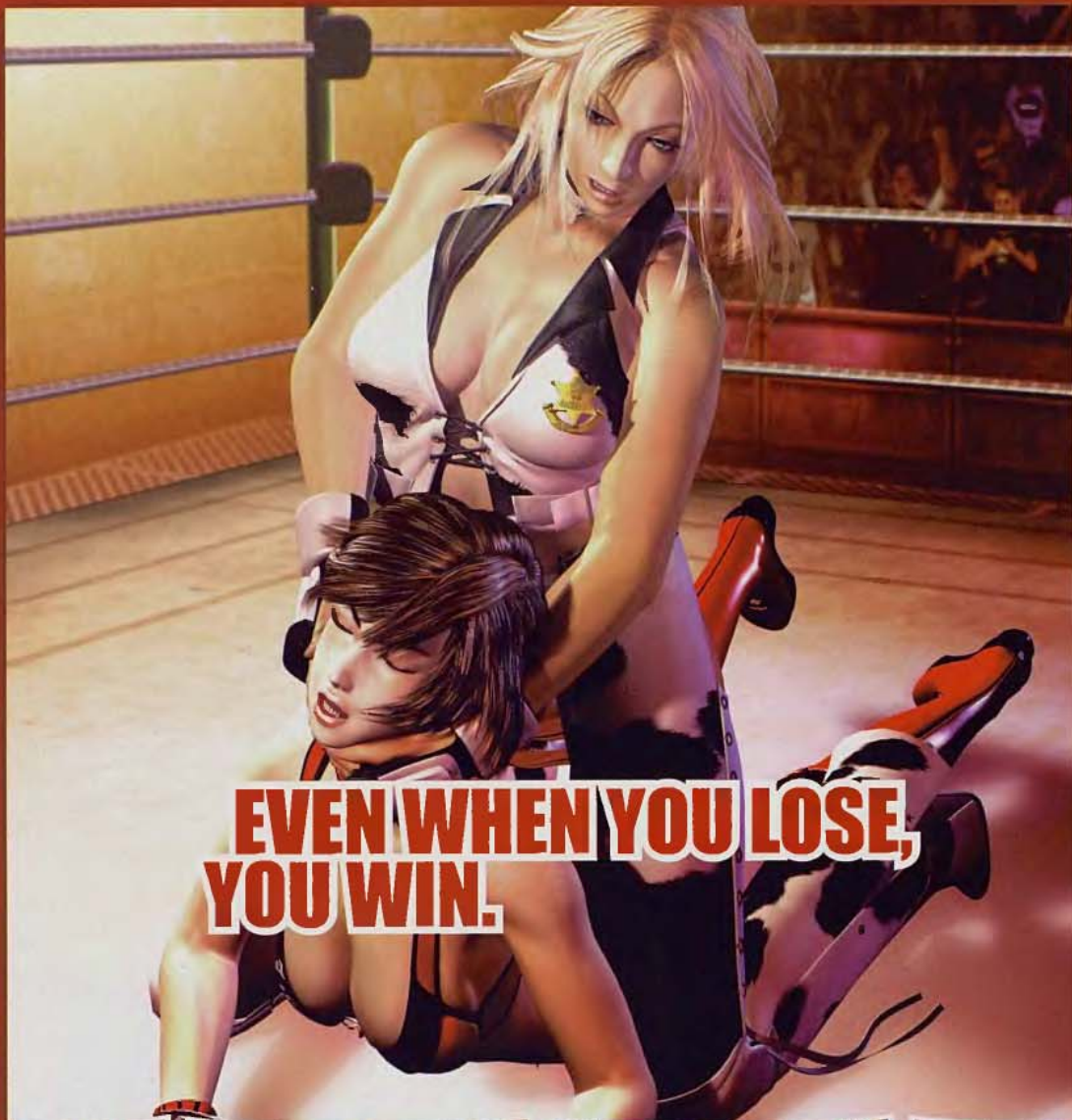
I enjoy putting PLAYBOY on my coffee table, but the August cover is so spooky I have to keep it facedown.

Jim Smith  
Phoenix, Arizona

Your August cover is great. The muted colors and lack of adornment

"We're impressed... the game plays as good as it looks." – PSM

"Looks amazing... plays fantastic." – Play Magazine | "Face it. You've always wanted this." – 1up.com



**EVEN WHEN YOU LOSE,  
YOU WIN.**



They're on top of you. You're on top of them. Does it really matter? All female wrestlers. 10,000 polygons per character. And hardcore wrestling gameplay. It's Rumble Roses and it's definitely a win-win situation.



PlayStation 2

KONAMI

[www.konami.com/usa](http://www.konami.com/usa)

make Eva look all the more beautiful.  
Ken Carlton  
Chicago, Illinois

Unlike other celebrities who have posed, Eva had the guts to show her entire body. She didn't hide behind a tree or shadows or twist like a pretzel. Thank you, Eva!

James Green Jr.  
Lorton, Virginia

Mario Sorrenti's presentation of one of the loveliest women on the planet is dignified, tasteful and exquisite.

Manny Gomez  
Henderson, Nevada

#### MATT AND BEN

I enjoy the *Playboy Interview* because, unlike the tabloids, you ask great questions. Matt Damon (August) may be reluctant to discuss his personal life, but he seems to have no qualms about dissecting that of Ben Affleck. He feels Affleck is a victim, but Ben and J. Lo are equally responsible for the snarkiness that the public displayed toward them. Damon shouldn't use his media time to discuss how Affleck is taking care of his business.

Margaret Lovell  
Batavia, Illinois

Damon's is another in a disappointing series of interviews. If you are going to let celebrities plug their books and movies, at least ask tougher questions.

Bryan Strain  
Springfield, Pennsylvania

#### DONNA MICHELLE

I just read about Donna Michelle's death (*Playmate News*, August). What a loss. She was my favorite Playmate.

Jeff Wykoff  
Reno, Nevada

#### PRO FOOTBALL FORECAST

You state that the odds of the Arizona Cardinals winning the Super Bowl are a trillion to one (*NFL Preview*, August). Can you tell me which casino is offering these odds? I'd like to bet.

Mike Edwards  
St. Petersburg, Florida

*That was our call and ours alone. We've since moved the odds to 900 million to one.*

Imagine my surprise when my son called to tell me that my husband was pictured in *PLAYBOY*—specifically in the photo accompanying "The Numbers Game" in your NFL preview. He is one of the 80,000 fans at every Washington Redskins game. But he's not an ordinary spectator. He is part of an elite group of 12, the Hogettes, who on Sunday afternoons turn into ultimate fans. The Hogettes have

been around since 1983 and have helped raise more than \$75 million for children's charities.

Donna Heid  
Chantilly, Virginia

#### WIN WITH THE ADVISOR

My husband subscribes to *PLAYBOY*, and I read every issue the day it arrives in the mail. The morning after we received the August issue, I called a local radio station for a chance to win two concert tickets. The DJ told me I would have to pass a quiz. He read a letter asking for advice and then asked me to guess which column it came from: Dear Abby or the *Playboy Advisor*. Since I had just read the *Advisor* the day before, I identified each letter without hesitation. In fact, I think the DJ was annoyed because I made the game seem too easy. As you can see, it pays to read *PLAYBOY*.

Mary Feducia  
Washington, D.C.

*The Advisor responds: "Nice job! When are we going to the concert?"*

#### LOVING LASTRA

Playmate Pilar Lastra (*Oooh La Lastra*, August) is fine. I have faith she will win an Oscar one day. Do you?

Maurice Boni  
San Carlos, Arizona

*Of course. We just hope she remembers us and agrees to pose again.*



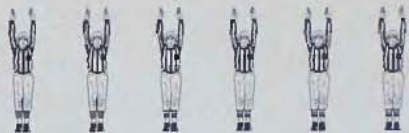
Three cheers for those in the trenches.

#### PLAYBOY IN IRAQ

Here in Iraq, the insurgents try to get a rise out of us. But nothing gives us more of a rise than *PLAYBOY*. The magazine provides us and the rest of our mortar platoon with more motivation than you could possibly imagine.

Sgt. Brad Brown  
Sgt. Sean Duncan  
Fallujah, Iraq

*You're talking about the articles, right? Thanks for writing—and stay safe.*



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OF BUD LIGHT.**



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0.9g protein, 0.0g fat and Bud Light has 6.6g carbs.

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# PLAYBOY

## after hours



babe of the month

## Gabrielle Richens

**W**ith her exotic features, British model and TV host Gabrielle Richens often tops the World's Sexiest Women roundups in magazines. "I ranked above the goddess Cindy Crawford once, so that humbled me," she says. "I get my skin from my father, who is South African with Indian and Chinese ancestry. Girlfriends won't lie next to me on the beach, because I tan quicker." Gabrielle chases the sun between her pads in London and Sydney and hosts a variety of shows in both cities, including a look at future sex on Bravo's *3001: A Sex Oddity*. "I learned that men might have babies someday

This starlet's *Mile High* party is just taking off and there will be a pill that can give you an orgasm," she says. The 30-year-old could be a certified sexologist herself with her stint on the steamy cabin-crew drama *Mile High* and her dating-show gigs. "I'm dateless, but I can get other people dates," she laughs. "One time we ambushed a girl as she left her date's home. My director kept pushing me to ask if she'd slept with the guy. I felt mean, but it's great TV." Gabrielle prefers to keep her own dating life out of frame. "I'm looking for a husband," she says. "Looks are just a bonus—if a guy can make me laugh, he's halfway there." That's no joke to us.

"If a guy can make me laugh, he's halfway there."

~~'I FIND IT A CONSTANT STRUGGLE TO RECONCILE MY  
EARNINGS WITH MY BLUE COLLAR UPBRINGING.'~~  
  
~~'GUESS HOW MUCH I BLEW IN VEGAS'~~



THE NEW FINE OAK SINGLE MALT WHISKY RANGE. THE LIGHTER SIDE OF THE MACALLAN.





guest spot: louie ck

## RUN FOR COVER. IT'S NOVEMBER AGAIN

SEEMS LIKE EVERY YEAR ABOUT THIS TIME SOMETHING HAPPENS

November—what a month for history. Here's my list of the top 20 things that have happened in November, some to me, some to all of us and some not at all.

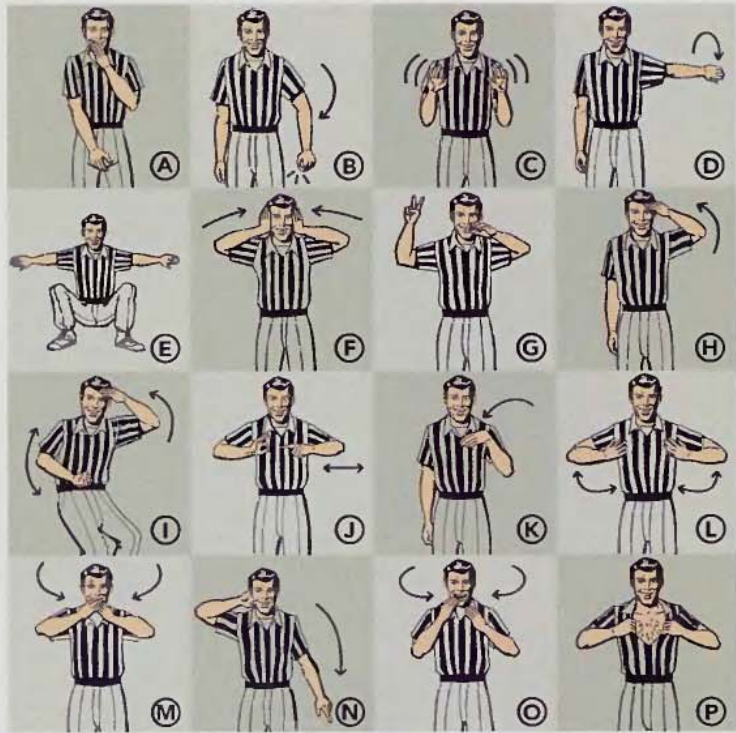
1. November 22, 1963 John F. Kennedy was shot right in the head.
2. November 24, 1988 My Uncle Simon died of a heart attack. Ha-ha. I never liked that guy.
3. November 20, 1982 The first girl I ever kissed baked me a pecan pie. We ate it, and then she made herself throw up. I didn't kiss another girl for three years.
4. November 13, 1999 I walked into my apartment to find Ed Taggles, my landlord, masturbating in my kitchen.
5. November 4, 1995 Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated in Tel Aviv.
6. November 23, 2003 I discovered that hair was growing on my nipples.
7. November 3, 1972 I stood in the driveway of our house, crying helplessly as something horrible worked its way out of my brown shorts and plopped at my feet. My sisters and their friends stood and laughed at me, calling me Little Brownpoops. Even today, in their eyes I am Little Brownpoops. Oh God, I hate their eyes.
8. November 24, 1975 I smoked pot for the first time. Two hours later I blew a guy for some crack. Stay in school.
9. November 1, 1990 I watched a fat girl get herself off with a vibrator. Then we shared an orange Fanta. I never saw her again.
10. November 17, 1969 Soviet and U.S. negotiators met in Helsinki to begin the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks.

Okay, I can't do 20. I guess November isn't such a historic month after all. Maybe something momentous will happen this year. Me, I just hope I get through the month without getting kicked in the balls. Anything beyond that is gravy.



Louie CK is a stand-up comedian and filmmaker.

## social infractions



STEVE BOSWICK

## OFFICIAL PARTY-FOUL SIGNALS

WHAT HAS SOME JACKASS DONE NOW? A HANDY GUIDE

When you're watching the big game with a group of friends, it's important to know your clipping calls from your holdings. You don't want to look like an idiot. But what about when you're at a party and the zebra whistles some guy on the other side of the room? Here's a helpful chart of the party-foul signals developed by the NFL\*—we suggest you clip and save.

- |                            |                                    |   |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| A. Freudian slip           | F. Unauthorized Fleetwood Mac      | J. Sleazy reference to previous sexual liaison with another guest | M. Bad breath                |
| B. Illegal backward fondle | G. Smoking doob at a non-doo party | K. Indiscreet use of lavatory                                     | N. Vomit                     |
| C. Illegal forward fondle  | H. Visible erection                | L. Deodorant failure  | O. Hogging the chips and dip |
| D. Spill                   | I. Visible erection on dance floor |   | P. Excessive chest hair      |
| E. Spill; broken glass     |                                    |   |                              |

\*not really

## sneaks preview

### FLYIN' SHOES

MILLIONAIRE HOWARD HUGHES WAS CRAZY. CRAZY ABOUT THESE KEDS, THAT IS



What does the world's richest man wear on his feet? Whatever he wants—Howard Hughes was famous for sporting a simple canvas tennis shoe. For the Hughes biopic *The Aviator*, Martin Scorsese's costumers wanted to put star Leonardo DiCaprio in the real deal: the Keds Triumph, last produced in the 1940s. Working from photos of Hughes and a 1934 catalog, a Keds designer re-created the shoe, and the comfy sneakers have become a word-of-mouth fad in Hollywood, with other A-listers angling for Triumphs of their own. The film is out in December, but you can get the limited-edition shoes this month at [keds.com](http://keds.com). Preposterous 150-ton wooden seaplane sold separately.

cold, hard flesh



**ABS OF MARBLE, BUNS OF BRONZE**

**TURN THE BODY YOU WORSHIP INTO AN AGELESS ALTAR OF LUST**

Forget Venus de Milo. Now you can exult in the beauty of Venus de Cleveland—or wherever it is that you call home. In ancient times only the elite Greeks could afford to immortalize their Peloponnesian pussies in bronze or marble, but at Desert Shadows, a nudist resort in Palm Springs, California, a craftsman named Curt will turn anyone into pseudoclassical statuary for a reasonable price. Depending on the size and finish—marble, stone, granite or bronze—it'll cost you between \$300 and

\$4,000 to make an immutable monument of your girl's anatomy (or your own—but frankly that would be a little *too* creepy). "It's equally about art and preserving ourselves," says Stephen Payne, the resort's founder and CEO. "People would rather have themselves done, warts and all, than take home an anonymous figure that doesn't represent them in the least." Although overtly salacious poses aren't allowed (keep your hands above the table, missy), Curt's sculptures are fully anatomically correct—legs, butts, breasts and genitals. Finally an artistic vision we can all appreciate.

dumpster dada

**TURNING TRASH INTO CASH**  
**MODERN ART IS RUBBISH**



Three years ago art student Justin Gignac faced a creative challenge. "I asked myself, What could I package that nobody would normally want?" The answer: garbage. He packed real New York City rubbish in three-and-a-half-inch Lucite cubes, then sold them on the street for 10 bucks a pop. "People go to Florida and buy sand in a can," he says. "Why wouldn't they come to New York and buy trash?" More than 500

people from 35 states and 17 countries have purchased the leakproof, odor-free, signed and numbered *objets*, some paying \$15 for limited-edition boxes made with World Series, New Year's Eve or Republican-convention trash. If your sterile Ikea coffee table needs a good trashing, visit [nycgarbage.com](http://nycgarbage.com).

tip sheet

**SLANG ON A STICK**

**DON'T BOTHER LOOKING THESE UP IN YOUR FUNK & WAGNALL'S**



**Blinglish:** Blend of British cockney and Jamaican patois that is the vernacular du jour among nonblack youths in the U.K. Useful example: "Wo' is yous bangin' on abou'?", which translates to "What are you saying?"

**Rejuveniles, kidults:** Grown-ups, Gen Xers or older, who cling to the trappings of youth. Symptoms include Vans, footie pajamas, grilled-cheese sandwiches, Hello Kitty and a devotion to the Cartoon Network.

**Turkey dump:** The jilting of a high school sweetheart while home on Thanksgiving break during freshman year of college. A tender back-to-campus pork often follows.

**Atkins mouth:** Halitosis caused by low-carb diets that omit plaque-removing foods such as apples and limit the production of natural mouth acids. Scarfing pungent slabs of sharp cheddar doesn't help either.



**Achievers:** Cult followers, à la Trekkies and Deadheads, of the Coen brothers film *The Big Lebowski*. Thousands flock to organized Lebowski fests—there have been four, with the fifth scheduled for New York—often dressed as characters from the movie. There tends to be a lot of bowling and drinking.

**Airmail:** Big-city-cop slang for miscellaneous objects thrown down at them from tall buildings.

**Geo-spam:** Automated ad messages sent when a GPS-equipped cell phone is detected by nearby restaurants and stores—for example, URGENT: QUARTER POUNDER NOW \$1.29!!!! And we thought the guy in the sandwich board jabbing handbills at us was a nuisance.

**Pole pox:** A rare but documented pole dancer's malady, it's an allergy to the nickel used in the chrome poles that produces painful skin inflammation and rashes. That's her story, at least.



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*Cool Water*  
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rich man, pour man



**HERE COMES A REGULAR  
LONGEST-SERVING BARKEEP STILL ISN'T TAPPED OUT**

Angelo Cammarata pulled his first beer the moment President Franklin D. Roosevelt brought Prohibition to an end—midnight, April 7, 1933. More than 71 years later he's still serving them up at Cammarata's Tavern, near Pittsburgh. In 1999 Guinness decreed him the world's longest-serving bartender. And now, having outlasted most milk sippers, he's approaching his 91st birthday. We'll drink to that.

**PLAYBOY:** Tell us about the day they made drinking legal again.

**CAMMARATA:** My dad owned a grocery store. When he heard FDR was going to repeal Prohibition, he said, "Son, people are going to want to have beer, and that's going to mean great business." Boy, was he right. We sold 50 cases of beer that first night. Pretty soon we weren't selling groceries anymore.

**PLAYBOY:** Ever serve anyone famous?

**CAMMARATA:** Josh Gibson, the Negro League star known as the black Babe Ruth—the only man ever to hit a ball out of Yankee Stadium.

**PLAYBOY:** Is the customer always right?

**CAMMARATA:** The right customer is always right. You look after him. One customer, Charles Blackwell, has been coming to my bar since 1935. I'm 57 days older than Blacky. He can't drive anymore, so I pick him up anytime he needs a ride.

**PLAYBOY:** What's your secret to longevity?

**CAMMARATA:** I start every day with a bourbon and Coke. I've read that a shot a day is good for you. It's been good for me.

employee of the month



**HOT WHEELS**

**BMW SALES MANAGER DIANE BROWN  
WILL PUT YOU IN A LUXURY RIDE**

**PLAYBOY:** What's your role at the dealership?

**DIANE:** I've been in sales for five years, first with Mercedes-Benz, then with Porsche and now as the Internet sales manager for Perillo BMW in Chicago. I sell cars on eBay and the Net and ship them all over the country.

**PLAYBOY:** So your show-room presence is wasted?

**DIANE:** I am on the floor. And I usually wear cute little skirts or nice suits. In some cases customers will say to other salespeople, "Who's that? I want to work with her." And a lot of women come to me because they feel I'm not going to lie to them.

**PLAYBOY:** Do nice cars get your engine revved up?

**DIANE:** There's nothing I love more than a man in a fine car. There's something very hot about it.

**PLAYBOY:** Ever test out the new leather seats?

**DIANE:** I've been tempted. But the showroom is glass. Maybe after hours, if I can find a willing participant.



listings

**SEABISCUITS BUT NOT STUD MUFFINS  
ACTIVE RACEHORSES THAT MAKE THE OTHER COLTS A BIT NERVOUS**

- |                   |                 |                |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Lavender Bob      | Provincetown    | Ballingarry    |
| Frisky Mark       | Skip Vigorously | Come On Chas   |
| Good Gracious Ned | Assmar          | Wild Gladiator |
| Whispering Walter | Lot o' Rim Fire | Fancy Man      |
| Toot My Whistle   | Little Bum      | Naughty Prince |
| Ballet Critic     | Rompburger      | Father Dooley  |

Employee of the Month candidates: Send pictures to PLAYBOY Photography Department, Attn: Employee of the Month, 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611. Must be at least 18 years old. Must send photocopies of a driver's license and another valid ID (not a credit card), one of which must include a current photo.

# 8 ROOMMATES. 1 HOUSE.

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### Cookin'

21% of us have engaged in sex in our kitchens.

### Regime Change

Since its founding in 1946, the Italian Republic has had **59** different governments. The briefest administration lasted **10** days, in 1972. The current (at press time) government, headed by Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, is the republic's longest-serving, having survived for more than three years.

### Generation Why Bother

**55%** of those eligible voted in the 2000 U.S. elections. Among eligible 18- to 24-year-olds, the rate was **29%**.

### Chance



### Mission to Mars

Latest lines from the oddsmakers at Intertops.com sports betting:

- 3:1** Humans will land on Mars by 2020
- 1:5** Humans will *not* land on Mars by 2020
- 13:2** Aliens will land on Earth before humans get to Mars
- 900:1** George W. Bush will be the first human on Mars



### Brew Man Chu

In 2002 China surpassed the U.S. to become the world's largest beer market. The country now accounts for **20%** of worldwide consumption.



### Who's Your Daddy?

Basing their findings on the results of tests for inheritable diseases, genetic counselors estimate that about **10%** of children in America, unbeknownst to their presumed fathers, were actually sired by another man.

### Misappropriations



Budget allotted to the 9/11 commission to investigate the terrorist attacks: **\$15 million**. Amount spent on Kenneth Starr's investigations of Bill Clinton's sexual and financial affairs: **\$70 million**.

### Book of Pointless Records

### Most Baseball Caps

**68,000** (approximately) owned by Frost, Minnesota farmer Bucky Legried. Hats off, Bucky.

### Price Check



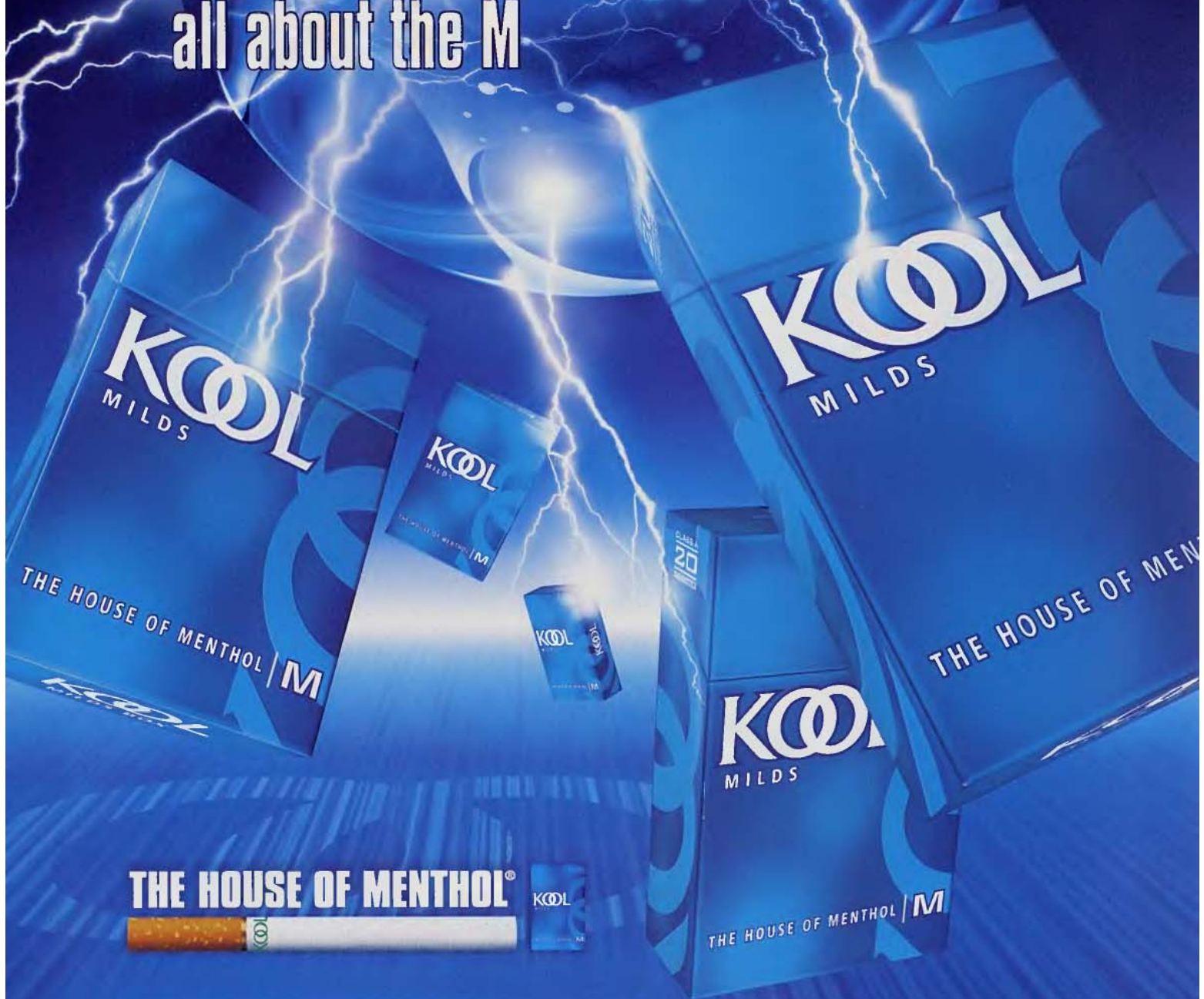
### Sultans of Wing

**\$11,282** First-class round-trip fare from New York City to Dubai on Emirates Airlines. Amenities include a cabin with a sliding door, room service, a personal minibar, a 19-inch TV with 500 channels and a vibrating bed that fully reclines. The airline also throws in a five-course meal at New York's Ritz-Carlton the night before the flight.

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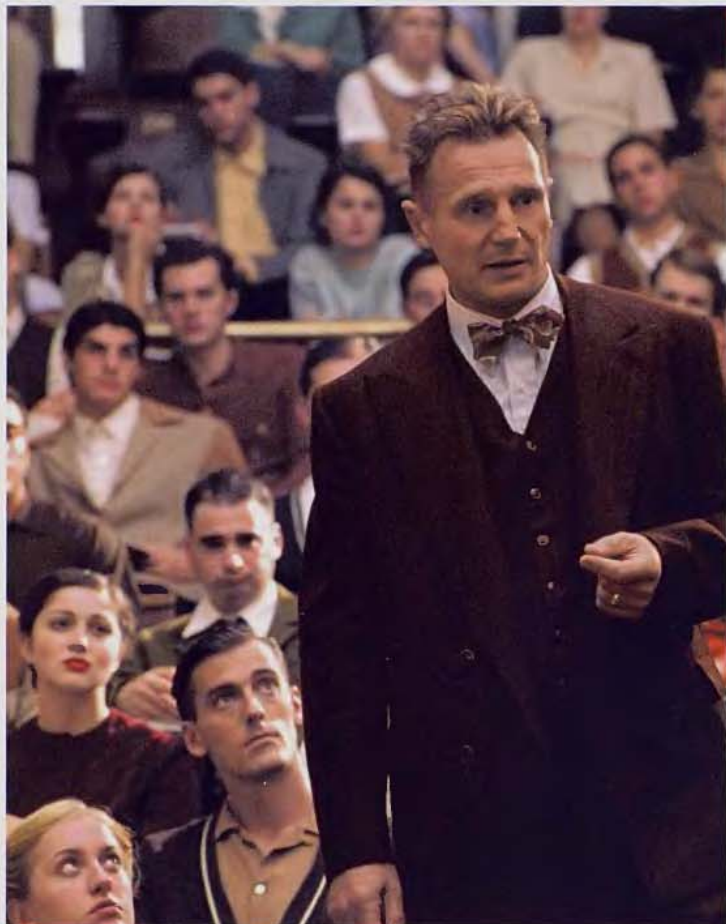
Milds Box, 10 mg. "tar", 0.9 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method. The amount of tar and nicotine you get from this product varies depending on how you smoke it. There is no such thing as a safe cigarette. For more information visit [www.bwtarnic.com](http://www.bwtarnic.com)

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# R E V I E W S

## m o v i e s



### movie of the month

## [ KINSEY ]

### Liam Neeson takes on his most controversial role

A mainstream American flick that deals with adult sexuality and talks almost nonstop about sex without a single smirk? That novelty alone would make *Kinsey*—starring Neeson as Alfred Kinsey, the fascinatingly flawed sex-research pioneer—worth the ticket price. Neeson stepped up to the role after such stars as George Clooney and Tom Hanks shied away, and he delivers an award-worthy performance opposite Laura Linney and Peter Sarsgaard. “We went for a few days to the Kinsey Institute in Bloomington, Indiana, where we were greeted by a sweet Indiana-housewife type with a pleasant ‘Hi, how are you doing?’ while on the wall behind her was this incredible framed poster of a couple making love,” says Neeson. Anti-sex zealots eventually crushed the influential researcher, and even today, Kinsey’s status as a father of the sexual revolution sparks controversy, including charges of everything from faulty research to pedophilia.

“I read this script and said, ‘Kinsey was a brave man.’”

“Coming from an Irish Catholic framework, I was taught enormous guilt about pushing your hand against your erect penis,” says Neeson. “Sex is controversial and always will be. I read this script and said, ‘Kinsey was a brave man who wanted to try to make the world a happier, more tolerant place.’ It’s only a movie, but it couldn’t be coming out at a better time.”

—Stephen Rebell

### now showing

### BUZZ

#### Ray

(**Jamie Foxx, Regina King, Kerry Washington**) Foxx goes for the Oscar gold in this musical bio about how Ray Charles, who died in June, overcame childhood blindness, his brother’s death, racism, drug addiction and womanizing to become an international star.

**Our call:** With this and *Collateral*, *Boozy Call* survivor Foxx lets it be known he clearly wants respect as a serious actor. But if his Ray doesn’t cut it, it’s hit the road, Jack.



#### Alexander

(**Colin Farrell, Angelina Jolie, Val Kilmer, Jared Leto**) Oliver Stone’s brawny epic celebrates how the young Macedonian king Alexander came, saw and conquered. Inspired by bosomy mom Jolie and bosom buddy Leto and aided by CGI-enhanced armies, Farrell tries to succeed where Brad Pitt faltered.

**Our call:** There hasn’t been a really good chest-beating sword-and-sandal epic since Russell Crowe and *Gladiator*. And this one’s got to be better than *Troy*, right?



#### Surviving Christmas

(**Ben Affleck, James Gandolfini, Catherine O’Hara**) Dumped by his girlfriend and alone for the holidays, a wealthy L.A. music executive (Affleck) arranges to be taken in by the family that lives in his childhood home. Will he recapture his happy youth? Gandolfini and O’Hara play the parents—is that a clue?

**Our call:** Sure, we can live through yet another supposedly edgy holiday comedy, but can the recently luckless Affleck survive another cinematic Christmas turkey?



#### Finding Neverland

(**Johnny Depp, Kate Winslet, Dustin Hoffman**) Depp stars as playwright J.M. Barrie, who becomes involved with a beautiful widow (Winslet) and her four young sons. While his shaky marriage gets even shakier, he is inspired, much to the delight of his producer (Hoffman), to pen the classic *Peter Pan*.

**Our call:** Get out your handkerchiefs. Powerhouse Oscar-worthy performances all around, and Depp plays a Scotsman so convincingly, Sean Connery could take lessons.



dvd of the month

[ SEINFELD ]

Nothingness is even funnier without commercials

Like Cosmo Kramer bursting through the unlocked door, *Seinfeld* propels itself onto DVD with gusto: three seasons at once, digitally remastered and restored to pre-syndication lengths. Although the show had yet to become a TV juggernaut—it didn't reach 25 in the ratings until season four—the first 40 episodes are some of the series's best, including "The Parking Garage" and "The Boyfriend," featuring first baseman Keith Hernandez. Given *Seinfeld's* syndication exposure, it's all about the... **Extras:** Cast commentaries from Jerry, Jason Alexander, Michael Richards and Julia Louis-Dreyfus add new dimensions to familiar scenes. Co-creators Seinfeld and Larry David chronicle the show's evolution in an hour-long documentary; volume two offers "Kramer vs. Kramer: Kenny to Cosmo," a feature on David's eccentric New York neighbor and Kramer inspiration Kenny Kramer. Also included are deleted scenes, bloopers and extended clips of Seinfeld's stand-up routines. **☆☆☆** —Greg Fagan



for this boxed set instead of paying the à la carte prices. **Extras:** New documentaries on all films except *North by Northwest*, and commentary by Peter Bogdanovich and author Patricia Highsmith on the loaded two-disc *Strangers*. **☆☆☆** —G.F.



**ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT—SEASON 1** (2003) Narrated by Ron Howard, the best sitcom in recent memory follows the dysfunctional Bluth family as straitlaced son Michael (Jason Bateman) tries to hold it together. As Bateman says, "It's *The Royal Tenenbaums* filmed like *Cops*." **Extras:** The un-aired pilot, cast and crew commentaries, an intro by Howard and a look behind the scenes. **☆☆☆** —Buzz McClain



**BEFORE SUNSET** (2004) The characters Ethan Hawke and Julie Delpy played in the almost-romance *Before Sunrise* spent 14 soul-baring hours together in Vienna before agreeing to meet again. Fast-forward nine years, and Hawke, in Paris for a book signing of his novel about their encounter, is reunited with Delpy shortly before he must catch a plane. The dialogue, co-written by both actors, is remarkable and real. **Extras:** Featurette with the stars discussing their cinematic reunion. **☆☆** —R.D.



**THE CHRONICLES OF RIDDICK** (2004) Vin Diesel returns to the breakout anti-hero role he nailed in *Pitch Black*. While that modest alien thriller surprised many, this post-*Fast and the Furious* Diesel flick has grandiose ambitions, Dame Judi Dench and a bloated budget. The dull nerd-world story about Necromongers and a planned interplanetary holocaust detracts from the otherworldly sets and badass Riddick one-liners. **Extras:** A guide to the *Chronicles* mythology and one level of Riddick's *Escape From Butcher Bay* video game (for use in an Xbox). **☆☆½** —Robert B. DeSalvo



**THE ALFRED HITCHCOCK SIGNATURE COLLECTION** A remastered version of *Strangers on a Train* anchors this nine-film collection offering seven DVD debuts from the master, as well as the previously available *North by Northwest*. With the superb *Dial M for Murder*, *Foreign Correspondent* and *Suspicion*, the worthy *Stage Fright* and *The Wrong Man*, and the flawed but still interesting *I Confess* and *Mr. & Mrs. Smith*—a rare Hitch screwball comedy starring Carole Lombard and Robert Montgomery—fans should definitely splurge

**FANNY AND ALEXANDER** (1983) Ingmar Bergman's movie is a joyous summation of his obsessions: theater, dreams, love and death. In a Swedish city in 1907, two children spend a year in hell when their widowed mother marries a sadistic bishop whose austere home is filled with ghosts and mad relatives. **Extras:** The five-disc set includes theatrical and TV versions, interviews and a making-of documentary. **☆☆☆** —Matt Steigbigel



tease frame



The lips get the attention, but her uninhibited sexuality on-screen is what sears **Angelina Jolie** onto our collective libido. Her curvaceousness is on display in *Mojave Moon* (1996), *Foxfire* (1996) and *Gia* (1998, left), the last proving that she can bare it all—physically and emotionally. Not all her roles transcend the flesh, leaving little reason to watch 2001's *Original Sin* or this year's *Taking Lives* other than the voyeuristic thrill of her sex scenes. This month she gives Colin Farrell an understandable Oedipus complex in *Alexander*.

the critical collector

[ WHEN THE RAT PACK RULED ]

Sinatra and pals define coolness on-screen

Back when world-class swinger-statesman John F. Kennedy was barnstorming his way into the Oval Office, a crew of world-class swingers-entertainers dubbed the Rat Pack roared into Las Vegas. Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., Peter Lawford and Joey Bishop hit *Sin City*, rubbed elbows with gangsters, played musical beds with showgirls and wowed audiences at the Sands. During their off hours, they breezed through the filming of *Ocean's Eleven*, which turned out to be one of the movie events of 1960. Forty-four years later *Ocean's Eleven*—one long in-joke disguised as a caper flick—is worth a look, if only for its glimpses of five cool hipsters at their finger-popping, swaggering peak. The DVD features trailers, commentary from Rat Pack sidekick Angie Dickinson and documentaries on the five targeted Vegas casinos. Sinatra and Martin reteamed in *4 for Texas* (1963), a saddle-sore Western spoof you might want to pass over for their final (and best) movie bash, *Robin and the 7 Hoods* (1964), featuring Sinatra, Martin and Davis as singing, machine-gun-toting Chicago gangsters. Sinatra memorably belts "My Kind of Town," and the DVD includes commentary by Frank Sinatra Jr. If you crave more cinematic ring-a-ding-ding, try the two-disc documentary set *The Rat Pack*, narrated by Danny Aiello, which offers more than three hours of interviews, concert footage and home movies. Chase that with a favorite of Rat Pack connoisseurs, *Judy, Frank & Dean—Once in a Lifetime*, a 1962 TV concert special with Judy Garland. Every number is a showstopper, but don't miss Sinatra casually flicking cigarette ash on the stage while singing a torch song. Essential coolness. —Stephen Rebello



special additions

Pee-wee, Tarzan and Scarlet exposed



The 1939 Civil War drama *Gone With the Wind* turns 65 in December, and it looks great in the new Warner Bros. special-edition release. The studio digitally restored a 1939 print and spread it over two discs to minimize compression. Despite passing on the 50th-anniversary celebrations in 1989, Olivia de Havilland, the movie's only surviving star, sat for a 45-minute interview that is the four-disc set's gem.... Readers absorbed in the FCC's straitlaced obsessions should grab *The Tarzan Collection Starring Johnny Weismuller* for an object lesson in American censorship. *Tarzan and His Mate* (1934) was the first film heavily censored under the industry's puritanical Hayes Code. Its four-minute skinny-dipping sequence, elegantly filmed underwater, is a landmark. Cut from the theatrical release, it's included here and discussed in-depth in the boxed set's eye-opening documentary.... With the cult-TV classic *Pee-wee's Playhouse* making its DVD debut, it's time to drop the pretense that it's a children's show. Let's face facts: Host and creator Paul Reubens has a dark, adults-only side to his genius. We look forward to hearing Reubens's commentaries on a limited boxed set promised for 2005. Meanwhile, the entire series is coming out November 9 from Image Entertainment—including six unaired episodes that were never available on VHS. —G.F.



SCANNER

**THE HUNGER** (1983) A vampire quests to stop her immortal lover's accelerated aging in this ultra-chic cult classic. David Bowie's transformation into an old man is chilling, while Catherine Deneuve and Susan Sarandon's love scene is hot-blooded. ★★★

**THE STEPFORD WIVES** (2004) The Stepford husbands create a utopia of programmable Barbie housewives who don't nag and are always in the mood. Nicole Kidman and Christopher Walken forgo the original's sociopolitical musings for camp. ★★★

**WHITE CHICKS** (2004) Inept FBI agents Marlon and Shawn Wayans become undercover brothers in the Hamptons when they disguise themselves as white socialites Brittany and Tiffany. It's not outlandish enough to be truly offensive. ★½

**BAADASSSSSS!** (2004) Mario Van Peebles plays his mack-daddy father, Melvin, in a pseudo-documentary about the making of his blaxploitation classic *Sweet Sweetback's Baad Asssss Song*. Enlightening and emotional. ★★★

**THE SIMPLE LIFE 2** (2004) Bored heiresses Paris Hilton and Nicole Richie humiliate themselves and all in their path on an Airstream trek from Miami Beach to Beverly Hills. Surreality television at its worst. ★

**STAR TREK: THE ORIGINAL SERIES: THE COMPLETE SECOND SEASON** (1967–1968) This round has "I, Mudd"—with the Stepford wife from hell—and Angelique Pettyjohn musing it with Captain Kirk. ★★★

**DE-LOVELY** (2004) Kevin Kline is dashing as musical-theater giant Cole Porter, and Ashley Judd evokes sympathy as the gay songwriter's wife-muse-beard. The musical interpretations by Alanis Morissette and Sheryl Crow just deflate the whole affair. ★★

**ED WOOD** (1994) Johnny Depp plays "The Worst Movie Director of All Time" in Tim Burton's sweet paean to the smelly underbelly of 1950s Hollywood. Martin Landau's Oscar-winning performance as down-and-out Bela Lugosi has become a classic. ★★★

★★★★ Don't miss      ★★ Worth a look  
★★★ Good show      ★ Forget it

cd of the month

[ MOS DEF \* THE NEW DANGER ]

Brooklyn's multitalented MC is always a lyrical threat



Find us a smarter, more socially conscious MC and we'll find out who shot Biggie and Tupac. For almost a decade, the die-hard Brooklynite has poured his heart, head and soul into his art, bringing his raptivism to De La Soul cameos and the visionary Black Star—his partnership with Talib Kweli—and also to theater and film projects. On his second solo effort, *The New Danger*, Mos showcases even more Bed Stuy layers. He scats, he chants, he croons beautifully. Most of all, he makes a statement. "Black Jack Johnson," the standout track—about taking back rock and roll from white people—is both the name of the black rock band he has formed and an ode to the first black man to win the heavyweight championship of the world. Is it as thought-provoking as everything else he touches? Most definitely. (Geffen) **★★★★** —Alison Prato

FATBOY SLIM • Palookaville

When Fatboy started out three albums ago, he had to make records for his DJ set—nobody else was producing what he wanted to spin. Massive beats were a key element. Though he's still in demand the world over for his ability to create the kind of party atmosphere you can spend a lifetime looking for, Fatboy no longer needs to fill his own DJ bag. Instead he mostly kicks back—with Bootsy Collins, Damon Albarn and others—on an album perfect for mellow poolside head nodding. (Astralwerks) **★★★** —Tim Mohr



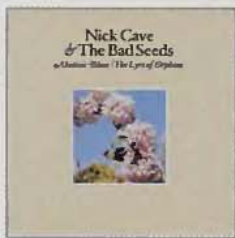
RICKY SKAGGS • Brand New Strings

Even before he became a country star in Nashville, Skaggs had a proud Kentucky pedigree, having played with Bill Monroe and Keith Whitley. These days he has given up the bright lights to return to his musical home, where he plays music too mountain for country radio. A master mandolin and guitar player, he knows how to put his killer band through its paces, as he does here. And his singing is better than ever. *Strings* is Skaggs's finest CD in years. (Skaggs Family) **★★★★½** —Leopold Froehlich



NICK CAVE • Abattoir Blues/The Lyre of Orpheus

This two-CD set is Cave's best work since 1996's *Murder Ballads*. With it, the postpunk legend returns to the gloom that made him an idol of the angst-ridden. Cave wrote all the Leonard Cohen-esque lyrics—and any number of emo bands would do well to study them. *The Lyre of Orpheus* is laden with acoustic gospel ballads. *Abattoir Blues* rocks hard. Though the London Community Gospel Choir nearly steals the show, Cave proves he's still one of the living music gods. (Anti-) **★★★★½** —Patty Lamberti



VALENTIN SILVESTROV • Silent Songs

The 67-year-old Ukrainian composer has earned an international reputation with his powerful neo-Romantic symphonies. This two-CD song cycle for baritone and piano moves in a less heroic direction—at times it's so quiet you must strain to hear the lamentations. For all their classical references, these are not the lieder of Schubert or Schumann. As the music moves at its glacial pace, we hear the disintegration of the form. The profound effect is of an immense object about to come to rest forever. (ECM) **★★★★** —L.F.



high notes

[ ANNA NETREBKO ]

This 33-year-old Russian soprano sold 100,000 copies of her debut album—and that's only the second best thing about her

She's been called the first great soprano of the 21st century, but she's no Brunhilde in a Viking outfit. Netrebko is a virtuoso with a brilliant voice of surprising color. On her new release, *Sempre Libera* (Deutsche Grammophon), she performs prima donna roles from Italian opera.

**PLAYBOY:** What do you love about opera?

**ANNA:** It's different from anything else, and I like that it's not easy to understand. I don't get bored with it, so I can listen to each opera many times. And it's difficult to sing, actually—it's very hard to perform. Singing pop music is not nearly as interesting as performing opera.

**PLAYBOY:** In America, opera attracts an older crowd. Why is that?



**ANNA:** Operas can look old-fashioned. That's changing, but not everywhere. There are lots of younger singers and pretty productions now. It's much more visually interesting than it used to be.

**PLAYBOY:** What's your favorite repertoire?

**ANNA:** I like to listen to Wagner, but I can't sing his work—it's not for my voice. I sing bel canto, which is beautiful music. And I like Mozart, of course, always.

**PLAYBOY:** How do you rest your voice?

**ANNA:** I try to shut up, but it's hard because I like to talk and I have lots of friends I like to hang out and chat with.

**PLAYBOY:** Is there a sexual component to opera's appeal?

**ANNA:** Opera can be sexual because the music can be erotic—very erotic.

**PLAYBOY:** Your boyfriend is also an opera singer. Do you sing to each other?

**ANNA:** No, never. But we like to listen to music together. That's always good.



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game of the month

[ DEAD OR ALIVE ULTIMATE ]

How do you follow up a hit game with its predecessor? Chicks help

*Dead or Alive 3* was our kind of game: Easy to pick up and play, it looked like a million bucks and featured some of the best digital females ever created. *DOA Ultimate* (Tecmo, Xbox) is a two-game set that contains the first and second installments of the series, which were previously designed for less advanced systems. *DOA 1* (created for the Sega Saturn) is an unreconstructed gaming history lesson that's strictly for the hard-core. *DOA 2*, on the other hand, has been completely updated with gorgeous graphics, new outfits, great environments and all the jiggy bits we've come to expect. The novelty quotient is relatively low—gameplay is nearly identical to *DOA 3*—but the addition of online play makes this game a rock of grade-A digital crack. If you're on Xbox Live and like to brawl, stock up on food—you won't be leaving the house for a while. **YYY** —Scott Alexander



**TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2** (Activision, GameCube, PS2, Xbox, PC) Amazingly enough, the house that Hawk built is still fresh its sixth time out. Adding more anarchy and humor to the story-based format of the first *Underground*, this iteration puts you on Tony's crew as he battles Bam Margera in a World Destruction Tour. All the usual thrashing ensues, but now you can take control of characters you meet throughout the game. Did you know that Ben Franklin can stalefish? **YYY**



—John Gaudiosi

**MORTAL KOMBAT: DECEPTION** (Midway, PS2, Xbox) Gaming's goriest brawler gets a macabre makeover this month, letting you make good use of Scorpion, Kira or Kobra's spine-crushing abilities. Technically, there is a plot, but with all the impaling and appendage-ripping we'd be hard-pressed to recount it. In addition to the main story mode, the game's extras include online play and bizarre yet addictive chess, puzzle and adventure options. **YYY**



—Scott Steinberg

**BLOODRAYNE 2** (Majesco, PS2, Xbox, PC) BloodRayne's controls have been refined for her second outing, making it easier to leap, grind and gyrate through modern-day sewers and slaughterhouses, flaying opponents with killer combos, flinging them into fans or filling them full of lead. Experience gets you weapon or ability upgrades, and BloodRayne's acrobatic moves and slo-mo superpowers are as impressive as her knack for squeezing into skintight leather. **YYY**



—S.S.

**FIFA SOCCER 2005** (EA Sports, GameCube, PC, PS2, Xbox) A good soccer match is all about control, and EA Sports took that to heart when creating the latest in its best-selling footy franchise. Its "first touch" feature is a huge leap forward, letting gamers control the ball in a quicker, more intuitive manner. Along with a ton of licensed teams and players, this year's version includes a more robust career mode and head-to-head play over the Net (on Xbox and PS2). **YYY½**



—Marc Saltzman

pixel profile

[ PETER MOLYNEUX ]

The brains behind *Black & White* turns his attention to mythmaking

Molyneux has long been obsessed with creating electronic worlds that truly live and breathe. The mind behind a host of groundbreaking games, he has developed his most ambitious to date with his latest opus, *Fable* (Microsoft Game Studios, Xbox).

**Q:** How does *Fable* differ from other adventure or role-playing games?

**A:** It's set in a simulated, reactive world with no set script and all these chaotic possibilities. Whether your character is good or evil is determined by the challenges you face. If you run into a man who's having an affair, he may give you some gold if you don't tell his wife. Do you take the gold and keep the secret? Do you refuse the gold and tell his wife? Do you take the gold and tell his wife anyway?

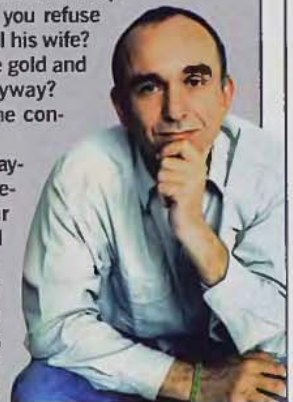
**Q:** What are the consequences?

**A:** The kind of player you are is reflected in your appearance and how people react to you. Your hero will look unique to you, but you don't create his look by selecting attributes from a menu; you create it by making choices in the game. When someone gets near the end of the game, you can look at his character and actually have an insight into what sort of person he is. I can probably tell more about a person from his *Fable* character than from a personality test.

**Q:** How long does it take to play?

**A:** That completely depends on you.

—S.A.



wired

Bare-Knuckled Debate

You have an important political choice to make this month. Which candidate do you want to punch? If you have a newish phone, you should be able to download Sorrent's *Bush vs. Kerry Boxing* (about \$3, most cell phone carriers), which lets you settle this whole election business the old-fashioned way.



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CLASSICS WITH A TWIST



TOMMY HILFGER



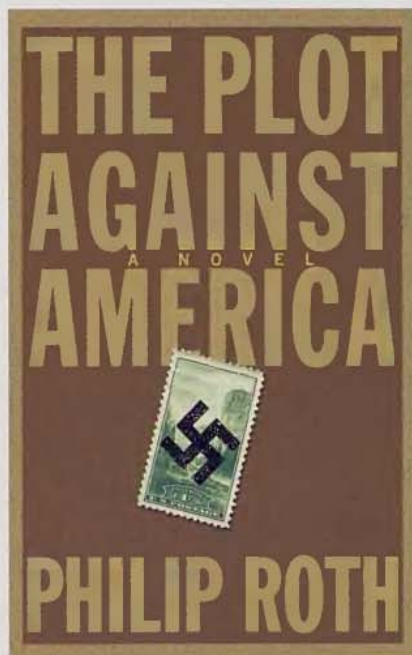
DRESS SHIRTS

book of the month

[ THE PLOT AGAINST AMERICA ]  
PHILIP ROTH

Imagining a fascist America

With this brilliant piece of conjectural history, Roth again proves he is one of our greatest novelists. The story begins when *Spirit of St. Louis* hero and anti-Semite Charles Lindbergh defeats Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1940 presidential election, which strikes fear into most Jewish households in Newark, New Jersey. The new government's Office of American Absorption and the Just Folks program pressure Jews to assimilate into the odd ways of Christian America. It's too much for the headstrong Roth family, which begins to fall apart. The stress weighs heavily on nine-year-old Philip, who struggles to make sense of a nonsensical situation. "How can this be happening in America?" asks Roth's father. The plot is occasionally as implausible as an Abbott and Costello routine, but it often hits so near to home we can sense the whiff of history. Roth reveals the fragility of our times, as well as how close we come to peril without ever knowing it. (*Houghton Mifflin*) ★★★ —Leopold Froehlich



THE STONE THAT THE BUILDER REFUSED • Madison Smartt Bell

The sequel to *All Souls' Rising* and *Master of the Crossroads* completes Bell's fictional trilogy chronicling the Haitian revolution and the rise and fall of insurgent slave leader Toussaint-Louverture. This installment concentrates on the final two years of his life. (If you haven't read the previous books, don't worry; a chronology at the end of this one outlines the historical facts.) The first novel was criticized for its violence, and here Bell leaves out many gory details. As the title hints, Toussaint, like Jesus, was rejected and, in a way, also crucified. In the end, however, his edicts provided the cornerstone for liberation. (*Pantheon*) ★★★

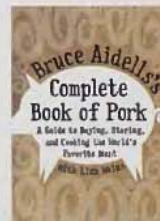
—J. Jaroneczyk Hawthorne



COMPLETE BOOK OF PORK

Bruce Aidells

Dried out and flavorless, pork has suffered in its low-fat role as the other white meat. A revival has been under way in the past few years, however. As founder of Aidells Sausage, the author knows how to cook pig meat. Some of the recipes here, such as Grilled North African Marinated Pork Kebabs on Couscous With Apricot Sauce, would be a challenge to even seasoned chefs. But many others, such as Pork Cutlets Milanese, can be whipped up in an oink. Introductory chapters provide tips on selecting the right cut, seasoning and grilling. There's even a section in defense of lard. This is a must for any porkophile. (*HarperCollins*) ★★★ —Patty Lamberti



HIP: THE HISTORY • John Leland

The soul group Tower of Power once asked, "What is hip?" *New York Times* culture reporter John Leland attempts to answer the question by analyzing the pivotal moments of coolness during the eras of slavery, jazz, Beats, punks and dot-commers. As antithetical as intellectualizing hipness may be, Leland balances the cerebral with the entertaining, making this book the literary equivalent of VH1's *I Love the 90s*. The most interesting chapters

illustrate hip's reluctant shift from rebellious to mainstream. For example, skateboarding was once the hobby of degenerates, but now it's broadcast on TV. Ultimately, Leland points out, if you have to ask what's hip, you're not hip. But after reading this insightful look at the history of cool, you'll be able to fake it. (*Ecco*) ★★★½ —Emily Little



the erotic eye



XXX: 30 PORN-STAR PORTRAITS

Timothy Greenfield-Sanders

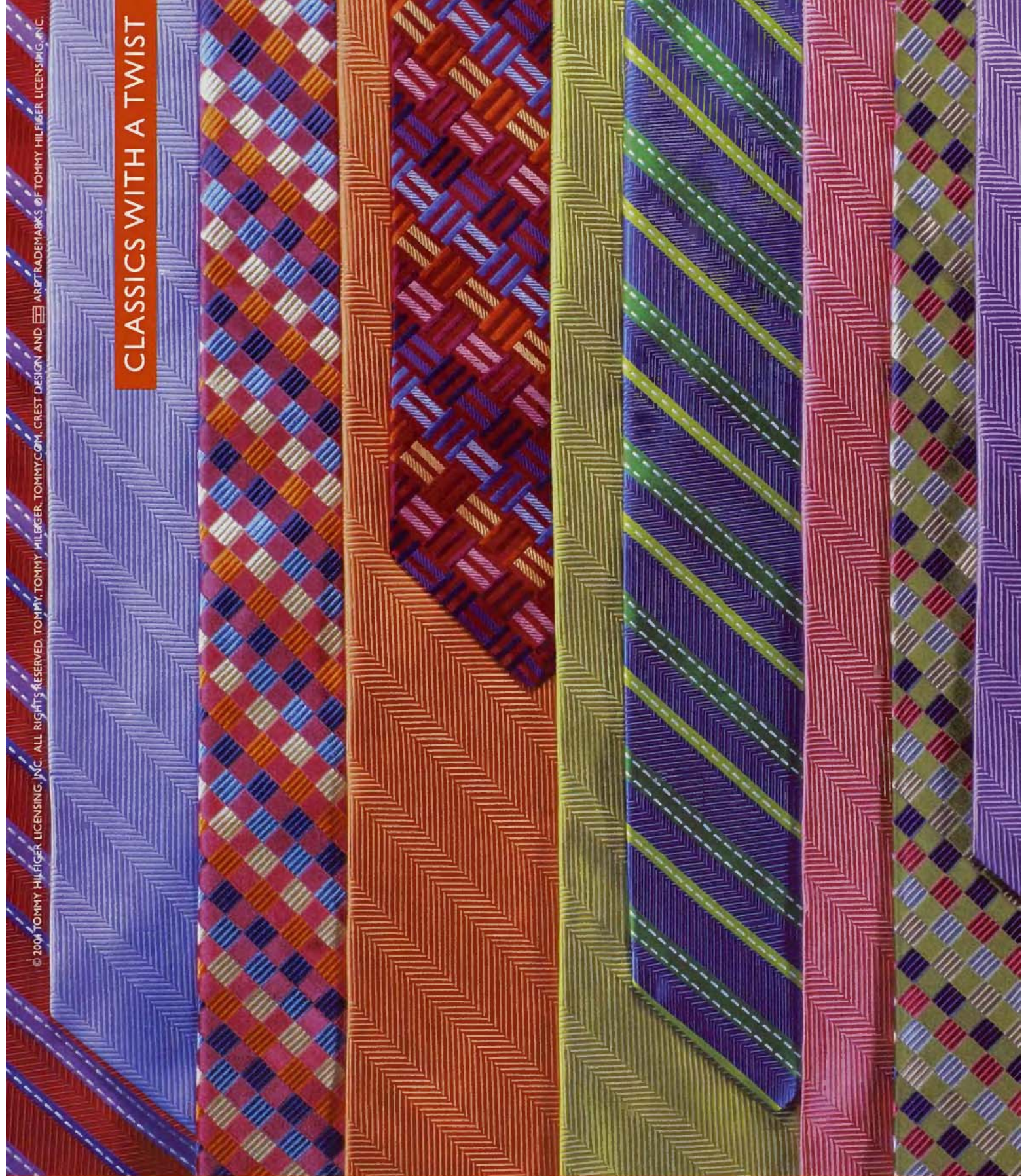
This coffee-table book places clothed portraits of such porn stars as Jenna Jameson next to naked ones. But the real attraction isn't the performers. It's the essays from such literary giants as Gore Vidal, A.M. Homes and Salman Rushdie. John Malkovich writes about watching porn as a young man, and John Waters interviews a porn director. Consider it an artistic, if not erotic, lesson in adult-film culture. (*Bulfinch*) ★★★ —Melissa Wozniak





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CLASSICS WITH A TWIST



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TIES



# MORTAL KOMBAT<sup>®</sup> DECEPTION



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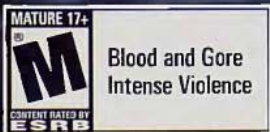


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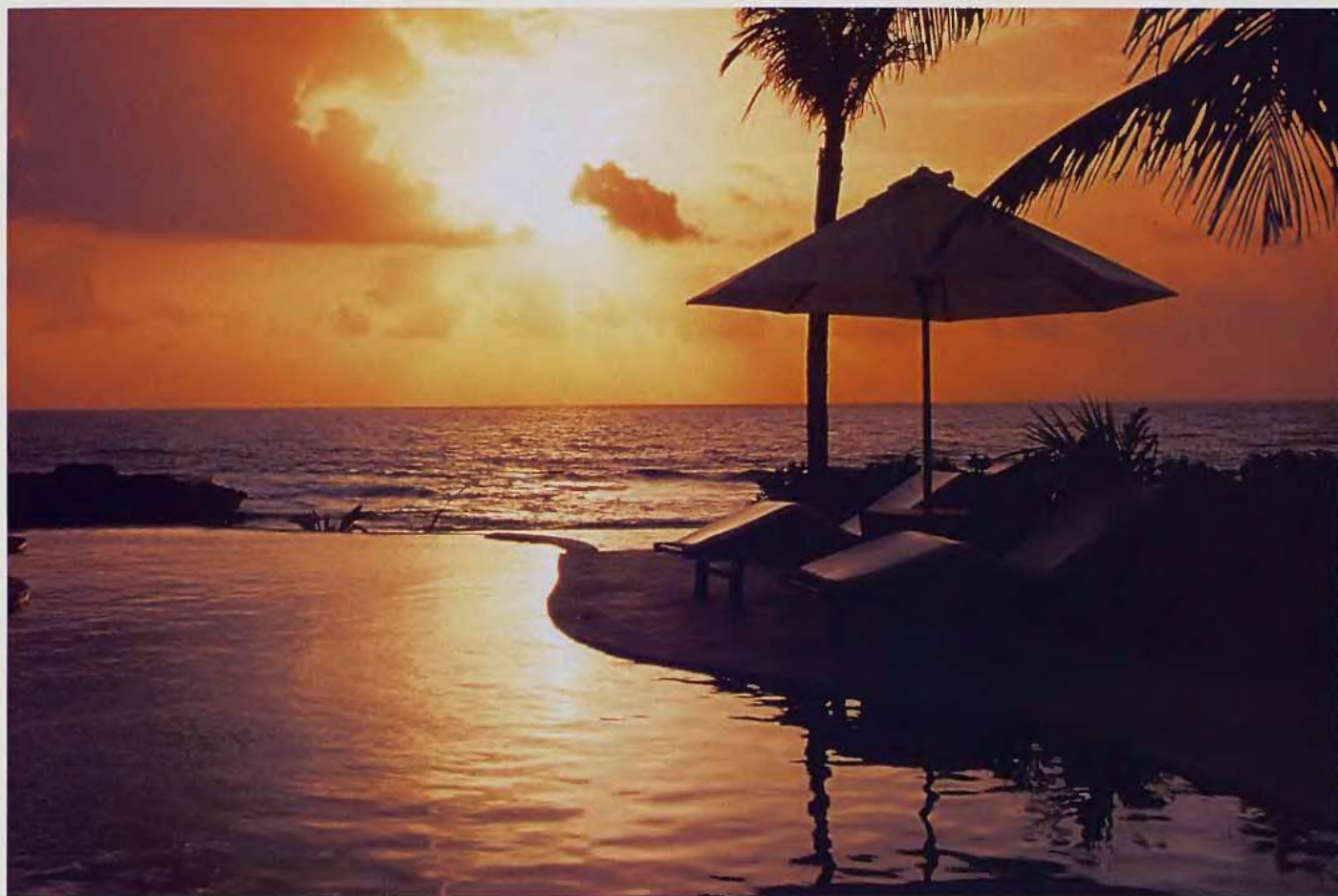
[MORTALKOMBATDECEPTION.COM](http://MORTALKOMBATDECEPTION.COM)



PlayStation.2



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## Southern Exposure

The latest revolution in Mexico is about class, not class struggle. Here's how to pay a visit in style

**USED TO BE, YOU** went south of the border for cheap thrills, a swim and a sombrero. In recent years, though, Mexico has started taking hospitality tips from Europe and the States, offering gourmet regional cuisine and luxe accommodations. Take, for example, the chic, contemporary Hotel Secreto (pictured), a romantic seaside getaway on Isla Mujeres, 30 minutes by ferry from Cancún. This three-year-old hotel is a labor of love for Scott Boyan, a Boston native and former magazine man who came to Isla Mujeres on assignment and ended up marrying into a family of local hoteliers. Outside, the terraced rooms are spread around

an infinity-edge pool. Inside, stone floors and canopied beds jazz up the cool whitewashed building. While the Secreto's rooftop restaurant is still a season away from completion, the pool bar and surf-side lounge are perfect for afternoon cocktails. Prime Yucatán must-sees such as the Mayan ruins of Tulum are just a few hours away, as are the crowded beach bars of nearby party town Playa del Carmen. Still, with its soothing silence and elegant, understated design, the Secreto lets you have a blast without ever leaving your room. Rates start at \$165; book at [hotelsecreto.com](http://hotelsecreto.com).



### 5 Rules for traveling in Mexico

1. Tip the police. Trust us, it's worthwhile.
2. Beware of ice cubes. You know not to drink the water. Guess what ice cubes are made of.
3. Don't get punched in the face. It hurts and can leave a scar. This means lay off any woman who has **HECTOR** tattooed above her papaya.
4. Avoid mysterious chili peppers on your plate. A raw habanero can seriously ruin your day.
5. Don't get busted with pot. Mexican law treats marijuana and heroin possession equally. How does a 10-year sentence sound, amigo?

## Nectar of los Dios



**THERE'S A LOT OF BUZZ** among liquor connoisseurs about Gran Patrón's Platinum tequila, the first new release in a decade from one of Mexico's most revered distilleries. *iAy, caramba!* This white tequila is as good as any we've ever had—pure steam-baked agave juice that's triple distilled, barely aged and dressed up in a handcrafted crystal bottle. With no oak in the way, all you taste is the agave's rich honey, with hints of nut and straw grass. For God's sake, don't mix it. Available for \$189 at better liquor stores nationwide.



## Tower of Power

Superb sound reproduction, world-class engineering and a body that won't quit: Time for a dose of the sonic truth

**WE KNEW IT WAS** only a matter of time before all the adorable industrial design work being applied to cell phones and MP3 players would begin to trickle down to the big boxes. Classé Audio started from scratch to come up with the elegant chassis design on its new Delta line of high-end audio components. If you could dream in stereo, you'd dream of this. The amp (bottom, \$5,000, [classeaudio.com](http://classeaudio.com)) pumps out 200 watts per channel of Classé's traditionally precise audio (courtesy of the technology that powers the company's venerable Omega line). For optimal playback, pair it as pictured—with the CP-500 pre-amp (\$3,500) and the CDP-100 CD player (\$3,500); the latter features a 24-bit, 352-kilohertz digital filter with oversampling, as well as Classé's Pure Differential Cross Balance digital-to-analog converter system, which uses four converters per channel. (Translation: It sounds real nice.) Control is a breeze—the unit has LCD touch screens that present you with relevant options only and can guide you through anything you might want to tweak in your sound. Better yet, the system sounds great even when you're not looking at it.



### Clothesline: Joe Perry

**PLAYING GUITAR FOR** Aerosmith isn't the only thing Joe Perry is passionate about—he also indulges heavily in fashion. "Rock and roll sets you free," he says, "and clothes help send that message. The best shopping is in Japan, because designers such as Burberry, Diesel and Prada make special lines just for that country. My favorite buying experience was in Milan, when the whole city was having a half-off sale. My favorite store in the world is Alan Bilzerian on Newbury Street in Boston. It carries everything; it's a one-stop store." Does Perry ever power shop with fellow bandmate and notorious clotheshorse Steven Tyler? "Not often. As time has gone by, he's gotten more conservative and I've gotten more flamboyant. Go figure that!"

### Think Again: the Master Bed

**INSPIRED BY THE SUBTLE** movement of suspension bridges, Max Longin's Float Bed (\$6,000 and up, [max-longin.com](http://max-longin.com)) eschews traditional vertical legs for a swaying, suspended sleep system. That is, when you move, it moves—which creates some interesting possibilities for more vigorous bedroom activities. Once you stop moving, though, the bed frame gradually settles and eases you into a night's sleep. Or as the German-based mathematician turned furniture designer puts it, the Float "doesn't inhibit or obstruct the movements of the lying or loving; it rather balances them and carries them to rest." Amen to that. The beds are made in small batches by Longin himself and come in a variety of sizes and polished-wood finishes (Longin prefers the king, in maple, pictured). They're designed for permanent use in the master bedroom, but they also make great guest beds; you can fold one up and stash it in a closet in a pinch.



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## The Road Less Traveled

Looking for luxury in a vehicle that can carry you well off the beaten path? Get ready to rumble through the jungle—urban or otherwise

**AFTER A 15-YEAR RUN**, Land Rover's Discovery, a benchmark SUV that repeatedly proved its worth on Camel Trophy off-road treks from the jungles of Borneo to the deserts of Africa, is getting phased out in favor of the new Land Rover LR3. The old Disco, off-road experts agreed, was the truck to take over ground most would fear to tread. But after test-driving the new model in the Scottish highlands—descending 45-degree sand slopes, slicing through a rocky riverbed with water lapping at middoor level—we can say with confidence that the new model eclipses the old and then some. Land Rover tested the LR3 on more than 4 million miles of terrain around the globe before bringing it to market, and it shows.

Most of the improvements involve technological wizardry. The best new feature is the patented Terrain Response system, a rotary switch on the console that lets you choose from five options: general driving; grass, gravel and snow; mud and ruts; sand; and rock crawling. Turn the knob and the entire car reacts, adjusting ride height, throttle response and any number of traction controls. Under the aluminum hood is a 300 bhp, 4.4-liter Jaguar-based V8 with 315 pounds per foot of torque. As for the interior, refined stadium seating comfortably accommodates seven. A rear hatch facilitates loading, and with two rows of rear seats that fold flat, Land Rover claims there's enough room to transport a newborn elephant (you never know when that might come in handy). The LR3 starts at a reasonable \$45,000 for the SE and goes to \$50,000 for the HSE. Power up the booming Harman/Kardon Logic 7 stereo and head for your favorite hills. Nothing will stop you.



### Car Getaways

**IN THE OLD DAYS**, the gentry would leave the city for the country on weekends to ride horses before getting silly on cognac. This tradition lives on at Land Rover's driving schools, only instead of horses—well, you get the idea. The company runs schools at the Biltmore estate in North Carolina (pictured), the Greenbrier in West Virginia, the Fairmont Le Château Montebello in Quebec and Eastnor Castle in England. By day you tear up the backwoods, negotiating riverbeds and steep descents (\$150 for a one-hour lesson, \$700 to go solo for a day). By night the XO flows. Dial 800-239-0533 for information.



### Drinking and Driving

**DIRECT FROM ITALY**, the Velox Coffee-break plugs into your car's cigarette lighter and makes two cups of espresso. If the java doesn't keep you awake, try spilling some on your lap—it's brewed at the standard 180 degrees. Order at forzanos.com.



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I wouldn't mind if he was up that early cleaning the garage, but he's out there having fun with her.

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## What's in Store

**Whiskey, Cuban cigars, head massages—Dunhill redefines shopping for men**



**ACCORDING TO** the old adage, men hate to shop. Well, at least some men do. Whatever—any man who hates to shop should pay a visit to the newly refurbished Alfred Dunhill flagship store at 48

Jermyn Street in London. You've heard about the classic brand's wares—slick British suits, lighters that can turn a health nut into a pack-a-day smoker. Now Dunhill's in-store stylings have us talking, thanks to a cigar bar where you can recline and indulge in a Cuban and a single malt. Then there's the barbershop (called Pankhurst), where you can get a straight-razor shave, a haircut and a head massage while you tune in to your own flat-screen TV. And when you pick out a suit, a lighting system in the dressing room can re-create the atmosphere of any place in the world at any time of day. Want to know how a particular color will look on you in, say, Tokyo at 10 A.M.? Tell a clerk and there you have it. The vintage 1925 Norton motorbike (left) isn't for sale. Or is it? Everything's for sale. That's the great thing about shopping.



## Save Face

**Don't let winter and shaving brutalize your mug**

**EPIDERMIS (N):** the thin outermost layer of skin, itself made of several layers, all of which can get rototilled by icy wind and razor blades. Our picks from this season's soothing aftershaves (clockwise from middle): Yves Saint Laurent Rive Gauche Pour Homme, an earthy mix of lavender and patchouli (\$34); L'eau D'Issey Pour Homme, with licorice extract and saxifrage to tone the tissues (\$40); Biotherm Homme Aquatic Lotion, with hydrating agents such as glycerin and plankton extract (\$21); Kenneth Cole Reaction, a casual brew with crisp lime and sandalwood (\$42); and Davidoff Cool Water Deep, with kiwi notes and a musk base (\$42).



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## Rio. Grand.

Don't be a pod person

**SO OKAY, YES, WE** get it. The iPod mini is as cute as a button. But where's the love for all the fantastic and, heaven forbid, different-looking devices out there that do the job just as well? Rio Carbon (\$250, [rioaudio.com](http://rioaudio.com)) sports five gigabytes of onboard memory (same as the mini) in a slimmer, trimmer, more masculine package. It slips into your pocket like a smooth beach stone, lets you pack more than 80 hours of your musical life, has USB 2.0 for speedy file transfers and gets 20 hours of playback time on one charge. Thank God someone's keeping Steve Jobs up at night.



## Easy Rider

This board takes a lickin' and keeps on slippin'

**GO AHEAD, TAKE SANTA CRUZ's** Chris Roach GhostShip (left, \$500, [scskate.com](http://scskate.com)) down the gnarliest terrain you can find. It won't fail you. This board is as technologically advanced as they come. It has rubber dampeners sandwiched into the metal edges that provide great grip on ice and protection from rock damage. The slick StrucTurn finishing gives you a faster ride, and the board's 155-centimeter length is short enough to let you navigate through trees and long enough for you to maintain when the going gets fast and bumpy. And don't worry—you can cruise the snowboard park without getting dirty looks. The GhostShip is part of the Santa Cruz Respect series, which pays homage to pioneers such as Chris Roach (if anyone asks, he's a snowboarding trailblazer whose skateboard-influenced style redirected the sport toward freestyle park riding).

## About Time

A stylish watch that's fit for active duty

**WE LOVE DRESS WATCHES**, but if you're planning something more ambitious than a night on the town, you may find yourself concentrating more on not ding up a fancy timepiece than on, say, carving your turns correctly. To deal with the slings and arrows (not to mention the scratches and dents) of everyday living, you need a watch that's tough but can also hold its own when you slide on a suit and cuff links. Bulova's Marine Star 98C66 sports watch (\$225, [bulova.com](http://bulova.com)) is built to handle a day on the slopes—or in the surf, for that matter. It's waterproof up to 200 meters and features a smart two-tone rotating timer bezel. And with its classic Bulova styling, you can hit the dance floor without skipping a beat.



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# The Playboy Advisor

I bought some Cubans recently. I'm a beginner smoker who fell in love with Romeo y Julietas while I was in Spain. I don't own a humididor, so I've kept the boxes in my bedroom closet. The cigars are in the boxes, in metal tubes, with a leaf in each tube. When I went to smoke one the other day I noticed what looked like mold on some of them. What can I do about this? Should I keep them in the basement? Please help me prevent a good thing from going to waste.—C.C., Trenton, New Jersey

First, make sure it's mold and not bloom, which is a grayish white powder caused by oils that the tobacco exudes as it ages. Mold is bluish green and stains the wrapper; bloom is harmless—the equivalent of dust on a bottle of wine. As Richard Carleton Hacker points out in his *Ultimate Cigar Book*, a closet is a good place for your stash because it's dark and remains at a relatively constant temperature close to the ideal of 70 degrees. But it still might have heat spikes, which can lead to trouble. That's why you should invest in a small humididor or cedar cigar box or at the very least use an airtight container that you've lined with cedar strips, which are the "leaves" wrapped around your cigars now. Cigars will dry out if you don't add moisture (the goal is 65 to 70 percent humidity), so include a paper towel or small sponge soaked in distilled water or use a product such as Evermoist. Don't let water come in contact with the wrappers. Dry cigars can be rehumidified as long as their oils haven't evaporated.

What's your position on withholding sex as a means of gaining power in a relationship?—M.L., Springfield, Ohio

Uh...we're against it. If a person believes refusing sex is the only way to assert power, the relationship is out of balance in other ways. You also sacrifice your own pleasure.

A close female friend keeps getting hit on by this proper player whom everyone but the girl hates. Normally I wouldn't be too bothered, but this guy has a seriously bad reputation with women, and it would drive me mad to see her hurt. Should I confront him and say I'll castrate him if he goes near her again, talk to her about it or let her sort it out?—G.R., Southampton, U.K.

Forget the guy. You need to tell your friend you're in love with her.

When I hang a picture, I place it so the center is at my eye level (I'm six feet tall). My wife, who is six inches shorter, says I hang it too high. What's the correct height?—S.Q., Middleburg, Virginia

The standard practice at museums and galleries is to place the middle of the picture 58 inches from the floor, which is about eye level for most people. This is according to our



personal curator, Aaron Baker, who oversees the extensive PLAYBOY art collection and who positioned the works in our office (including a photomosaic of the Mona Lisa by Robert Silvers that's composed entirely of hard-core Internet porn—try hanging that at your job). You have more flexibility in your home, especially because you're placing pictures around furniture, but 58 inches is a good starting point.

Can you recommend a good vibrator?—G.B., Phoenix, Arizona

Besides the washing machine? Every woman (and man) is different, so we can tell you only what sells well at shops such as Toys in Babeland (800-658-9119 or babeland.com). We've written about the top three before: the workhorse Hitachi Magic Wand (\$52), the classic Rabbit Habit (\$86) and the discreet Pocket Rocket (\$27). Innovative products include a vibrator charged by the sun; the Petal Ring, which is designed to stimulate both partners at the same time; a vibe you can attach to your laptop's USB port; and the Audi-Oh Butterfly, which vibrates to sounds such as voices or music. In general, vibrators are becoming smaller and more powerful, largely because many now run on watch batteries. The trendiest new toys are vibrating objets d'art sold by the London boutique Myla (myla.com). Japanese ceramic artist Mari-Ruth Oda created Pebble (\$175), furniture and watch designer Marc Newson made Mojo (\$120), and furniture designer Tom Dixon created Bone (\$350).

You said in July that the best method to discourage tailgaters is to turn on your emergency flashers. I am a police officer who once ticketed a guy for doing exactly that. Not only is it unsafe, it's against the law. When motorists see a

vehicle with its flashers on, they are likely to make quick, irrational maneuvers to get around it. The safest way to handle a tailgater is to signal and move into a slower lane. If you're in the slowest lane, pull over to the shoulder or exit. Don't let pride or anger cloud your thinking.—J.G., St. Louis, Missouri

Did you ticket the tailgater? That's something we would have liked to see. A number of readers took issue with our advice, pointing out that the easiest thing to do is change lanes (assuming you have that option). That seemed too obvious to mention.

Your answer should have been "Get the fuck out of the way." Most people tailgate because the driver in front isn't paying attention, not the other way around. Stay out of the passing lane unless you're passing.—P.M., Chicago, Illinois

Some people drive too slowly. That can be frustrating. But sticking to their bumper in any situation makes you the asshole, because you're creating a hazard that didn't exist before. With rare exceptions, it is your fault when you rear-end someone. The rule of thumb is a car length for every 10 miles per hour, and that's still too close.

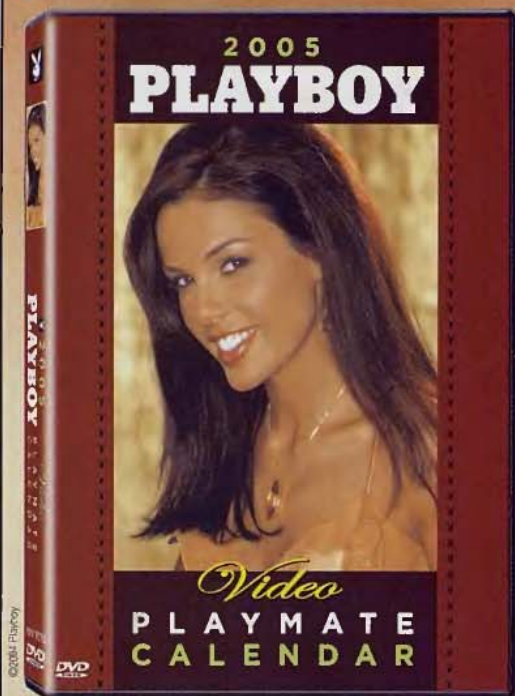
I am a 25-year-old Asian woman, and my husband is a 30-year-old Asian man. I think we both would say we have a healthy sex life. But recently I looked at the website history on our computer and discovered he's been looking at porn before he goes to work. Specifically, he searches for photos of blondes engaging in anal sex. Should I be concerned that this sometimes makes him late for work or that he's into blondes? I know it can't be about anal sex, because we have that frequently.—V.N., San Jose, California

If you were a blonde, he'd be searching for brunettes. The appeal of porn for most guys is that it provides variety (and they never hear "no"). In your husband's defense, his search for images may be nothing near a habit. That's what you need to find out from him—is this a fetish or one of many fantasies? We'd guess the latter. Ever been butt fucked in a wig?

After an evening of energetic sex with my girlfriend, I awoke at 2:30 A.M. to find her lips on my cock. I said, "I can't believe this, baby," at which point she pulled away, looking startled. Turns out she was asleep and had no idea what was going on. My girlfriend is a sleepsucker! We both are wondering if this is common.—R.C., Vermillion, South Dakota

It's not common enough, that's for sure. In 1996 we ran letters from two women who claimed their husbands had made love to them while asleep. We had our doubts, but a respected sleep expert, Dr. Michael Thorpy,

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assured us that people are capable of doing many unusual things while slumbering. We called him for an update. "There's now more awareness among doctors that this occurs," he says. "It's part of a process known as confusional arousal. It occurs while people are in a deep sleep—deeper than even the dream stage—usually during the first half of the night. Something rouses them, but they don't wake up. Instead they enter a half-sleep, half-awake state." That leads to sleepwalking or other odd behavior. One study at Stanford University involved two sleeping women who would moan loudly as if being aroused, a woman and a man who would masturbate furiously, and six men and a woman who would make unwanted and sometimes violent advances on their partner. One 26-year-old would fondle her husband and talk dirty to him. When he responded, she would wake up and accuse him of trying to seduce her while she slept. Her husband wouldn't believe she had been unconscious. They went to a counselor but didn't make any progress until a sleep lab revealed what was going on.

You took a beating in July for your reply to the size-16 woman who wanted to know if a cute face was enough for her to find a man. But the Advisor's honesty, brutal or otherwise, is the reason I read PLAYBOY. When people ask you for the truth, they actually want you to affirm their unrealistic fantasies. Because men are confronted with the harsh realities of life and dating at an earlier age, we do not so easily find solace in fairy tales.—T.S., New York, New York

*Not sure that's true—we hear from plenty of men who have unrealistic expectations.*

Your critics are too harsh. The woman told you she was heavy and therefore didn't have a man and therefore was bitter. This is a common pattern. Many people gain weight to avoid intimacy, but it doesn't always work for women, because they date and marry up, while men date and marry down. That is, even a woman who is a one on a scale of one to 10 will be attractive to a guy who is a two. You also see women who become 10s only so they can say that no man is good enough.—S.S., Chicago, Illinois

*That explains why we date so many nines.*

The angry letters took up too much space, especially since you were right. Drop it!—J.R., New Orleans, Louisiana

*Done. But where were you guys when we needed you?*

What are the differences between a steam room and a sauna? My gym has both.—D.K., Brookline, Massachusetts

*The difference you'll notice immediately is that one is hotter. A sauna is typically 170 to 180 degrees and has very little steam (a dry heat). A steam room is typically 100 to 110 degrees and will have more steam (wet heat). Saunas are constructed of porous material such as cedar, while steam rooms are sealed off.*



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AT NEWSSTANDS NOW

There's no evidence that sitting in a hot room for 15 minutes rids your body of toxins, cleans pores, sheds pounds or offers any other long-term health benefits—even the diehards at the Finnish Sauna Society will tell you that. But it can be relaxing. Because saunas and steam rooms increase your heart rate dramatically, decrease your blood pressure and dehydrate you, doctors say they shouldn't be used before or after strenuous exercise.

A reader wrote in August that he likes to put binder clips on his nipples while watching porn. I'm a guy who also likes to stimulate my nipples, but I use the suction cups sold at nipplefunwear.com. I wait until my nipples fill 80 percent of the cups and then squeeze—the pleasure is exquisite. When the cups are removed I always have large, hard nipples.—B.B., Thousand Oaks, California  
Thanks for the pointers.

A while ago you asked readers to submit their real-life threesome experiences. Do you have any good stories to share?—K.L., Seattle, Washington

You bet. Because so many readers ask how to arrange threesomes, we wanted to find out how they come about, for better or worse. Below are a few of the hundreds of responses; visit our site at [playboyadvisor.com](http://playboyadvisor.com) for more. Next month we'll tell you what we learned.

I was talking to two women when one said, "Friends who play together stay together." We started making out while her friend slid her hand down my pants. When we got to my place, they asked what I wanted to see. I told them to fight over me. So they gave me head while bickering over whose turn it was.—M.F., San Francisco, California

The last time I had anything close to a threesome was two years ago. My wife and I watched *Eyes Wide Shut* while her friend blew me. Now I have blue balls because my wife says those days are over. She says she has grown up and that I should too.—D.P., Kansas City, Missouri

I was hosting a frat party when I noticed two girls flirting with each other. I told each girl that the other had asked to meet her upstairs in my room. I waited awhile, then went up to see how they were doing.—M.C., Parsippany, New Jersey

It's happened three times, all with my current girlfriend: (1) We invited a waitress back to our hotel. The next morning, as we were checking out, the manager kept saying, "You had two girls!" (2) We were on a cruise. A blonde asked if I was single. I told her I could be single if she wanted and took her to meet my girlfriend. (3) We were playing golf. A woman playing alone caught up with us. I asked, "Do you ever get hit on by other golfers?" She said, "All the time." So I asked, "Do you ever get hit

on by couples?" We've had other prospects, but it usually happens when we least expect it.—R.W., Phoenix, Arizona

This chick at a party asked if she could sit on the arm of my chair. Some guy bumped her and she fell into my lap. We talked and started making out. Five minutes later I opened my eyes and 30 people were watching us. Another chick said, "This shit is making me horny." Everyone cheered as the girls led me away. I always thought a threesome would be confusing, but I didn't have to do much.—P.L., St. Louis, Missouri

My date pushed me against a wall, crouched down and unbuttoned my jeans. That's when I saw her roommate. It turned into an up-and-down swap. The key is to let the women be in control.—G.C., San Diego, California

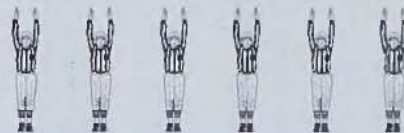
My fiancé introduced me to his ex. I suspected he wanted to sleep with her one last time, so I organized a threesome. I had two ground rules: He couldn't kiss her, and he had to give me most of his attention. But they tried to slip in a kiss, and he fucked her four times and me only once.—A.T., Provo, Utah

My wife and I had three-ways with her friend. Things were great until I decided to fix up the friend with a co-worker. He told her he would love to swing with her. She was pissed. I had no idea he'd go for the gold within 15 minutes of meeting her. I learned the hard way not to screw and tell.—W.W., Chicago, Illinois

My girlfriend and I did it doggy style while her friend stood over her back and pretended she was riding a mechanical bull. No matter how much you fantasize about a threesome, you're never ready for it.—B.T., Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Two women I met while drinking asked me if I had money for a room. At the hotel one woman cuffed me to the bed. They both sucked my cock. When I told them I was close, they stood up, took my wallet and clothes and left. The maid who found me in the morning didn't speak English, so soon the room was filled with the manager, two cops and two EMTs. At least I can say I've had a threesome.—R.K., Houston, Texas

All reasonable questions—from fashion, food and drink, stereo and sports cars to dating dilemmas, taste and etiquette—will be personally answered if the writer includes a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The most interesting, pertinent questions will be presented on these pages each month. Write the *Playboy Advisor*, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, or send e-mail by visiting our website at [playboyadvisor.com](http://playboyadvisor.com).



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# THE PLAYBOY FORUM

## OUR NEXT WAR

U.S. ENERGY POLICY IS ABOUT TO GET A LOT MORE COMPLICATED

BY CRAIG UNGER

I don't know who will win the election on November 2, but I will make one prediction: Whoever takes over the White House next year will have to confront an energy crisis of astounding proportions. The most disastrous unintended consequence of President Bush's Middle East policies is that we are about to enter an era that might become known as the Great Oil Wars.

Consider the irony: For nearly a generation, oilmen George H.W. Bush and James Baker oversaw the relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, forging a deal with the devil in which we

turned a blind eye to the dark side of the Saudis so we could make certain America's 165 million cars got cheap gas. Now Bush's son, leading an administration dominated as never before by oil executives (even Condoleezza Rice was on Chevron's board and had a tanker named after her), is likely to leave the U.S. with the worst of both worlds: Posing as the tough guy fighting terrorism, the president has given a pass to the Saudi role in terrorism. Yet at the same time, he seems to be presiding over the end of the special Saudi-American relationship that has given the U.S. access to oil for many years. This could leave us running on empty.

How could this happen? For decades the U.S. bought cheap oil from the Saudis and sold hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of weapons to them. The catch was that we agreed to keep our noses out of their domestic affairs. Because the stability of Saudi Arabia and its vast oil reserves is crucial to the economy of the West, that didn't seem a high price to pay. It made for an astoundingly successful relationship. Few Americans realized, however, that the Saudi state religion, Wahhabi Islam, was an extremist, puritanical sect that played a key role in fostering terrorism.

No one played a bigger part in this policy than former president George H.W. Bush and his allies—in both the public and private sectors. Over more than two decades, the Saudis funneled in excess of \$1.4 billion in investments and contracts to companies in which the Bushes and their allies were prominent figures—Harken Energy, Halliburton and the Carlyle Group, among others. The liaison was a White House first. It was personal as well. Prince Bandar,



the Saudi ambassador to the U.S., was a close friend of the first president Bush. Affectionately nicknamed Bandar Bush, he visited Kennebunkport, Maine; Crawford, Texas; and the White House, and was the only person allowed by Barbara Bush to smoke in the Bush homes. Bandar had more access to the White House than did any other foreign official in the world.

In the 1990s the rapid ascent of Islamist terrorism should have raised serious questions about whether being so close to the guardians of Wahhabi Islam was wise. In 1995 a car

bomb killed five Americans at a building shared by the Saudi Arabian National Guard and the Vinnell Corporation, an American company owned by the Carlyle Group. In 1996 the U.S. military barracks in Khobar Towers, Saudi Arabia were bombed, killing 19 Americans. In 1998 Al Qaeda bombed the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

After September 11, the ugly seams of this relationship were laid bare. Fifteen of the 19 hijackers were Saudi. Bin Laden is Saudi. Al Qaeda's financing was largely Saudi. The great secret had begun to unravel.

Yet even after nearly 3,000 people were murdered on September 11, George W. Bush has been anything but tough on the Saudis. Again and again, Bush officials have characterized the Saudi response to terror as "superb," even though CIA and other intelligence sources said the Saudis were refusing to cooperate. High-level Saudi officials, from Interior Minister Prince Naif to Crown Prince Abdullah, have blamed terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia on Zionists rather than on Al Qaeda—and there has not been a peep out of the White House.

The unspoken rationale for kowtowing to the Saudis is that we need their oil. Yet at a time when the U.S. is more addicted to foreign oil than ever, this special relationship appears to have entered the endgame stage. One reason is that just after he took office, Bush decided not to waste his political capital on trying to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian crisis. As a result, his standing with moderate Arabs in the region dropped accordingly. Both Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah and King Abdullah II of Jordan went so far as to turn down

invitations to the White House. Even before September 11, Crown Prince Abdullah wrote an angry 25-page letter to Bush that appeared to end the special relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. "Starting from today, you're from Uruguay, as they say," it read. "You Americans, go your way. I, Saudi Arabia, go my way."

Since then, it has become increasingly apparent that Bush's preemptive, unilateral move to invade Iraq was a colossal strategic blunder that will not be undone easily. By installing troops in the oil-rich Arab state, the U.S. has fulfilled Osama bin Laden's prophecies. The American occupation and the Abu Ghraib prison scandal have incited thousands of Islamist terrorists, making it impossible for moderate leaders like King Abdullah to openly identify themselves with U.S. policies. This comes at a time when the support of moderate Arabs is essential if the United States is to build a successful new government in Iraq.

In recent months the Middle East crisis has taken on the character of an oil war. Terrorists and insurgents have launched scores of attacks on the oil facilities and the Westerners who service them both in Iraq and Saudi Arabia. There have been more than 40 attacks on oil operations in Iraq in the past year and five major attacks in the Saudi kingdom. The resulting instability inevitably translates to higher oil prices. In Saudi Arabia, which has the biggest reserves in the world, there are bombings, kidnappings and beheadings. Widespread civil unrest suggests a low-intensity civil war.

Half the Saudi population supports Bin Laden. In May, James Oberwetter, the new U.S. ambassador to Riyadh, warned Americans, "It is time to pack your bags and go home. We cannot protect you here." Not surprisingly, Westerners have begun to flee. Even in normally placid Bahrain, the State Department autho-



Waving good-bye to a special relationship?

ritized the departure of Americans because of terrorist threats.

Observers have long forecast the demise of the House of Saud. While such dire predictions may still be premature, a succession crisis in the next few years is certain even if the House of Saud retains control. Crown Prince Abdullah, the de facto ruler, is 80, and the fact that King Fahd is still alive but incapacitated makes it unclear who might succeed him.

Then there is China. Until 1993 China was a net exporter of oil. Now it is producing 5 million cars a year, and in order to quench its energy needs it has been cultivating its relationship with the Saudis. According to the Jamestown Foundation, there have even been reports that China has sold to Saudi Arabia intermediate-range ballistic missiles, suggesting that it is positioning itself as a rival to take America's place as the favored partner to consume Saudi oil.

This volatile stew of political instability, anti-American fervor and new geopolitical rivalries could not come at a worse time, given the harsh limits of the global energy picture. Some experts predict that world oil production will peak as early as 2005, meaning that no matter how much wilderness is explored or how many wells are drilled, less and less oil will be available. Promising alternative energy strategies such as hydrogen fuel cells exist but are still in their infancy. Of the 1.6 trillion barrels of oil in the world, half will likely be depleted by 2010.

When increased demand meets limited supply, prices, of course, go up. After the oil embargo of 1973, the U.S. got a taste of what that meant—long gas lines, high inflation, double-digit interest rates and a long-term recession. This time prices are likely to go up again—but not gradually and not temporarily. And don't forget that this will be happening in a region now beset by terrorism and instability. All of which means our next president will have to not only make sure America has enough energy but avoid being enmeshed in the Great Oil Wars.

## HYBRID CARS, ON THE HOUSE

*Nathan Glasgow of Colorado's Rocky Mountain Institute, a think-and-do tank, has been analyzing carrot-and-stick programs—called feebates—that could get virtually every American driver behind the wheel of a fuel-efficient car quickly and cheaply.*

**Q:** Why are they called feebates?

**A:** Under this government-administered system, if you buy an efficient car, you get a rebate. If you buy a gas guzzler, you pay a fee. Both would be on a sliding scale according to each car's fuel efficiency. The fees pay for the rebates. For example, the sticker price of a new Hummer would include a fee, and the money raised would help defray the cost of a new Escape hybrid. We estimate that by 2025 feebate policies could result in every

fourth vehicle on America's roads being several times as efficient as today's cars. As technologies get better and cheaper, the "pivot point" between fee and rebate rises too, rewarding continual improvement. With ultralight materials and innovative propulsion systems, cost-effective 60- to 90-mile-per-gallon cars and light trucks are already realistic, and more than 100 miles a gallon is likely.



Efficient cars reduce our foreign-oil needs.

**Q:** Could this approach be used for anything other than cars?

**A:** We're looking into applying feebates to both heavy trucks and airplanes. Applying this system to airplanes is especially promising because of their long service life and their historical improvements in efficiency. Today's airplanes use about 50 percent fewer gallons per mile than those made in 1970.

**Q:** So the idea is that feebates could wean us off fossil fuels?

**A:** Our new report, "Winning the Oil Endgame," concludes exactly that. Feebates are just one of the tools we advocate to show that the U.S. could get off oil entirely over the next few decades—and at a profit.

—Matt Bivens

## TAPPED OUT

WE'VE BUILT A CIVILIZATION ON CHEAP OIL. BUT THE WELLS WILL RUN DRY

Industrial economies are built on hydrocarbons: wood, coal and oil. Today oil represents 40 percent of the world energy market. But petroleum supplies are finite. Theoretically, it's possible, using estimates of known reserves, to calculate when the world oil supply will peak. Such estimates, though, are notoriously inaccurate. "Ninety percent of reserves are held by countries, not companies," says David Goodstein, a Caltech physicist and the author of *Out of Gas*. "Nobody audits countries. In the 1980s OPEC changed the quota system dictating how much oil each country could pump and began to base it partly on countries' stated reserves. Overnight 400 billion barrels of oil magically appeared from nowhere." Though



rosy reserve numbers continue to appear, oil use has outpaced oil discovery since 1980. Even with the most optimistic reserve figures—such as those from the U.S. Geological Survey—oil production would peak in about a decade. "We now have 6 billion people on earth, largely because of the green revolution," Goodstein says. "That revolution consists almost entirely of petroleum-based fertilizers." Oil is also important to the chemical, pharmaceutical and plastics industries. "Whatever fuel replaces the missing oil is going to be more expensive," Goodstein explains. "We will have a big inflationary episode. That's assuming the world stays at peace. More likely, we will find it's in our best interest simply to take someone else's oil."

THE 2  
MINUTE  
DRILL

## WHAT'S LEGAL

QUESTIONS FOR: NEERAJA VISWANATHAN

*The former criminal defense lawyer and author of The Street Law Handbook explains what the law allows.*

*It's against the law to have sex in public, but what about in a car or your backyard? A public space is anywhere someone can see you, within reason. In most suburbs, there's a good chance a neighbor can see you. Your car is definitely a public place.*

*So you're always safe having sex inside. Not necessarily. I know of a case in which a guy was charged with indecency for having sex with a pumpkin in his basement. Someone saw him through a window.*

*Prostitution is defined as paying someone to have sex with you. Could you get around this by bartering?*

No. The legal term is *consideration*. But realistically, unless you were to write in a contract, "I'm giving you a car in return for having sex with me," a prosecutor would have a hard time proving it. Escorts work around the law by hiring themselves out for company. You can give her \$300 to go on a date. But as soon as you say, "I'll throw in an extra \$100 for sex," that's illegal.



*What is "constructive possession"?*

Actual possession means you have drugs in your hand or pocket. Constructive possession means you have drugs in your room, car or safety deposit box. Because you have control over the place, cops assume the drugs are yours.

*If a police officer wants to search your car, do you have to let him?*

No, but he can do it anyway, even without a warrant. It's called a vehicular exemption. An officer needs a reason to pull you over, but that could be anything: He thinks you may be drunk, he saw you swerve, your taillight is out. Once you've stopped, he can look through the windows. Even if you say, "You can't look through my car," he can. He just has to go to court and explain

why he searched. But he can't open the trunk unless he arrests you.

*Is it true that if you ask a drug dealer if he's an undercover cop and he is, he has to tell you?*

No. Officers are allowed to lie. They also can say, "Your buddy told us everything, and he blames you." Cops are not your friends.

## MARGINALIA



## FROM A MEMO

sent to volunteers by the Bush-Cheney campaign. Earlier, the campaign had asked volunteers to identify 1,600 "friendly" congregations where Bush supporters could meet, prompting the IRS to remind both parties that churches that endorse candidates risk their tax-exempt status: "(1) Send your church directory to your state Bush-Cheney '04 headquarters or give to a BC04 rep. (2) Identify another conservative church in your community that we can organize for Bush. (3) Talk to your pastor about holding a Citizenship Sunday and Voter Registration Drive. (4) Hold a 'Party for the President' with church members. (5) Talk to your church seniors or 20- to 30-something group about Bush-Cheney."

## FROM A RESOLUTION

offered by Dr. J. Chris Hawk III of South Carolina at the American Medical Association's annual convention: "Resolved, that our AMA notify physicians that, except in emergencies and except as otherwise required by law or other regulation, it is not unethical to refuse care to plaintiffs' attorneys and their spouses."

## FROM A COMPLAINT

filed by the Oklahoma attorney general against Donald Thompson, a district judge in Creek County: "Judge Thompson violated these ethical canons by his repeated use of a device known as a penis pump during trials and in the presence of court employees. His court reporter first started hearing a noise that 'sounded like a blood-pressure cuff being pumped up' in September 2000. She saw the judge place a pump on his penis 'maybe 10' times during trials. On one occasion, she saw the judge holding his penis up and shaving underneath with a disposable razor while on the bench."



**FROM A LIST** of terrorist groups compiled by the State Department and the attorney general under authority of the Patriot Act. Foreign members of listed organizations are banned from entering the U.S.: Afghan Support Committee, Al Taqwa Trade, Property and Industry Company Ltd., Al-Hamati Sweets Bakeries, Al-Nur Honey Center, Anarchist Faction for Overthrow, Army for the Liberation of Rwanda, Communist Party of Nepal, Continuity Irish Republican Army, Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement, First of October Antifascist Resistance Group, International Sikh Youth Federation, Islamic Army of Aden, Islamic Renewal and Reform Organization, Japanese Red Army, Jerusalem Warriors, Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, the Lord's Resistance Army, Pentagon Gang.

(continued on page 59)

# READER RESPONSE

## WHO WILL JOIN THE COURT?

Edward Lazarus's "Courting Disaster" (August) mentions the pressure on President Bush to appoint a Latino to the Supreme Court. Like the appointment of Thurgood Marshall in 1967, the addition of a Latino would be historic. But Lazarus didn't discuss what a Latino would bring to the Court. No justice has consistently made the case for Latinos, as Justice Marshall did for African Americans, on issues such as the history of discrimination against Mexican Americans in the Southwest, the treatment of Puerto Rico as a colony



A black justice, then a woman. And next?

and immigration-law reform.

A decision from 2001 illustrates how a Latino could make a difference. In *Alexander v. Sandoval* the justices voted five to four to reject a challenge by a legal Mexican immigrant to force Alabama to provide driver's license tests in Spanish as well as English. A Latino justice might approach cases like this with greater sensitivity.

The views of a Latino could affect the views of the other justices, just as Marshall's did. And a Court that looks more like America would be more likely to be viewed as impartial.

As Lazarus suggests, should President Bush be reelected, he may nominate a Latino in an attempt to grease the wheels for a relatively painless confirmation. But the failed Court of Appeals nomination of Miguel Estrada demonstrates that a rabidly conservative nominee will face opposition whatever his or her race. I'm confident that Latinos would not blindly back a nominee who would endanger civil rights.

Alberto Gonzales, now chief White House counsel, is a tougher case. Conservative but not ideologically rigid, he has ties to the Mexican American com-

munity in his home state of Texas. Latino activists would need to weigh whether Gonzales would be that much different from the white conservative that Bush would likely pick if a Gonzales nomination were to tank.

Kevin Johnson  
School of Law  
University of California at Davis  
Davis, California

*The writer is a professor of public interest law and Chicano studies and the author of, most recently, The Huddled Masses Myth: Immigration and Civil Rights.*

## A NEW AND IMPROVED FORUM

The *Playboy* Forum is so slanted in one direction lately that there's no point in reading anything but the headlines. Hire Michael Moore as a columnist and Ann Coulter to counter him. Matt Drudge, the greatest living muckraker, could shake things up. Andrea Dworkin should get space; men could either laugh at her or feel like dirt. *PLAYBOY* is smart enough to hire these people. If they accepted the jobs, you might have something worth reading.

Christian Holm  
Livermore, California

## DEATH TO THE DEATH TAX

So Bill Gates Sr. loves the estate tax ("Tax Me, I'm Rich," August). That may sound courageous, but given its billions, his family isn't losing sleep over the fact that the estate tax exists. The problem with the tax is simply that it taxes money that has already been taxed. I pay my debt to our society on April 15—why should the government hit me up again when I die? My wife's grandparents built an estate over 50 years that was worth close to \$1.5 million. After estate taxes it was worth less than \$1 million. What incentive is there for anyone to better their lot if the government is going to take most of it away? I say we let those who invest and save wisely keep it in the family. Gates argues that the tax helps offset deficits. But the politicians who create those deficits should be responsible, not my wife's grandparents.

Tom Gainer  
Colorado Springs, Colorado

In his book *Wealth and Our Commonwealth: Why America Should Tax Accumulated Fortunes*, Bill Gates Sr. credits me with reviving the phrase *death tax*. Truth be told, President Reagan coined

the term many years ago. But I take pride in having hammered it home. A tax ought to have a socially redeeming value. The estate tax has none. Instead it tears away at family businesses and stymies wealth creation and jobs. If Bill Gates Sr., George Soros and Warren Buffett want to keep the death tax, fine. Make it voluntary and let them pay. But don't preach to others about how they should be happy to pay. The estate tax needs to die.

James Martin  
60 Plus Association  
Arlington, Virginia

## MAY I SEE YOUR ID?

A lot of people ask me why I went to jail and took my case all the way to the Supreme Court rather than give my name to a police officer (*Marginalia*, August). And now that the Court has ruled five to four that Americans don't have the right not to identify themselves, maybe some think I look foolish. But I still think I did the right thing. We're supposed to be free men, able to move freely—not stopped at checkpoints. That's part of the Constitution, but it's also something you kind of just know. If you haven't committed a crime, you shouldn't be harassed by the police. If they suspect you of something, I don't see why they shouldn't explain it. In my case I wasn't violent. And it was proved later in court that I



Hübel is questioned, from papersplease.org.

hadn't committed any crimes.

I finished only the eighth grade, but I remember what I learned, and it seems to me that the idea of a police officer being able to say "Your papers, please" to anyone he encounters goes against the grain of being American. It's not that I'm anti-law enforcement. But I don't think we have to take rights away just so we can feel safe.

Larry Dudley Hübel  
Winnemucca, Nevada

## NEWSFRONT



## The Right to Bear Kids

NEWPORT, KENTUCKY—A county judge here offers two options to deadbeat dads who have more than four kids with at least three women and owe \$10,000 or more: Spend 30 days in jail or get a vasectomy. Of the first seven defendants given the option, one chose jail, one chose a vasectomy and five wanted to think it over. A similar proposition reached the Wisconsin Supreme Court in 2001. By a four-to-three vote split along gender lines, the justices approved an order that a father convicted of refusing to pay support for seven of his children by four women had to wear a condom during sex for the duration of his five-year probation. The three female dissenters argued that having kids is a basic liberty regardless of one's ability to support them. Earlier this year a judge in Monroe County, New York ordered a drug-addicted homeless couple with four children in foster care to stop making babies or face jail. Having offspring is not an inalienable right, she said, because it must be balanced against the interests of those forced to care for neglected kids.

## Let's Go to the Videotape

SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA—A 20-minute tape given to police showed three teenagers having vaginal and oral sex with an unresponsive 16-year-old girl. The boys also inserted a pool cue, a glass bottle, a juice can and the filter end of a lit cigarette into her vagina and anus. The girl testified that a boy gave her a drink, and the next thing she remembered was waking up sick and sore. Prosecutors charged each teen with 24 crimes, including rape by intoxication. After a two-month trial, the jury deadlocked, with 11 of the 12 jurors favoring acquittal on the most serious counts. The defense portrayed the girl as a habitual liar who aspired to be a porn star and had faked being unconscious. The defense also accused the police of editing a portion of the tape supposedly showing that the girl had been willing and suggested that, even if she was in a stupor, she was known to like sex, so it wasn't unreasonable for the boys to assume she would have given her consent.

## Nudie Patrol

TORONTO—The *Toronto Sun* unearthed a memo from an embassy official that appears to state that foreigners wanting to work as strippers must attach nude photos to their visa applications. Immigration officials say that's not true but that photos do help. They say the idea is to protect the women from being exploited by making sure they know what they're getting into. (Officials also suggest that singers bring tapes and that models have portfolios.) One lawyer recalled a Romanian client who was denied a visa because her photo was only topless.

## Getting Off Easy

ABERDEEN, MISSISSIPPI—On at least four occasions, Ferrell Hunter, a sheriff's deputy, gave Joe Stewart, an attorney, the name of someone he had stopped for drunken driving. Stewart would offer his services, then pay Hunter up to \$300 to skip the court date so that the judge would dismiss the charge. (At the same time, the state MADD chapter was honoring Hunter for his many DUI arrests.) What was Hunter's punishment for this violation of public trust that may have put dangerous drivers back on the road? Probation and a \$500 fine.

## Falwell for President

WASHINGTON, D.C.—An activist group filed a complaint with the IRS after the Reverend Jerry Falwell endorsed President Bush on his ministry's website. Americans United for Separation of Church and State says the endorsement violates a provision of the tax code that prohibits churches from being involved in politics.



Falwell insists the message was posted not by Jerry Falwell Ministries—although that name is all over the site—but by his conservative lobbying group, the Liberty Alliance. Americans United filed its first complaint with the IRS in 1988 against the Reverend Jesse Jackson after he said he planned to pass collection plates for his presidential campaign.

## MARGINALIA

(continued from page 57)

People Against Gangsterism and Drugs, Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (excluding the Kuwait office), Revolutionary Proletarian Nucleus, Riyadh-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Battalion of Chechen Martyrs, Salafist Group for Call and Combat, Special Purpose Islamic Regiment, Tunisian Combat Group, Turkish Hizballah, Ulster Defense Association.

**FROM THE DRAFT** of a First Amendment textbook by UCLA law professor Eugene Volokh: "Within 10 years there will probably be software that can merge photos and voices with movies. The most common use of this would probably be for porn. Consumers would use the program to merge photos of celebrities or acquaintances with a porn movie to create porn that stars whoever it is they lust after. Naturally, many people would be unhappy knowing they are depicted in home sex movies. Imagine that Congress decides to prohibit the distribution of the software. Do you think the law should be upheld, and if so, on what grounds?"

## CHAPTER TITLES

from *Intimate Issues: 21 Questions Christian Women Ask About Sex*: (1) What Does God Think About Sex? (2) How Can I Be Godly and Successful? (4) How Can I Relate When He's a Microwave and I'm a Crock-Pot? (12) How Can I Get Rid of Guilt Over My Abortion? (16) What's the Big Deal About Orgasm? (18) Are Quickies Okay With God?



**FROM EXCLUSIONS** in the Americans With Disabilities Act: "For purposes of the definition of *disability*, homosexuality and bisexuality are not impairments. The term *disability* also shall not include transvestism, transsexualism, pedophilia, exhibitionism, voyeurism, gender identity disorders not resulting from physical impairments or other sexual disorders; compulsive gambling, kleptomania or pyromania; or psychoactive substance-use disorders resulting from illegal use of drugs."

**FROM A REPORT** by the New York University School of Law suggesting reforms for the state legislature, which has been called the most dysfunctional in the country: "(1) Each member shall be limited to introducing 20 bills in the Assembly and 30 bills in the Senate in each session. (2) All committees shall meet biweekly, without exception. (3) Members shall receive equal funding for operating costs and staff regardless of party affiliation or seniority. (4) A vote shall not be recorded for any member who is not present in the chamber. Members' attendance and vote shall be recorded as public record." Currently, legislators can sign in, indicate they want to vote yes on every bill that day and leave.

# LAST-MINUTE ELECTION POLL

NOT THAT ANYONE CARES WHAT YOU THINK



Dear respondent: Please take a few moments to answer the following questions. Your input will assist the news media to prepare cursory and reductive dispatches likely to influence voters who have even smaller minds than yours.



**1. I consider myself to be:**

- a Republican
- a Democrat
- utterly insignificant
- totally screwed

**2. If Congress gives you a tax refund while raising your taxes more than the refunded amount, is the refund actually a refund?**

- Yes, I love refunds
- Yes, I'm no terrorist
- Gee, I never thought of that
- I don't like doing math

**3. Why are the Democrats such wusses?**

- Irritating desire for everyone to be happy and nice
- Squeamishness about gun nuts and interrogations
- Deep-seated guilt about U.S. status as global badass
- Didn't send any bright young stars to evil genius school in the 1970s

**4. If you were to pick one issue as a so-called litmus test, which would it be?**

- Assault weapons
- The rules of the BCS
- The current war in Belgium
- Uppity womenfolk

**5. I think President Bush has done:**

- a bad job
- a shitty job
- pretty well, unless you count foreign and domestic policy
- exactly what Jesus would do

**6. Which of the following best characterizes John Kerry's presidential run for the roses?**

- He's destined for victory, like Seattle Slew
- He'll blow it in the end, like Smarty Jones
- He's the one we'll all wish we had bet on, like Stewball
- He's the famous Mr. Ed—of course

**7. Kerry won me over when he:**

- jammed with Moby at a fund-raiser
- rode his motorcycle onto the set of *The Tonight Show*
- played saxophone on *Arsenio Hall*
- revealed his nipple shield at the Super Bowl

**8. Which of the following describes your particular quixotic reactionary stance?**

- I am on a crusade against non-Christians
- I am on a crusade against crusading Christians
- I am on a crusade against those who think Christians are crusading
- Moderate

**9. Which of the following misstatements is least unlikely to influence your decision to vote against President Bush?**

- George W. Bush wants to legalize gay marriage
- George W. Bush wants to illegalize gay marriage
- George W. Bush has declared a "war on gay marriagism"
- George W. Bush is married to a gay lesbian

**10. It's important to me that our next president have a realistic plan for:**

- providing affordable hallucinogenic drugs for the elderly
- keeping toenail clippers off domestic and international flights
- putting my tax money where it can really help—in the pockets of the richest one percent
- using the chaos in Iraq to set off the entire Middle East

**11. Why is Kerry's war-hero image a bunch of malarkey?**

- Photos show that his haircut was clearly in violation of military grooming regulations
- The men whose lives he saved later smoked marijuana
- In war, men are but mad dogs in the noontday sun, killed by the gods for their sport
- There was no "Vietnam war"

**12. I am frustrated by the selection of candidates because:**

- neither speaks to my concerns as a white supremacist
- they'd rather trade soundbites than settle this like men, with weapons
- neither is a former movie star or pro athlete
- both have broken their vows of celibacy

**13. If he fails to win reelection, President Bush will be remembered by future generations as:**

- another casualty of Bill Clinton's reckless womanizing
- a great man whose career was marred only by poor decision making
- misunderstood
- Li'l Nixon

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## PLAYBOY INTERVIEW:

# OLIVER STONE

*A candid conversation with the controversial director about enemies, drugs, conspiracies, bisexuality and why Alexander the Great was a rock star*

Oliver Stone's movies have been in the news as often as they have been about the news. *JFK*, Stone's divisive drama about a conspiracy to murder President John F. Kennedy, is still hotly debated. Only last year, on a television special commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Kennedy assassination, ABC News's Peter Jennings noted that a significant number of Americans remain convinced of a conspiracy based entirely on Stone's movie. Stone has created indelible stories about Richard Nixon (in *Nixon*) and Jim Morrison (in *The Doors*) and tackled the American culture of violence in *Natural Born Killers*. His films about the Vietnam war—*Heaven & Earth*, *Platoon* and *Born on the Fourth of July*—are inextricably tied to the nation's collective memory of the conflict and the 1960s antiwar movement.

Recently, Stone turned his attention to Cuba, in a pair of documentaries about Fidel Castro. "Newspapers can have trouble keeping up with him," wrote Gary Wills in the *Atlantic Monthly*. And Stone not only helps shape—or distort, according to some—history, he predicts it. With uncanny prescience, he depicted corporate insider-trading scandals in *Wall Street* (1987) and the rise of the right-wing media in *Talk Radio* (1988) years before they happened.

For Stone's newest, and most ambitious,

movie, the director retreats from modern-day controversies, venturing back in time to 356 to 323 B.C. Stone spent more than a decade writing *Alexander*—the story of Alexander the Great—which he filmed at the end of 2003 in Thailand, Morocco and England. In Stone's hands, even *Alexander the Great* is somehow tied to the current political debate. "There are similarities between the ambitions of ancient Macedonia under Alexander and the United States under George Bush," Stone claims. "They made similar journeys into Iraq and Afghanistan. And both men, though of entirely different character, want to conquer the world."

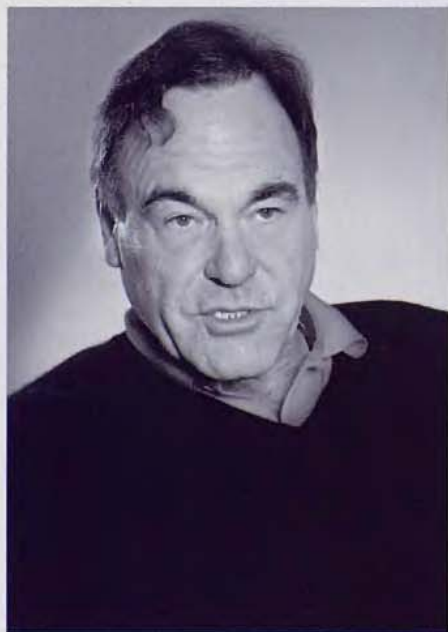
Almost no one is indifferent to Stone. He has die-hard fans, and film critics have praised many of his movies. Leonard Maltin called *JFK* "a masterful cinematic achievement." Norman Mailer called *Nixon* "a major work by a major artist." And Stone's detractors are equally impassioned. Some dismiss him as a paranoid nutcase; *Time* magazine dubbed him Mr. Conspiracy. After Stone described the September 11 terrorist attack on America as "a rebellion against globalization, against the American way," journalist Christopher Hitchens called Stone "a moral and intellectual idiot."

Stone is the only child of a wealthy stockbroker father and a French-born

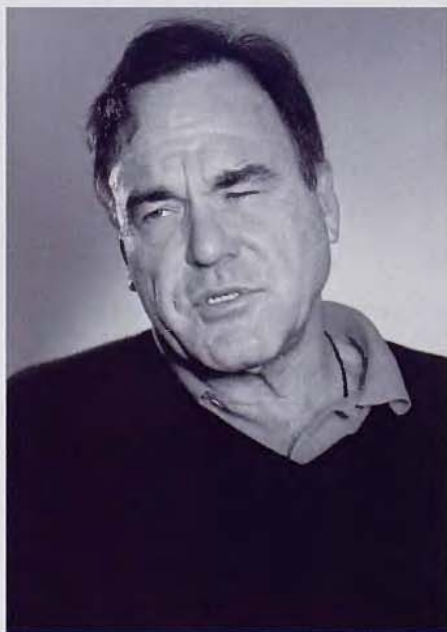
mother who divorced when he was 15. He attended private boys' schools in New York City and in 1965 enrolled at Yale, where he was a classmate of George W. Bush's and John Kerry was a few years ahead of him. Stone dropped out, joined the military and was sent to Vietnam in 1967. Twice wounded, he was awarded a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart. He returned to the U.S. embittered and began writing *Platoon*, an indictment of the war.

He enrolled at New York University to study filmmaking and wrote and directed his first movie, *Seizure*, in 1974. He won his first Oscar, in 1979, for his screenplay for *Midnight Express*. A decade after writing *Platoon*, he finally made the film, which was released in 1986. It won the Academy Award for best picture, and Stone won the best director award. He was also nominated that year for a best screenwriting Oscar for *Salvador*. Screenwriting nominations for *JFK* and *Nixon* followed, and he won another best director statue for *Born on the Fourth of July*.

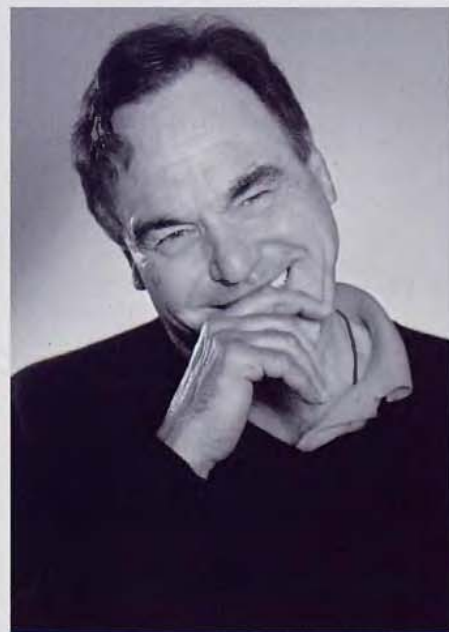
At times Stone's personal life has been as controversial as his movies. In 1999 he was arrested in Los Angeles for driving while under the influence and for possession of hashish and other drugs. (He had also been arrested in 1968 in Mexico for



"It's hard to know, but I think a movie can make a huge difference. *JFK* helped Clinton win. It came out right before the election. *Salvador* and *Platoon* may have had an impact on Reagan's downturn in popularity."



"Conspiracy nut, leftist, madman. These are terms of dismissal so you don't have to listen to the argument. It's an ugly way of doing business. It would be healthier and more fun to hear what someone has to say."



"Arnold Schwarzenegger is what America wants. He's got an amazing face. He's got a great smile. Unless he really fucks up, he can go right to the White House. I'm not surprised he's governor. I like him."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIZUNO

possession of marijuana.) Stone entered a drug-treatment program in 2000.

PLAYBOY Contributing Editor David Sheff, who last interviewed Google founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin for PLAYBOY, met Stone in Santa Monica, California, where he was editing *Alexander*. Reports Sheff: "When I arrived at Stone's office for the interview, his gorgeous British assistant explained that Stone would be late. In the meantime, she said, 'Oliver says you should lie on the floor and I should give you a massage.' Once we began the interview, it was a challenge to keep Stone, who sucked on a Cuban cigar and drank coffee, focused on any given subject. Many conversations returned to his obvious concern about American politics. Still, it was clear he was enjoying his immersion in the pre-Christian time of *Alexander the Great*. 'Maybe I'll stay here,' he said, sounding serious. 'I may have found a time where I fit in much better.'"

PLAYBOY: You're associated with so many topical contemporary dramas. What inspired you to tackle *Alexander the Great*?

STONE: I've been interested in him since I was in college. I'd always wondered why his story had never been dramatized. It's one of the most extraordinary stories in history. Why hadn't Shakespeare tried? Why hadn't other great playwrights or screenwriters?

PLAYBOY: And what was your conclusion?

STONE: I think he scares people off because he was so fucking successful. There's an inherent dislike or fear or distrust of somebody who is that much bigger than life. It seemed too much for a story—the decadent politics, the outrageous ambition, the decadent lifestyle. So I struggled with how to make the movie that has eluded everyone. I loved the character, but I never thought I would get to do him.

PLAYBOY: You weren't the only director to decide to tackle Alexander's story. Mel Gibson was planning a miniseries for HBO, and producer Dino De Laurentiis and director Baz Luhrmann signed Leonardo DiCaprio and Nicole Kidman for a version.

STONE: As far as I know, they've all given up, but not before they damaged us.

PLAYBOY: How did they damage you?

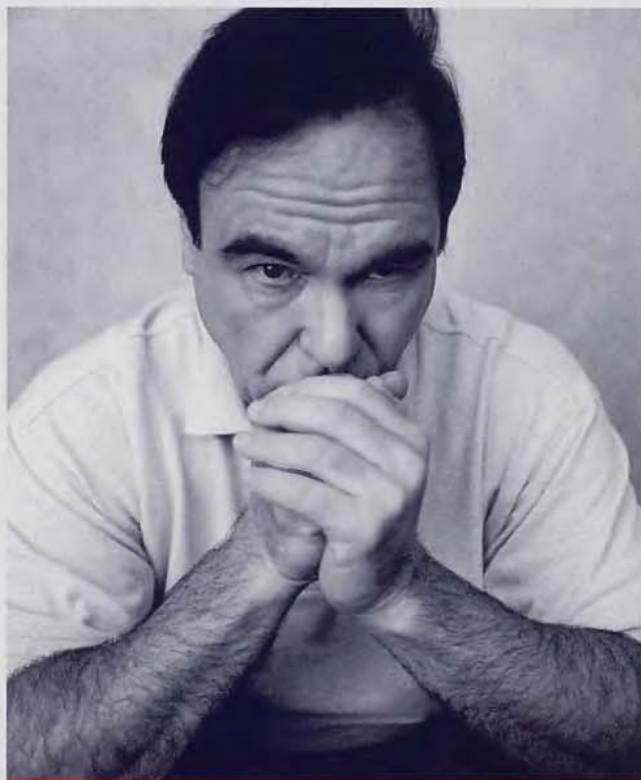
STONE: We did not get financed in Hollywood. We were rejected there. We got financed in Europe only, and it didn't help to have Dino De Laurentiis telling his friends in various countries, "Don't buy that movie." Without foreign sales you're dead in the water. There were a lot of shenanigans, and there was a lot of ugliness. I was called names. I tried to

stay out of it. I'm not going to be left with bad karma on my set. I just stuck to the work, and we eventually pulled people together and got the movie made.

PLAYBOY: Could you have made the movie without the success of *Troy* and *Gladiator*?

STONE: No. Without them the movie never would have been made. There was new interest in big epics. When Warner Bros. finally signed up in the U.S., I could go to them and say, "Gentlemen, you've got to sign on to our movie. We're making a movie about the son of Achilles." They were high on *Troy*, of course, and they went for it.

PLAYBOY: How did you decide to cast Colin Farrell as Alexander the Great?



After September 11 no one would speak out. For a while it killed the impulse we have for creativity.

STONE: I liked Brad Pitt very much in *Troy*, but like Achilles, his character in the movie, he is as mythic as Steve McQueen is in *The Magnificent Seven*. Unreal. From the myth, I wanted to find the man. Colin was right. He is equally handsome and of a younger generation. It's thrilling to watch him as Alexander, who lived up to and went beyond the Achilles myth. Achilles conquered Troy; Alexander went after the world. Colin may well be a modern-day Alexander, and Angelina Jolie, who is Olympias, is a modern-day queen. If we had them, she would be queen. She's as strong and determined.

PLAYBOY: You once said that Alexander was a rock star of his time. Were you thinking of Jim Morrison of the Doors?

STONE: Him or others. Like Morrison, Alexander ran up against the forces of life and surmounted them.

PLAYBOY: Morrison didn't surmount them. He succumbed to them and died young.

STONE: But he accomplished an enormous amount. Every man reaches and falls. Some attain greatness along the way. Alexander did, of course. Morrison did. I'm fascinated by all who achieve greatness.

PLAYBOY: You produced a movie about the attempted assassination of Ronald Reagan. When the former president died, were you surprised by the intensity of the tributes?

STONE: It was theater. It was television.

Parades with people in baseball caps and shorts and ugly T-shirts. A hollowness. It's what Reagan was all about. He was a scary man. I used to have nightmares about him, literally. Smile, head of hair. He was a stage prop, an actor. That's what Americans want. They want the shell. Look at Arnold.

PLAYBOY: You've known Schwarzenegger since you wrote the script for *Conan*. Do you keep in touch with him?

STONE: I see him here and there. I like him.

PLAYBOY: Even as governor?

STONE: I'm not sure, but he's what America wants. I'm not surprised he's governor. He's got an amazing face. He's got a great smile. He has great willpower. The guy pulls off amazing things with his charisma. Unless he really fucks up, he can go right to the White House.

PLAYBOY: How will he overcome the requirement that a president be born in this country?

STONE: They'll change it for him. He's a hell of a lot more attractive and sexy than Bush. He would be a far better president, too.

PLAYBOY: Now that you've directed movies about presidents Kennedy and Nixon and produced a movie about Reagan, have you considered taking on President Bush?

STONE: It's too soon. You need some historical perspective. We had to wait 20 years to do Nixon. As a dramatist, you have to wait. Right now Bush is in full play. It's not time for a biography.

PLAYBOY: Would Bush be a good subject for a drama?

STONE: A scary one. He looks like a tiny little chamber of commerce guy. In the 1950s he would have been considered distasteful. He's worse than Nixon in his vulgarity. He looks like he shops at Wal-Mart. That's not what a president is supposed to be. He has no intellectual curiosity and is proud of it. He says his wife

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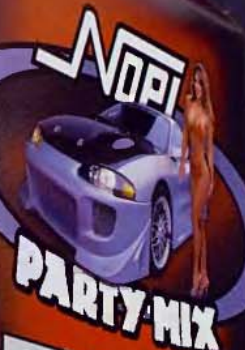
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does the book thing. He's a liar, hiding behind a shallow and dangerous patriotism: "We're number one." "The American way." It's a Superman comic book idea of the world. It covers up the complicated realities, and it's very dangerous.

**PLAYBOY:** After September 11, 2001 you spoke out against the president. After your statement that America may have brought on the type of hatred that led to the terrorist attack, journalist Christopher Hitchens called you an idiot.

**STONE:** A moral and intellectual idiot, to be exact. In the 1980s I admired Hitchens. He was strongly pro-Nicaragua and right about it. He seemed very intelligent. Since then he has gotten into an extremist groove. He has become an ideologue. I thought it behooved us to understand how America's unilateralism, arrogance and history of pushing around the rest of the world enrages people. Since Iraq, the outrage is worse than ever. It's why this election is so damn important.

**PLAYBOY:** Did you know Bush when you were at Yale together?

**STONE:** No, but I met him before he was president. He wanted to meet me.

**PLAYBOY:** But as a well-known leftist, you seem like the last person he would want to meet.

**STONE:** I don't know why, but he did. When we met, he reminded me that we'd been in the same class at Yale. I said, "But you know, Governor, I didn't make it all the way through. I went off to Vietnam." He said, "I had a friend who went over there and didn't come back." He looked at me, and it was a moment. I don't think he had much interest in me beyond that. He knows how to talk to you, though. He's good for a few seconds. I don't know, maybe this is Oliver Stone paranoia, but I felt like he was looking through me, like he wished his friend had come back instead of me. I felt a whiff of discontent.

**PLAYBOY:** John Kerry was at Yale too. Did you run into him?

**STONE:** When I was a freshman, he was a senior. He was a big shot. I saw him debate, and he was powerful—he looked like Lincoln. People said he was pompous—that was the rap. He had a funereal groove about him, like some Dickensian character. He was always too old for his years. I remember him in the post-Vietnam era, too, and he was very somber. I've met him a few times since.

**PLAYBOY:** What's your opinion of him?

**STONE:** There's a fundamental decency about him. I think he'd make a good president. He's a public servant in the Brahmin sense of the word. The guy knows his A's, B's and C's.

**PLAYBOY:** What's your take on the polls? In the end, who will win?

**STONE:** I worry that the Republicans will do anything to win. For a long time I've worried that Bush will start another war before the election to get people fearful. Voters are nervous about changing

## Toga, Toga, Toga

Not all epics are created equal



**Alexander the Great (1956)**

Richard Burton, Claire Bloom, Frederic March  
**Plotline:** A charismatic fourth century B.C. Macedonian prince conquers the world by uniting the tribes of Greece against the Persian empire before dying at the age of 33.  
**Toga appeal:** Burton wears a Harpo Marx wig and drowsily belches out fake Shakespearean speeches for much of the film's 141 minutes. Did Alexander crush his foes by baring them to death?



**Ben-Hur (1959)**

Charlton Heston, Stephen Boyd  
**Plotline:** A Jewish prince condemned to slavery avenges himself on his childhood pal, the new Roman tribune.  
**Toga appeal:** You can blame the flick's 11 Oscars and brawny box office—not to mention its 212-minute running time—for the gargantuan-epics craze that took over Hollywood in the late 1950s and spread like a mutating virus in the 1960s.



**Spartacus (1960)**

Kirk Douglas, Laurence Olivier, Tatyana Curtis  
**Plotline:** A Thracian slave, forced to become a gladiatorial killing machine, turns on his owners to lead a slave uprising that uproots the corrupt Roman republic.  
**Toga appeal:** Stanley Kubrick's four-Oscar epic is spectacular, especially in those slaves-versus-Roman-soldiers sequences punctuated by the battle cry that achieved pop-culture immortality: "I am Spartacus!"



**Cleopatra (1963)**

Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, Rex Harrison  
**Plotline:** The queen of Egypt seduces the Roman emperor in order to merge their kingdoms, then becomes his widow and beds his most powerful general before losing a war with the new Roman emperor.  
**Toga appeal:** This four-hour-plus bloated-athon cost so much to make it nearly toppled a film studio and killed sin-and-sandals epics. Temporarily, at least.



**Gladiator (2000)**

Russell Crowe, Joaquin Phoenix  
**Plotline:** A Roman general, enslaved and forced into gladiatorial training by a twisted new emperor, returns and becomes a hero to the oppressed.  
**Toga appeal:** Nifty gladiator scenes, lots of scowling from Crowe and CGI-enhanced spectacles helped it win five Oscars and perform big at the box office, triggering the newest wave of epics.



**Troy (2004)**

Brad Pitt, Eric Bano, Orlando Bloom  
**Plotline:** The abduction of Helen, queen of Sparta, by the Trojan prince launches the Greek armada against the city of Troy.  
**Toga appeal:** The thousand-ships-a-sailing sequence is cool, but the \$185 million budget was squandered on a cast that spent too much time buffing up and getting slathered in bronzers and not enough time with an acting coach.

—STEPHEN REBELLO

leadership in the middle of a war. He bills himself as Mr. Security, which of course he's not. He's Mr. Insecurity. Every decision he has made has led to a worse military conclusion and a less secure nation. He has generated enormous hatred, and hatred begets violence. He shovels up the worst kind of patriotic crap. Thirty or 40 years ago, even in the 1920s, they would have run him out of town. Patriotic stuff works occasionally, as it did during Joe McCarthy's time, but Bush is overdoing it.

**PLAYBOY:** Some critics of *Fahrenheit 9/11* lump Michael Moore and you together, charging that you're left-wing loonies and conspiracy-theory nuts.

**STONE:** That's typical. Rather than look at what we say, they try to discredit us. I'm glad to be lumped in with such great company. We fucking need him. He's becoming a folkloric Mark Twain figure. The movie is very powerful.

**PLAYBOY:** How much of a difference will his movie make in the election?

**STONE:** It's hard to know, but I think a movie can make a huge difference. *JFK* helped Clinton win. It came out right before the election. *Salvador* and *Platoon* may have had an impact on Reagan's downturn in popularity. *Salvador* took shots at Reagan and led to an early sense that the Reagan thing was going to end. A month before *Platoon*, Ollie North got booby-trapped. The whole thing turned.

**PLAYBOY:** Yet Reagan remained popular.

**STONE:** At the time, though, he lost a lot of power. He couldn't do as much evil. The movies were part of a change in sensibility. Movies can help evolve consciousness, as Michael Moore's movies have. You risk a lot when you speak out, though. That's always been true, but more so since September 11. After September 11 no one would speak out.

**PLAYBOY:** You did.

**STONE:** And I was pilloried. Most were quiet. We all felt the chill. We became so cautious that we self-censored. For a while it killed the impulse we have for greatness and creativity.

**PLAYBOY:** Did you self-censor because of fear of reprisals?

**STONE:** The fear of rocking the boat, yes. We all have it. In school you don't want to rock the boat, but at times you have to. I had movies shut down, sometimes for mysterious reasons. I was never in the middle of a storm like Moore is, but there were controversies even before September 11. Since then, however, they can call you unpatriotic if you don't go along. If you came out against Vietnam they pulled the unpatriotic thing too. It's a warped definition of patriotism. A patriot cares deeply about this country, enough to want it to do right. Michael Moore is a great patriot.

**PLAYBOY:** If you were to make a new version of *Platoon*, focusing on Iraq rather than Vietnam, how would it be similar?

**STONE:** I haven't been to Iraq, but from

the letters home and glimpses of the soldiers, I think it's pretty much the same for a young man in Iraq as it was in Vietnam. There's the dilemma about how you behave, morally or immorally. Most people just follow orders, but some step up. The fighting is about the same, though the military has gotten better at making people more like robots. They're able to control firefights better; they move clumps of men more easily. But basically it's the same strategy as in Vietnam. They bring in maximum firepower, wipe out what they can and then send in the soldiers to mop up. You blow the shit out of everybody and then move forward, minimizing your own casualties. As a result they've maximized civilian casualties. Whatever they say about precision bombing, it's not that precise. The news triumphs when we take out some terrorist, but what about the 3,000 civilians? What difference does it make? Why is a baby in a well in Pennsylvania more important than 3,000 civilians in Iraq? Because it's an American baby?

War was and is a bureaucratic fuckup. Nothing goes right, and everything costs twice as much as they say it will. For the most part it's a nightmare and inefficient. They said that My Lai was just a few bad apples. It wasn't. The system allows it to happen, just as it did in the prison camps in Iraq. One of the great things about writing *Platoon* was that I looked deeply into the different reactions of ordinary boys from every state. The boy you thought would be a weasel wasn't, and the boy who *was* a weasel was a hero. Then the soldiers came home. I fought in Vietnam in 1967 and 1968. When we came back here, we were nobodies. Vets live with what the public never sees. Here I am again, raving, the conspiracy nut.

**PLAYBOY:** You're joking, but how do you feel about those stereotypes?

**STONE:** Conspiracy nut, leftist, madman. These are terms of dismissal so you don't have to listen to the argument. It's an ugly way of doing business and not logical, either. It would be healthier and, frankly, more fun to hear what someone has to say. I'm just looking at the facts and asking questions. Meanwhile, the press, which is supposed to ask the questions, usually just smiles and nods. Donald Rumsfeld said the abuses in Iraq are un-American. What the fuck does that mean? Does he mean that the rest of the world does it and we don't? Yet no one challenges him. Another thing that bothers me is that we've created a ball game in which unless you're a winner, you're seen as a loser. It's a zero-sum game that Michael Douglas talked about as Gordon Gekko in *Wall Street*. Why? Why do you have to see life that way? It goes to the fundamental mind-set of what schoolchildren are taught. When I made *Born on the Fourth of July*, I got to know Ron Kovic well. He said he grew up on John

Wayne in *Sands of Iwo Jima*, and everything was black-and-white, good and evil, winners and losers. Trying to emulate John Wayne is how he wound up in Vietnam, but of course he came to see that things are not black-and-white at all. Not in war, not ever. America should be about many definitions of being a winner. America's greatness—what's left of it—comes from the fact that we're a melting pot. We're Portuguese, Latin, French, Chinese, African. We're all mutts. It should make us more forgiving and tolerant, but instead it has made us fearful and arrogant, two sides of the same coin. At 18 you are allowed to go to Iraq and get killed, but you can't get a drink in California. Why can you die and not fuck? Why can't there be legal whorehouses? Why can't there be places where kids can have sex safely? Why can't we be more honest about sexuality?

**PLAYBOY:** Not sure how we got from conspiracies to legal whorehouses, but are you advocating them?

**STONE:** I'm talking about hypocrisy. Our puritanism allows boys to kill and be killed but not have sex. It's ludicrous. Once again we pretend things are one way. Alexander lived in a more honest time. We go into his bisexuality. It may offend some people, but sexuality in those days was a different thing. Pre-Christian morality. Young boys were with boys when they wanted to be. Sometimes it was physical and sometimes platonic. Nonetheless, a man was expected to marry. They didn't know how heirs were made. At the time, many thought sperm itself contained the whole thing and that the vagina was merely the receptacle. It led them to view women as second-class citizens, as baggage carriers. Sexuality wasn't necessarily tied to procreation and morality, and men were allowed to have a homosexual side as well as a heterosexual side.

**PLAYBOY:** A lot of American men would deny that they have a homosexual side.

**STONE:** I think if we were allowed the freedoms we were promised, we might find out more about ourselves than we know. Perhaps people would be happier, too. Instead of having 14 shotguns, they might have an erection. But children are taught to be fearful of AIDS, to shy from the other sex unless you marry them, to repress any natural sexual feelings, not to drink, not to fuck, not to dance, not to take ecstasy, but to fight in Iraq. They're scaring kids to death. Heterosexual and homosexual sex can be fun. You don't have to live an antiseptic, antidope, anti-booze, anti-everything life. Let people do whatever the fuck they want and stay the fuck out and don't ask them about it.

**PLAYBOY:** Have you felt a puritanical reaction to your movies?

**STONE:** I've been shot down for most of them. I've taken a lot of shots in my life.

**PLAYBOY:** Undeserved?

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**STONE:** Maybe they were deserved and I just never understood. Or maybe if you start messing around with Richard Nixon or JFK, you have to expect people to attack you. Not only that, if you move from *Heaven & Earth* to *JFK* to *Natural Born Killers* to an interview with Castro, people can't get a take on you. *Heaven & Earth* and *Natural Born Killers* were played at the Paris Film Festival back-to-back. What a 180-degree fucking turn! One was a Buddhist film about pacifism, according to some people, and the other is supposedly a violent, insane, lurid piece of trash. They can't figure you out, and that bothers them. From that point on it's opinions and gossip.

**PLAYBOY:** Why have you swung from genre to genre?

**STONE:** I follow whatever motivates me, whatever puts the wind in my sails at the moment. I have to be zealous about a project, because it requires years. You have to be consumed by it. Whether it's *Alexander* or *U Turn*, you give it your all. I've always changed genres. I'll do a film noir and then a sports drama like *Any Given Sunday*. This is the first time I've done a historical epic. Ideas come to me, some people say too fast. Perhaps they're right and I have to learn to slow down, but age takes care of that anyway. I just have to keep going. When I have been shut down, I've found a new way. I'm misunderstood and I keep going. I was accused of promoting violence. Anyone who knows me understands that I promote peace.

**PLAYBOY:** The accusation that you promote violence comes from *Natural Born Killers*. One teenage couple, after watching the movie, went on a killing spree.

**STONE:** *Natural Born Killers* was an experiment. I wanted to make an action film. I'd never done a summer movie and wanted to. Once I started, I explored the idea, and it became about cartoon violence. *Natural Born Killers* is a breakthrough in experimentation. I tried to explore the flexibility and elasticity of film. I don't think film had ever been used like that. The people in the movie were cartoon characters. We scraped the edges off the behavior perimeters to see how far we could go. Correct me if I'm wrong, but isn't the definition of satire overexaggeration? You can't expect everyone to get satire.

**PLAYBOY:** Did you feel any guilt over the copycat murders?

**STONE:** You can't account for every person in the world. The kid who killed John Lennon was reading *Catcher in the Rye*. Is Salinger responsible? Give me a break. Anybody who'd kill is psychotic in a deeper way and was psychotic before they saw a movie.

**PLAYBOY:** Writer John Grisham said you were responsible in the same way that Ford Motor Co. was responsible for the deaths caused by its Pintos.

**STONE:** He got involved because a per-

sonal friend of his was killed. He became one of those outsize caricatures—in this case, American novelist turned vigilante. I don't know the guy at all, but he's still gloating. He recently said how glad he is that he put a spike into Hollywood. I don't know if the films you've seen in the past seven or eight years are far better than *Natural Born Killers*, but they certainly are violent, some far more violent and far more realistically violent. Look at *Black Hawk Down*. I think that movie has done far more disservice to this country than *Natural Born Killers*.

**PLAYBOY:** What disservice?

**STONE:** *Natural Born Killers* is satire, whereas movies like *Black Hawk Down* and *Saving Private Ryan* contribute to an aura of patriotic inevitability and an awe of the military.

**PLAYBOY:** Did the *Natural Born Killers* controversy weigh heavily on you?

**STONE:** It was an ugly time. I'd just finished *JFK* and was editing *Heaven & Earth* and shooting *Natural Born Killers*. I was going through a divorce. Can you imagine what that was like? At the time I had two kids. I had an amazingly complicated life. Yeah, the controversy was difficult. I get people so mad.

**PLAYBOY:** Even cartoon violence can be upsetting. So can conspiracy theories.

**STONE:** Let's look at *JFK*. *JFK* doesn't say the things some people say it does. It's very much a hypothesis. It's a philosophical inquiry into what is truth, what is reality. If you look closely at the film, it's written precisely with conditional tenses, what-ifs. It's a timeworn method of drama. And we put out an entire book with footnotes to explain our sources. We made every effort to be honest, and we were raked over the coals. I was in Europe, thank God, but Peter Jennings took me apart on ABC on the 40th anniversary of the Kennedy assassination.

**PLAYBOY:** Do you admit that you are conspiracy-minded?

**STONE:** In Europe everyone is conspiracy-minded. They assume that things happen behind the scenes in government and business. They aren't naive enough to believe the evening news and the soundbites from politicians. Americans want to believe the evening news. They want to believe the press conference. Don't people realize that they've been lying to us for years? So they attack Michael Moore. They attack me.

**PLAYBOY:** Are you immune to the attacks?

**STONE:** Sometimes. The reaction to *Natural Born Killers* wounded me.

**PLAYBOY:** You were also attacked for that movie by the author of the original script, Quentin Tarantino.

**STONE:** I bought the script from Quentin for a lot of money. He accepted the money. Nobody forced it down his throat. Contrary to what my critics say—that I took it away from him and ruined it and blah-blah-blah—it had been at the

(continued on page 148)



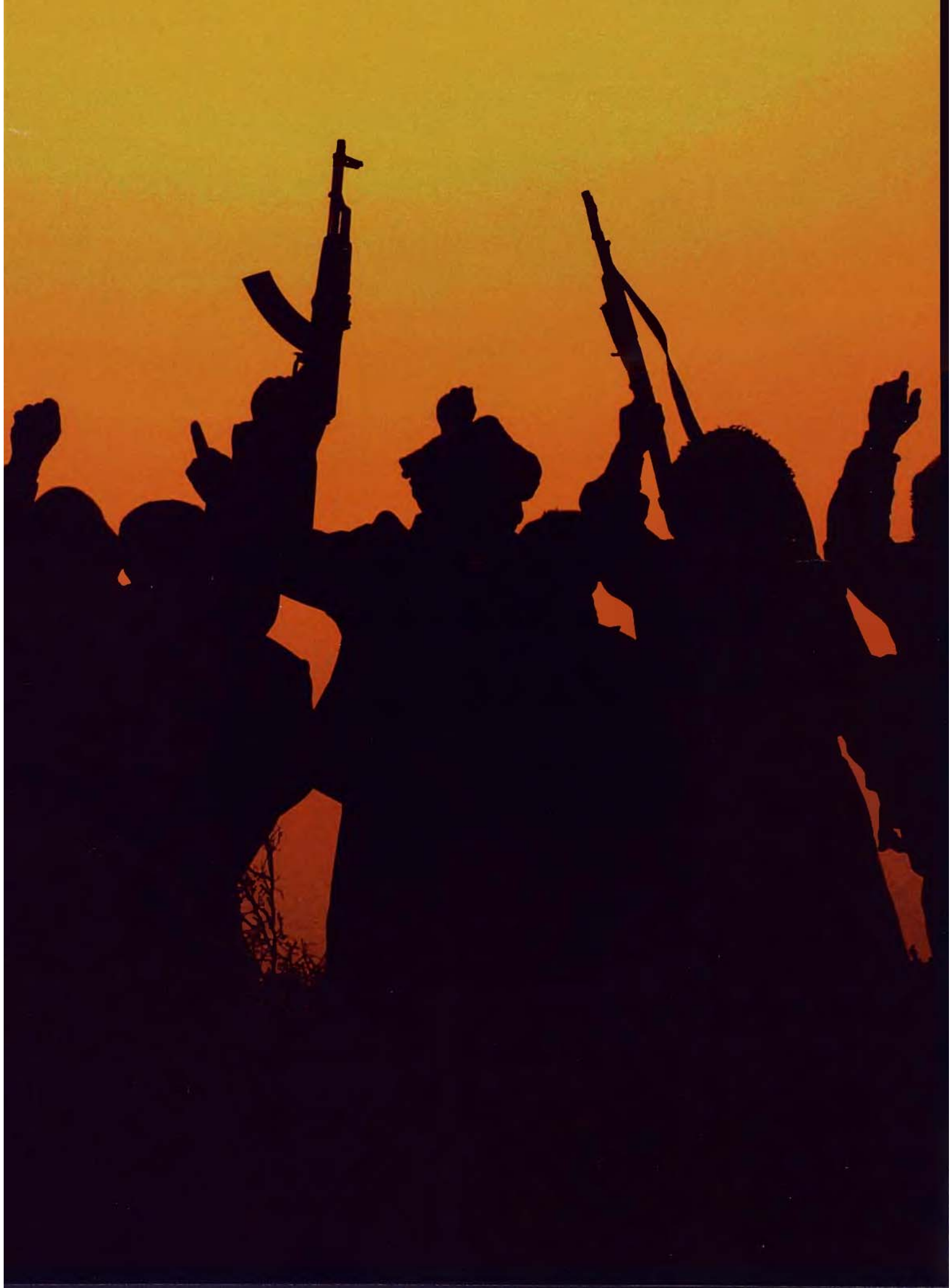


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IN A CITY WITH A HISTORIC NIGHTLIFE TRADITION, WAR AND FANATICISM  
HAVE FORCED BAGHDADIS TO ADJUST TO A WORLD WITHOUT PLEASURE



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# BAGHDAD

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## AFTER HOURS

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BY NICOLAS PELHAM

**T**he Hunting Club is Baghdad's leading venue, but it isn't the best place to stage a rock concert. Night has fallen by the time the Devils take the stage, and most of the audience have returned to the relative safety of their homes. The group, dressed in white shirts buttoned up to the collar, struggles to inject a party mood into the near-empty club, which has the lost air of a 1950s sock hop in an Oklahoma church hall. "We're emerging from half a century of hibernation," my host, Dr. Rikab Alousi, says apologetically, harking back to his youth, when Iraqi women proudly displayed cleavage.

Beneath dimmed chandeliers, a few people gravitate to the dance floor, first in single-sex groups and then more furtively in couples. A girl whose black hair falls so seamlessly into her black dress the two could be a single

piece ripples toward her partner. His arms are outstretched over her head as if he were holding a curtain to screen their would-be embrace from onlookers. The girl keeps her back to the people seated at the tables and swoons in complicity.

"The good days are on the horizon; the days of darkness will pass away," sings Husam Rasan, encouraging his audience, which sits at tables laden with Black Label whiskey and Amstel beer (bottled in Jordan), to briefly recapture an age when the Baathists kept the mullahs at bay and men retired to their clubs to drink whiskey. Iraq was the Arab world's largest importer of scotch—the real thing, not the fake brands of bromine-dye "Johnnie Talker" that flooded the country when sanctions restricted imports. "The women will be bedecked in jewel pendants



**Hussam Rasan belts out a tune at Baghdad's Hunting Club, the last social refuge of the city's middle class.**

hanging down to their breasts," sings Rasan.

"That's what we're missing," cries Alousi, letting his gentlemanly air slip to reveal a machismo honed in the trenches during the Iran-Iraq war. "Dancing girls with free-flowing hair who shake their breasts." His tolerant, headscarved wife explains that this is their first party in five years. "Our mistake was that we never had a victory party to celebrate the fall of Saddam," she says.

Halfway through the evening, a power outage cuts the revelry short, dumping the audience back into a reality in which essential services constantly fail, helicopters fly so low that the vibrations trigger car alarms, and police abandon their checkpoints soon after dusk, leaving the streets free for insurgents to roam. Alousi hurries home.

Such is night in today's Baghdad. In a city once unrivaled in the Mideast in its pursuit of pleasure, secular Muslims struggle against fundamentalists to establish some kind of normal life. And they're doing it on their own as Americans sit tight in the Green Zone, where they too struggle to amuse themselves. Little has turned out as expected.

I first went to Iraq two years ago as a British journalist covering the Middle East when Baghdad was an ashen city blighted by Saddam's secret police and 12 years of sanctions. Following the U.S. invasion, I took a small apartment on the banks of the Tigris with a palm grove for a back garden. It was the sixth Arabic capital I would make my home in 16 years, and at the time it was the most welcoming. People were grateful, if disoriented, to be rid of Saddam. Families like Alousi's would invite me for evening barbecues at their homes overlooking the lazy Tigris and lecture me about the old Baghdad—before war, Saddam and the occupation restricted fun to enclosures like the Hunting Club.

**I**n the 12th century Ibn Jubair, a traveler from Muslim Spain, wrote of two Baghdadi virtues: the "polished mirror" of the river Tigris, which wound through the city "like a necklace of pearls between two breasts"; and the beauty

of the city's women, "so that if God does not give protection, there are the dangers of love's seductions."

The Hunting Club is one of the few hideaways in Baghdad where Iraqi girls and boys can hold hands and look glam. Daughters and wives who stayed at home, fearful that Saddam's playboy son Uday might take a fancy to them, are again heading to the club. The bars have their TV screens stubbornly fixed to sports stations, refusing to let bulletins of Iraq's relentless bloodshed spoil the mood in a capital where most days start with the thud of a car bomb. Sixteen months after an invasion freed them to buy the satellite dishes Saddam had banned, Iraqis are too tired to tune in to the news. Life was easier when the state pulled the wool over their eyes.

After eight years of trench warfare with Iran, Iraqis careered into Kuwait. And following their flight from Kuwait, they struggled through 12 years of a global boycott. Liberation turned to occupation. And despite the arrival of the world's superpower, Iraq

has remained a pariah, cut off by commercial airlines and oil giants too afraid to set foot in the country. Immigration authorities the world over consider Iraqis suspect. Iraqis are always falling out of the frying pan and into the fire.

Yet the current wave of killing, kidnapping and crime is small fry compared with the murders and mutilations under Saddam. Or so says Alousi.

"Fewer people are getting killed than before the war—we just know more about it now," he tells me as we prowling the gardens of the Hunting Club in the twilight before the Devils come out to play. "Before, we couldn't fathom what was happening even in a neighboring town." Or, he adds, in his own Baghdad borough. After the Iran-Iraq war, Alousi eventually found a job as a pathologist in a large Baghdad hospital. In those days they could tell how fast Saddam's execution machinery was churning by the number of bodies received at the morgue. But then the secret police started to deliver the bodies directly to families—for the cost of the bullet—with the eyes removed. "By law, the eyes belonged to



**After a string of attacks on purveyors of alcohol, Baghdad liquor-store owners have had to take steps to protect their customers.**

years at the helm, with his face imprinted on every wall and in every consciousness, Saddam had cloned the country in his own image. He was the personification of Iraq. Maybe the singer was right.

I remember chiding my driver, Samir, a diminutive, moody man in his mid-50s, when he arrived for work unusually cheerful, bragging that he had beaten and divorced his wife and expelled his eldest son from his home. Admittedly, it would have been quite a feat; his towering wife is twice his weight, and his son ripples with muscles from working out. Eventually Samir confessed it was humbug. "People have to know I'm still head of the household," he said, a wizard of Oz with his curtain down.

It's about honor, says Alousi, when I ask why Iraq didn't set up a truth and reconciliation committee to exorcise itself of the past traumas, psychoses and guilt. "What matters is less the reality than the appearance of normality." Which was why, he says, so many families complied with Saddam's ban on mourning for loved ones killed by the state. It helped hide their powerlessness.

### **SOME BAGHDADIS HOPE TO RECAPTURE AN ERA WHEN MEN RETIRED TO CLUBS TO DRINK. IRAQ WAS THE ARAB WORLD'S LARGEST IMPORTER OF SCOTCH—THE REAL THING, NOT THE FAKE BRANDS THAT LATER FLOODED THE COUNTRY.**

the hospitals for research," explains Alousi. "We knew it had been a bloody month by the high cornea count."

"Why are you not like other countries?" laments singer Rassan, who has switched from optimism back to melancholy. "Why are your children swimming in pools of blood? Why are all our homes burdened by funerals?" They are questions that plague Iraqis. The previous regime and the current insurgents like to blame foreigners—America, Iran, Syria, Israel—for their suffering. But what if something in the Iraqi character itself is to blame? Rassan has his own answer: "The problem is not the homeland; the problem is the prison guard," he replies in verse, spitting out the Arabic for jailer, *sajjan*, as if pronouncing *Saddam*.

Alousi finds the answer a cop-out. "It's easier to blame other people for your misery than a whole society," he says, referring to the trial of Saddam and his 11 disciples as if all the sins of the past rested on their shoulders alone. Yet Iraqis are fond of saying that instead of one Saddam, they now have thousands of mini Saddams with his megalomaniacal, murderous zeal for power. After 35

1,200 years ago under the caliph Haroun al-Rashid, or Aaron the Upright. From his throne in Baghdad, he ruled the world's superpower, lording over an empire that reached from the Atlantic to Afghanistan. Today the overlord is better known for his exploits in bed. Accounts of his majesty fill the pages of *One Thousand and One Nights*, depicting a time when erotica was part of the rich tapestry of Islamic tradition.

Nothing but the odd tumbledown minaret has survived the centuries of brutality that followed, from the caliph through Saddam. But that has not stopped Saad Janabi from dreaming of a revival. "I want to bring back the beautiful nights, the parties and the new clothes," says Janabi, the Hugh Hefner of Iraq, outlining the manifesto for his campaign to be Iraq's president come January.

In pursuit of such nocturnal delights, Baghdad's playboy has remodeled three of Saddam's family's riverside pleasure palaces and filled them with Iraq's hottest dancers and

**A gypsy prostitute in Nahawan, with her nephew.**





**Left: Even in the middle of the madness, nightlife goes on. A young couple has dinner in July in Baghdad's Zeyuna district. Right: Sergeant Tony Dale of Cody, Wyoming ropes a wooden steer outside his barracks in the protected Green Zone.**



actresses. When he got the palaces (quite how is a mystery; many land-grabbers surfaced in the anarchy that followed the war), the buildings were wrecks. What American missiles failed to demolish, vandals had ransacked. But over the past five months, Janabi has painstakingly transformed the ruins, converting two into a grandiose headquarters for a 21st century television company named Rashid after his favorite caliph.

Much of Janabi's media experience comes from America, where he lived in exile for eight years with his American wife—a Republican mayor—from whom he is now estranged. He is a touchy-feely politician and addresses all Westerners as “buddy.” Where its namesake ruled the land, says Janabi, his media empire will rule the airwaves that rule men's minds. For a price tag of \$7.5 million, he has decked his studios in Italian marble hewn in Mosul. The lights are finished in gold leaf, and a half-completed gazebo adorns the garden, where Janabi plans to film an aerobics show. Two golden eagles perch over a central atrium crafted with a mosaic of precious stones. Even the doorknobs—which come from Syria—have been designed to mimic the breastlike archways that filled his caliph's Baghdad.

The palace has seen such pleasure before. Janabi's predecessor, Saddam's son Qusay, had a tiled painting of bare-breasted muses installed; it defied the looters' efforts to pilfer it and now lies cracked on a balcony wall. Janabi once quarreled with Qusay over revenue from a cigarette business he ran in Iraq and says he is unsure whether the painting accords with his tastes. In the meantime he has commissioned a fresco of Caliph Haroun al-Rashid topped with a phallic turban and eyeing semi-clad dancing girls at the foot of his throne.

“That's me, buddy,” he says, pointing to a sketch of the caliph held by the artist, before he leads the way to his latter-day harem of dancers, singers and would-be Jane Fondas for his aerobics show. “It's better to shoot movies than people, no?”

Fearful that not all might agree, Janabi has rebuilt the bombed palace walls higher than the Qusay originals and crafted vast iron gates to hide his dream Iraq from intruders. Gone are the anything-goes days that followed the American invasion, when bootleggers set up Budweiser stands on Baghdad's thoroughfares and com-

munists returning from exile held public unveiling ceremonies in which women would strip off their headscarves. To avoid assassination (he has survived four attempts already), Janabi zooms by speedboat along the untraveled Tigris that winds through the city, jetting between his three palaces. Gunmen in sunglasses guard the launches, and a 45-minute car journey is replaced by five minutes on the water.

On my first visit, I feel as if I were straying onto a *Dr. No* set. Janabi's pleasure gardens are bedecked with pavilions, swimming pools and two stables of Rolls-Royces and other vintage cars. An Excalibur sedan bears the license plate BAGHDAD 1. Janabi says he brought them all from Dubai after the U.S. invasion, when Iraqis still dreamed of better times. The cars lie like caged tigers, unable to risk a spin on the roads.

But despite the mayhem beyond his grounds, Janabi has not yet abandoned his boyish optimism, a trait he must have acquired during his American exile. He spends much of his time planning gatherings for his political party, the Iraqi Republican (continued on page 163)



**Left: Iraqi men smoke water pipes and play dominoes along the banks of the Tigris. Right: The security chief for Saad Janabi, would-be leader of Iraq, pilots his boat on the Tigris, across from Uday Hussein's former palace.**



*"I don't know what to do. Ted likes it shaved and  
Martin likes it fluffy."*





# American Beauty

Miss United States Teen is Oregon's crowned jewel

**K**ari Ann Peniche, the reigning Miss United States Teen, would like to dispel a few misconceptions about beauty queens. "Most of the girls I competed with are beautiful," she says, "but they're also smart, talented and driven." Growing up, Kari Ann was a cheerleader, a model and an athlete before she set her sights on the tiara. "I was the only girl on the boys' varsity soccer team," she says. "One day I came home and announced, 'I'm doing a pageant next week.' My family was shocked." Kari Ann's penchant for diversity means her post-pageant life will revolve around premed classes, singing and acting after she passes the crown in November. "My dad was an entertainer, and I used to go to his sound checks. I always wanted to be a singer. I'm recording a rock CD." Not surprisingly, this too-good-to-be-true winner volunteers with Alzheimer's patients in her spare time. "They have cooler stories than we do," she says. When it comes to guys, she's attracted to those who are as ambitious as she is. "I want a boyfriend to work on his own projects instead of saying, 'Why can't we just hang out?' I'm so focused on my goals." If you haven't seen Kari Ann shaking her pom-poms as a cheerleader in the science fiction flick *Species III*, or opposite Ray Romano and Burt Reynolds in the comedy *Grilled*, you're missing out. "In *Grilled* I play a 'special gift' for someone during a bar mitzvah," she says. And here she is, unwrapped.



Kari Ann held Miss Oregon United States Teen and Miss Oregon Teen USA titles before becoming Miss United States Teen 2003. The 20-year-old now lives in L.A.











"I like hanging out with both guys and girls because they can bring different elements to the table," says Kari Ann. "I am definitely a tomboy, but I am forever a girl. I was always into hiking, rock climbing, biking and other outdoor activities, but I did pageants and cheerleading, too. I can put on high heels and a dress when I need to—or slip out of them for PLAYBOY."



The background of the page is a detailed, textured illustration. In the upper left, a dragonfly's wing is shown in a golden-brown hue, with its intricate network of veins clearly visible. Below the wing, the dragonfly's legs are depicted in dark, almost black tones, extending across the bottom of the frame. The overall background has a mottled, brownish-yellow appearance, suggesting a natural, perhaps muddy or earthy, environment.

# *St. Mark's Day*

*Filth, food and fornication. Just a typical bug's life*

*Fiction by* **Rod Liddle**

**T**risha and the kids are off at Flyworld®—"400 Square Feet of Shit," as the brochures proclaim. It's something of a tradition for those of our lineage round about St. Mark's Day, April 25, when there's a palpable warming of the breeze outside and the not too distant smell of summer hanging above the lawn and the blackthorn hedgerows and the lime trees. Maybe I'll join them later—though, then again, maybe not, because recently it feels as if I've become immune to all the quote excitement unquote of being around so many similarly fervid buzzing bodies, the frantic diving and scrabbling and vomiting, the clamor and the rapacious fucking and the occasional violent sideshows as everyone gets a

ILLUSTRATION BY OAVE McKEON

little too stoked up and overheated and tempers boil over. I think, reader, you know what I mean. You've been there. The sinister ichneumons are always around too, looking for hosts for their hideous children, which is one reason you never find our more genteel, civilized brethren—the moths and the butterflies—taking time out at Flyworld®. Plus, those guys are not mad on shit, anyway.

Anyway, this is why I'm here now, thinking things over, just circling the light in the living room. And there is work to be done, a few little odds and ends to be tidied up with everybody safely out of the house.

Without me to keep watch, I reckon Trisha will lose a good five or so of our 27 benighted offspring, and the truth is we rowed this morning—me saying, Look, why make the effort. It's Flyworld—no @—in here: There's shit everywhere you look, they've just had a fucking baby, and the human standards of cleanliness and hygiene have been forgotten, albeit maybe temporarily. And Trish waggles her pretty scape sadly and says, It's not the shit; that's not the point. It's a day out, it's a family thing, when did you get to be so fucking joyless, Clive—look at the kids, all of them, buzzing around by the window, they're desperate to go.

And indeed little Jermaine and Bryony and poor, dumb Edmund, the runt-iest of runts, are flying headfirst at the glass, trying to pulverize their way through, *bang bang bang bang* they go, and they're young and stupid and know nothing, and I rate their chances of surviving Flyworld® about one in 20 absolute tops, and Edmund one in a hundred, but Trisha is resolute and there's this horrible, debilitating, acrimonious exchange between the two of us and then a dangerous silence before they all file out shrieking with glee through the ventilation grill behind the gas boiler, and the house is quiet.

What gets the kids going, apart from the promise of all that glorious shit, is the chance to see the St. Mark's flies make their first appearance. According to our popular mythology, the laws of physics preclude a creature as ungainly and heavy and inept as the St. Mark's from achieving any sort of flight. That cumbersome black undercarriage and the two pairs of elongated, limp tarsi and a pair of flaccid palps should by rights drag them back down to earth and thus to evolutionary annihilation. And in fact they don't fly too well and rarely climb higher than a bed of nettles, and you watch them and think, Right, any moment now, nemesis in the form of an avian predator, a robin or a thrush, or maybe just gravity, will strike and that's it for the St. Mark's flies for

another year. But somehow the St. Mark's flies get by.

The kids are avid to watch all this and have been pretending to be St. Mark's all around the house, plummeting from the arm of the sofa to the carpet and giggling, and now they want to see the real thing, knowing that this will most likely be their only chance to do so.

And I think they hope maybe to strike up some sort of conversation, too, or ask for autographs, and that's okay because the St. Mark's are easy-going, self-effacing and approachable, which is more than can be said for most of the multitudes of kith, kin and mortal enemy spinning out their cheap holidays at the frantic, tawdry hedonism of Flyworld®, with the barkers and the colored balloons.

Here's a thing, though. Trisha and me, we met at Flyworld® during the last desperate whirl of bacchanalia just before the big autumn sleep. There she was, just inside the gates, this vision, dancing in the air surrounded by a virtual swarm of swooning, just-hatched stone flies with their soft and frankly hopeless gossamer wings and Trisha

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*Silverfish slither around the  
goopy mess beside the sink;  
black beetles and cockroaches  
hide beneath the stove.*

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spinning above and around them in this peculiarly elegant ellipse or maybe a trapezoid, which later became so familiar and then, in the end, unaccountably irritating to me. Lust-drunk, we flew straight back to my house, and the kids were set down to mature in a large piece of unsmoked bacon that had fallen down to ripen behind the refrigerator. Hell, those were heady days, believe me!

And maybe remembering our first meeting was behind some of the fury this morning. She thinks I've become too comfortable, too attuned to and obsessed with the rhythm of this house, its frequent, dangerous interlopers and the worry and irritation of a burgeoning arachnid population—much worse since the new baby arrived—and of course the life cycle of our own dear, kind hosts. The mewling baby has meant a glut of food and new breeding opportunities (which, for some reason, I feel disinclined to take advantage of—tiredness, maybe). But you can't argue that it hasn't made for a comparatively easy life, the new arrival. However, problem is, the change in our circumstances has not gone unnoticed outside and under-

neath, either. The various baby smells stretch down the block and around the corner, and every day brings a plethora of grimly opportunistic visitors, usually nothing more threatening than educationally subnormal bluebottles, who, bereft of wit, fly straight into the myriad of spiderwebs that now festoon each corner of the kitchen and living room and connecting hallway, or maybe occasionally a sluggish early wasp from the big nest in the attic, fooled into an early summer by the fact that the heating is on full blast all the fucking time. No, stupid, it's not July. Wasps are so gullible. When it comes down to it, they're just glamorous, dumb ants.

But it's the stuff at floor level that has gotten more worrying. Silverfish slither around the goopy mess beside the sink; black beetles and cockroaches hide beneath the stove. Black ants scurry around the slatternly melamine work surfaces in search of powdered baby milk and spilled sugar. And even those fucking weird things from the damp gray earth beneath a stone, devil's coach-horses, have colonized the cool and musty pantry. I try to explain to these enormous, sinking creatures, in words of one syllable, that there's nothing for them here, just shit, so leave, guys—do yourselves a favor, make for the garden. But the coach-horses can sniff a slug from 40 paces, and I can't disguise from them the glistening, bejeweled trails leading haphazardly from the front door to the cellar and the kitchen, and the coach-horses just wave their fat tails at me and say in that coarse, primitive lingua franca of the garden, "Minda your owna fucking business, *mosca*, shadduppa you fucking face."

And apart from the new spiders, which make even the most elementary navigation of our home a tricky business—especially the frankly fucking terrifying *Tegenaria gigantea* now installed in a crumbling plaster crevice to the left of the kitchen window, growling and slavering and uttering dire threats and imprecations while nimbly skittering across its deadly, cloying web or sometimes just sitting there, waiting, waiting, its face contorted in a rictus of evil—things are changing with the humans, too, and I mean more than just the rather mundane advent of a human infant.

Thing is, there is a suspicion of entropy in the air. More than a suspicion, in fact.

Hell, I mean, we're all grateful for the mess, for the patent lack of energy to go that inch or two farther and sweep up the bread crumbs. Heaven, after all, is a slovenly house. But there are issues with the humans, bad issues.

(continued on page 160)





Olivia  
2004

*"Who wants to go for a pony ride...?"*



**T**ake a good look at this yacht, the 123-foot *Caprice*, and imagine yourself aboard, cruising the Bahamas. At sunset, you recline with your beautifully bronzed companion in the Jacuzzi on the teak-lined fly deck. Afterward, you head to the salon and lean on the bar, staring out at the glittering turrets of the Paradise Island megaresort Atlantis (pictured). Sure, the hotel is jammed with tourists and screaming kids, but from the comfort of the *Caprice* and the lulling sea, it looks enchanting. Hungry? The chef is laying out a spread of prawns and lobsters on the dining room table, which is carved from rare tiger's-eye maple. Up for a movie? All four cabins (the boat sleeps eight, plus a crew of six) have TVs and VCRs. Yesterday you were buzzing along the pink-sand beaches of Eleuthera on a WaveRunner. Tomorrow Captain Chuck

Limroth is taking you shark diving off Andros.

Get the picture? The sea is the greatest playground on earth. No one has learned this more than today's celebrities, who have discovered they can turn a giant yacht into the world's most exclusive club. These penthouses with propellers have enticed such notoriously big spenders as Sean Combs, who rented the *Southern Cross III* off the Côte d'Azur for 10 days for \$400,000. Oracle CEO Larry Ellison recently cashed in his 244-foot *Katana* for \$68 million and is awaiting delivery of a 460-foot behemoth. No wonder yacht brokers are in a frenzy, trying to outdo each other with one amazing ship after another. The four boats profiled here are up for charter—or for purchase if you have the cash. (For the *Caprice*, contact Camper & Nicholsons at [cnconnect.com](http://cnconnect.com).) Prepare to set sail.

# D R E A M B O A T S

*Your ship just came in? Here are four of the world's finest yachts for charter or purchase*

BY JASON HARPER

## **CAPRICE**

CHARTER: \$42,500 A WEEK

WHERE: BAHAMAS

BUY: \$7 MILLION



• SLIPSTREAM •

CHARTER: \$126,000 A WEEK  
WHERE: MEDITERRANEAN,  
CARIBBEAN, INDIAN OCEAN  
BUY: \$20 MILLION

Of all the yachts out there, the *Slipstream* is the one most likely to be owned by a villain in a 007 film. The unique black hull and silver superstructure whisper of sex, speed and danger.

And among the world's new hot spots, the Adriatic coastline of Croatia is the ideal backdrop for villainous escapades. The Dalmatian riviera is a string of 1,200 mostly unblemished islands that were off-limits 10 years ago because of the war. Today the region's future is as clear as its azure waters, and the 143-foot *Slipstream* is your ticket to traveling first-class. The ship's British captain, Phil Stevens, describes the area as a closely guarded

secret, but of course he's got the inside edge.

On boarding this vessel, you notice that the most striking

element is the interior—the very definition of modern nautical luxury, with unfussy furnishings of lacquered metal, rich neutral fabrics and sharp, clean lines. Amenities include the de rigueur Jacuzzi, a gym, two water-jet craft (18 and 15 feet), three double and two twin cabins (which sleep 10, not including the nine-member crew), TVs and DVD players in each cabin, a cinema with a projection screen, and three dining areas (one formal indoor room and two alfresco setups). And speaking of food, the yacht's French chef, Gilles Camilleri, has overseen Michelin-rated restaurants, naturally. He specializes in the cuisine of Provence.

There you are, anchored off Hvar, a small island known for its limber beauties and white pebble beaches. Imagine Ibiza before the lager louts or St. Barts before the attitude. You're sitting in a restaurant with an eye toward the *Slipstream* bobbing off the port as you eat the local specialty of squid-ink risotto in the company of a beautiful, bizarrely named henchwoman, your partner in crime. Could life get any better? Sure—keep reading. As for the *Slipstream*, the British yacht company Nigel Burgess handles charters. Info at [nigelburgess.com](http://nigelburgess.com).





If he who dies with the most toys wins, the 150-foot yacht *Seahawk* puts you on Saint Peter's VIP list. Cruising the Caribbean around pristine tropical islands—Petite Bateau and Petite Rameau in the Tobago Cays, for example—the *Seahawk* has the 37-foot motorboat *Intrepid* in tow for day expeditions. The big ship's toy chest also includes a speedy 17-foot Zodiac, two three-man AquaTrax, scuba and fishing equipment, kayaks, wakeboards, water skis, bicycles and two hot tubs. Not to mention the gadgetry strewn throughout the boat's five cabins (they sleep 10 guests), dining room, sky lounge and study: high-end sound systems, TVs and DVD players, satellite phones, a fax machine and anything else you could possibly need or want. Combine all that with luxe interiors that resemble something out of an English manor and you have the makings of a perfect experience on the high seas.

As for food, chef Troy Davidson used to head the kitchen at a five-star resort in New Zealand. Now his job is to focus on just the 10 of you. You can eat in the formal dining room (pictured top left) or outside on the aft main deck, a great sunset spot. While you savor fresh tuna with a bottle of chilled Burgundy, Captain Dean Maggio, a veteran seaman with a nose for dive spots and finding fun, makes an appearance.

Tomorrow, he suggests, would be a good day to explore the awesome coral reefs off the island of Canouan. You've never heard of it. You can't wait. Ready to go? Contact Fraser Yachts at [fraseryachts.com](http://fraseryachts.com) for all the info.

## SEAHAWK

CHARTER: \$165,000 A WEEK  
WHERE: WINTER, CARIBBEAN;  
SUMMER, MEDITERRANEAN  
BUY: \$24 MILLION



## APOGEE

CHARTER: \$320,000 A WEEK

WHERE: WINTER, CARIBBEAN;

SUMMER, MEDITERRANEAN

BUY: \$50 MILLION



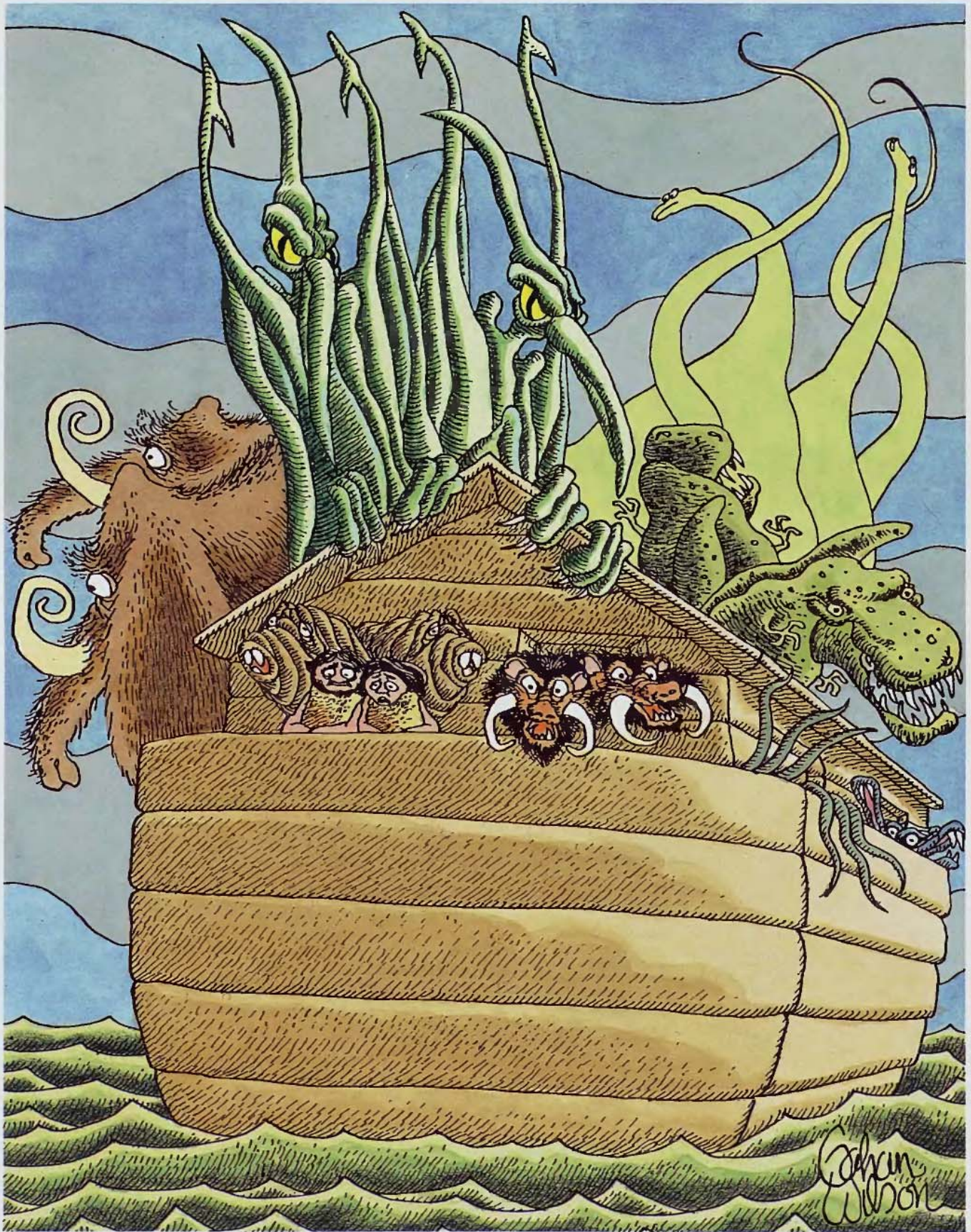
St.-Tropez is full of big rollers. But when you dominate the storied Mediterranean port in the four-deck, 205-foot *Apogee*, the glitterati will be put on notice: There's a new player in town. Forget having to party onshore with the hoi polloi who try to push past the imperious doormen at Les Caves du Roy nightclub. You're floating on the most decadent club in Europe. With three full bars, the *Apogee* might have been more Rick James than Sean Connery if it weren't for the bright polished wood, stately columns and elegant circular staircase. The *Apogee* is also the most powerful of the boats we're featuring, with 5,000 horsepower in the engine room. This boat is made for rocking.

You can start the day by taking your 24-foot tender to Bouillabaisse Beach, where you'll comb the topless Brigitte Bardots to prepare the evening's guest list. Spend the afternoon in the Jacuzzi on the *Apogee's* top deck, which, like the ship itself, accommodates 12. Later you'll hit the aft bridge deck for a sunset

dinner (pictured below) prepared by the chef. But once the guests start arriving by dinghy, you'll head for the sky lounge. With a 26-foot onyx-topped bar inspired by one at Miami's Delano hotel, and mirrors behind the bar that slide open to give you a sea view, this room sets a new standard. Once the drinks start flowing and the dance floor fills, who knows who'll end up swinging around the 15-foot stripper's pole? It just might be you.

When you wake in the morning, you'll slip from the embrace of your 700-count cotton sheets, and the elevator will usher you to the sun deck's air-conditioned gym. Nary a drop of sweat will hit the floor, however, as the crew won't allow it. Wimbledon's ball boys don't move this quickly. As Sara Montefiore of the charter company Camper & Nicholson's ([cnconnect.com](http://cnconnect.com)) puts it, "We believe our service should be far superior to a five-star hotel's. In the *Apogee's* case, the crew-to-guest ratio is 17 to 12. The crew is for you, and for that week you own that yacht."





*"I've got this awful feeling we took the wrong boat!"*

# HOLY WAR

IT'S EASY  
TO RECOGNIZE  
RELIGIOUS  
EXTREMISM ABROAD.

BUT CAN WE  
RECOGNIZE IT  
AT HOME?

by  
Arthur  
Schlesinger Jr.

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**R**eligion has definitely been a good thing personally for President George W. Bush. He is the most aggressively religious president in American history. But is that a good thing for democracy? Is that a good thing for religion? He would not be president today had not a vivid religious experience charged his life with new meaning, direction and discipline. His first 40 years had been a wasteland of drift, aimlessness, buffoonery, business failures and excessive drinking. Redemption and transformation through his commitment to Jesus made him a man and a leader.

His parents are conventional Episcopalians, and for a while young George had conventionally attended the Presbyterian church in Midland, Texas. Marriage and Laura involved him with the Methodists. But he missed something, as he said, "on the inside." In the summer of 1985, while visiting his parents in Kennebunkport, George W. took his famous walk along the rugged Maine shore with Billy Graham. "Are you right with God?" Graham asked. "No," Bush answered, "but I want to be."

"That weekend," Bush later recalled, "my faith took on new meaning. It was the beginning of a new walk where I would recommit my heart to Jesus Christ." He was born-again, and he gave up drinking, smoking and tobacco chewing. Returning to





Midland, he joined a men's community Bible-study group devoted to intensive reading of scripture. When his father ran for president in 1988, young George served as an informal liaison with the religious right. Subsequently turning to politics, he was elected governor of Texas. By this time he was a regular reader of the Bible and enjoyed a personal relationship with his savior. He was a great believer in the power of prayer. At a White House reception he said, "Our country has been delivered from many serious evils and wrongs because of that prayer."

In 1999 he decided to run for president himself. Asked on television about his favorite philosopher, he replied, "Christ, because he changed my heart." As his religiosity gained confidence, he said to members of the Southern Baptist Convention, "I believe that God wants me to be president." To a Houston minister he said, "I believe I am called to run for the presidency." Working through the Supreme Court of the United States, the Almighty delivered the White House to George W. Bush in 2000.

President Bush now finds himself a born-again Christian locked in a struggle with a radical Muslim leader. Neither can be said to represent the whole West or the whole Middle East, and of course there is a world of difference between Protestant and Muslim fundamentalism. But in a way, President Bush is fighting a holy war predicated on his religious convictions, much as Osama bin Laden fights for his fanatical interpretation of the creed of Muhammad. According to the appreciative book by Peter and Rochelle Schweizer, *The Bushes: Portrait of a Dynasty*, a family member said, "George sees this as a religious war. His view of this is that they are trying to kill the Christians. And we Christians will strike back with more force and more ferocity than they will ever know."

American presidents are routinely God-fearing and God-invoking, but they have rarely asked for divine guidance on secular issues. The framers omitted the word *God* from the Constitution. During the Civil War, a convention of Protestant ministers, led by the redoubtable Horace Bushnell, drafted an amendment that repaired the omission by inserting "Almighty God" and "the Lord Jesus Christ." But President Lincoln declined to back the Christian Amendment.

Few among the framers were born-again. Nor did the men who drafted the Constitution conceive of the president as a religious or even a spiritual leader. Of our first three presidents, Washington was a nominal Anglican who did not stay for communion, John Adams was a Unitarian (whom strict Trinitarians spurned as heretics), and Jefferson—denounced as an atheist—was actually a deist who produced an edited version of the New Testament with the miracles eliminated.

In the 19th century, all presidents of course professed belief in a heavenly father, though religion did not occupy a major presence in their lives. Lincoln was the great exception, and even he protected the Constitution from sectarian amendments. Nor did our early presidents exploit their religion for political benefit. "I would rather be defeated," said James A. Garfield, "than make capital out of my religion."

Many 19th century voters did not much care whether politicians were men of faith. James G. Blaine, for example, picked Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll, "the great agnostic" and a famed critic of religion, to nominate Blaine at the 1876 Republican convention. A 21st century equivalent of Colonel Ingersoll would be hissed off the platform at Republican conventions today.

There have been presidents of ardent faith in the 20th century. Woodrow Wilson had no doubt that God had anointed the United States—and himself—for the salvation of suffering humanity. Jimmy (continued on page 142)

## APOCALYPSE NOW

Nearly half of America believes the end is near



A peculiar brand of Christian fundamentalism has invaded mainstream America. It's called premillennial dispensationalism, and it's influencing a Republican leader near you.

The idea behind this movement is that, sometime soon, certain chosen Christians will be bodily raptured into heaven, leaving behind their clothing, jewelry and false teeth. The rest of us will suffer the ravages of a tribulation period foretold in the Book of Revelation: demon locusts; boiling seas; a great rain of hail, fire and blood; and plenty of lewd behavior by minions of the Antichrist. After seven years—and following the conversion of 144,000 Jewish "witnesses" to Christianity—Jesus will return to earth and, in a battle north of Jerusalem on the plains of Megiddo, slaughter the remaining nonbelievers, including the rest of the Jews.

It's an unforgiving scenario. Neither the sinless Methodist nor the most saintly Catholic (or Muslim or atheist) will be raptured and avoid this punishment. Only those who have "accepted Jesus Christ as their personal savior"—in other words, the born-again—will get a pass. Some of their names? Ashcroft, DeLay, G.W. Bush.

Still, all that would be just a matter of personal faith—and taste in entertainment—except that the affairs of the Middle East figure prominently in the conviction of premillennialists that biblical prophecies are coming true in our times and presage the end of the world. Many Americans believe tribulation is upon us. Some fundamentalists may even be trying to help things along. One group of premillennials, the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, has raised millions to return all Jews to Israel, which they believe is necessary for the Second Coming to occur. Peace in the Middle East? That's the last thing fundamentalists want, unless the Muslims decide to destroy the Al-Aqsa Mosque on the Dome of the Rock—the third holiest site in Islam and where premillennials believe the Jewish Temple must also be rebuilt before Jesus can return. So American fundamentalists find themselves in the curious position of endorsing Jewish settlements on the West Bank in the hope of inciting a confrontation.

As popular as such beliefs are now in the U.S., none of these notions can actually be found in the Bible. The theological underpinnings of premillennial dispensation are, in fact, less than two centuries old. John Nelson Darby, a British evangelist, came up with the idea based on an account of a teenage Scottish girl who saw visions of the Second Coming in 1830. From this, Darby developed the notion that Jesus would return to earth twice—once to summon his believers to heaven and once to establish a 1,000-year earthly reign (the millennium).

Regardless of how bizarre this seems, some Americans eat this stuff up. The hugely popular *Left Behind* series of apocalyptic novels, by the Reverend Tim LaHaye, has become a mainstream hit. "So many people have been converted by our books. I've never seen anything like it," LaHaye says at conferences across the country aimed at explaining the theological underpinnings of his series. The 12th installment, *The Glorious Appearing*, debuted at number one on best-seller lists. In all, more than 57 million copies of the *Left Behind* novels have been sold to people who enjoy reading about bad sinners predictably getting their comeuppance. And what could be more predictable than this premillennial view of time? Believers are raptured, nonbelievers die, Jesus returns. The end is near and if you don't get your act together you will be cast into a lake of burning sulfur.

It's an idea many Christians find difficult to accept. "Left Behind has been very influential, but televangelists like Jerry Falwell have long been promoting these ideas as the Christian view," says theology professor Barbara Rossing, author of *The Rapture Exposed*. "But it's just not biblical that a chain of events must happen before Christ can return." Nevertheless, according to a recent Gallup poll, 44 percent of Americans now believe in the premillennialist version of rapture. Hang on to your teeth.

—Nancy Garascia



*"I think Joan is a little over-the-top."*

MTV star  
Cara Zavaleta  
rules the  
road as Miss  
November



On *Road Rules: South Pacific*, Cara's costmates (shown at left) voted her off in the eighth week. "I didn't win," she says, "but I got to see Fiji, New Zealand and all these other great places. I learned wonderful things about myself because I put myself through the ultimate challenge."

# Road Trip



**M**TV has been the launching pad for many a Hollywood career: Adam Sandler was a stand-up comic on the game show *Remote Control*, Jenny McCarthy slapped around male fans—and perfected her chops—on *Singled Out*, and Carson Daly, before landing his own late-night show, was *Total Request Live's* main tween wrangler. There was a time when Miss November, Cara Zavaleta, wanted her MTV too. You may remember her as the wide-eyed, enthusiastic beauty from *Road Rules: South Pacific* and later *The Gauntlet*, on which *Road Rules* and *Real World* alums faced off and hooked

up while pursuing a cash prize. Cara is now touring the country as part of the 10-month Reality Bar Crawl. "We've been hosting ass-shaking contests, guest bartending, signing autographs and hanging out with people," Cara says during a pit stop at her Chicago apartment. "Bar owners want to hire us. I'm goofy, and I don't take myself too seriously. I think people like that."

On *The Gauntlet* Cara helped her team to victory—but would she do it again? "I would feel more relaxed and have more fun with it knowing that I'd already won one and that it didn't need to be another crazy competition," she says. "I





"I know nothing about cars," Cara says. "Anyone who knows me and sees me chonging a tire is going to say, 'Right. You can't even pump your own gos.' But I fell in love with the red British MG in these pictures. It looks like an Austin Powers car. Normally, I'm hoppy on my Pee-wee Herman bike. I have one with a basket that I cruise around on, okay?"





would probably never do *Road Rules* again. It was uncomfortable and an invasion of personal space. I told the producers I had claustrophobia, and they put us in this small RV. We were sardines in that thing. Every mission was scary."

Bungee jumping aside, what really caught Cara off guard was the fan mail. "There were guys who worshiped me and wanted me to have their babies," she says. "People wrote mean things because they thought I treated my on-screen rival, Abe, badly. Abe was an untamed animal from Montana, so it was hard for me to adjust to him. But you can't take it personally."

When the bar tour dries up, and when she's not globe-trotting for PLAYBOY, Cara





may continue to avoid the nine-to-five grind by starting her own fashion line. "I bought a whole bunch of beautiful yarn and two looms in Argentina, and I'm neck deep in weaving shawls and scarves that I'm selling," she says.

But don't count on Cara covering up anytime soon: "I love wearing next to nothing. Gauzy dresses are my favorites because they're barely on you. I've never been intimidated being naked in front of people. I read a book called *The Nympho and Other Maniacs*, by Irving Wallace. In it, women from the past two centuries talk about how they've gone against social standards in order to liberate future generations. That pumped me up."







MISS NOVEMBER

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET



NAME: CARA ZAVALTA

BUST: 34 WAIST: 25 HIPS: 34

HEIGHT: 5'6" WEIGHT: 118

BIRTH DATE: 6-15-80 BIRTHPLACE: BOWLING GREEN, OHIO

AMBITIONS: TO LIVE LIFE FULLY IN THE PRESENT AND ENJOY EVERYTHING IT HAS TO OFFER!

TURN-ONS: WHISPERING IN MY EAR, NICE BUTS AND INTELLIGENCE.

TURNOFFS: ARROGANCE, SLOTH AND NAIL-BITING.

SOME BOOKS I AM READING: MARILYN MONROE BY DONALD SPOTO, THE NYMPHO AND OTHER MANIACS BY IRVING WALLACE.

GUILTY PLEASURES: BINGEING ON EACH OF THE FOLLOWING: CHOC HOSTESS CUPCAKES, US WEEKLY, E! ENTERTAINMENT.


LAST FIVE CONCERTS I'VE SEEN: U2, DAVE MATTHEWS, STING, ELTON JOHN / BILLY JOEL AND PHISH.

IF I WERE AN ANIMAL, I WOULD BE: A CAT! LYING ON SOFT PILLOWS, GETTING BRUSHED AND PLAYING w/ CATNIP TOYS SOUNDS GREAT TO ME!!



1996 - SOPHOMORE YEAR  
BOWLING GREEN HIGH  
SCHOOL.



JV BASKETBALL-1996  
CHEERLEADER.  
GO BOBCATS! 



2004 COSTA RICA  
VACATION. ¡PURAVIDA!  
(COSTA RICA'S MOTTO)



# PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

**A** busybody visited her bachelor neighbor and said, "You're 45 years old and have never been married. I have a lovely niece your age. Say the word and I'll introduce you."

"Don't bother," the bachelor said. "I have two sisters who look after all my needs."

The meddlesome woman replied, "That's all well and good, but all the sisters in the world cannot fill the role of a wife."

The bachelor said, "I said two sisters. I didn't say they were my sisters."



**O**n their 25th wedding anniversary, a man and his wife went back to the hotel where they had honeymooned. The wife said, "When you first saw my naked body 25 years ago, what was going through your mind?"

The husband said, "All I wanted was to fuck your brains out and suck your tits dry."

As the wife undressed, she asked, "What are you thinking now?"

He replied, "It looks like I did a pretty good job."

**A** small boy ran into the house, crying and holding his hand. "Mommy, quick," he cried. "Get me a glass of cider."

His mother asked, "Why do you want a glass of cider?"

The boy said, "I pricked my hand on a thorn and I want the pain to go away."

The confused mother poured him a glass of cider, and the boy put his hand in it. "It still hurts," he said. "This cider doesn't work."

His mom asked, "Well, what made you think it would?"

He said, "I overheard my babysitter say that whenever she gets a prick in her hand, she can't wait to get it in cider."

**A** traveling salesman was driving down a desolate stretch of road late at night when his car broke down. He spotted a farmhouse and knocked on the door. A farmer answered. The salesman said, "My car broke down. Would you mind if I stayed the night?"

"No problem," the farmer said, "but you'll have to sleep with my son."

"Never mind," the salesman replied. "I must be in the wrong joke."

**W**hat is the similarity between a rattlesnake and a limp penis?

You don't fuck with either one.

**A** couple was vacationing in the Australian outback when they saw a man copulating with a kangaroo. A few miles down the road, they saw another man having sex with a kangaroo. "That's disgusting," the husband said. "I'm going to report this to the hotel when we get back."

They arrived at their hotel, only to see a man with a wooden leg masturbating at the entrance. The husband stormed inside and yelled at the manager, "My wife and I are appalled. This is a five-star hotel; we've seen two men having sex with kangaroos, and just now we saw a man with a wooden leg masturbating on the steps of your hotel. What have you got to say?"

The manager replied, "Take it easy, mate. How do you expect a guy with a wooden leg to catch himself a kangaroo?"

**W**hat is the main difference between Iraq and Vietnam?

Bush went to Iraq.



**A** man visited the same diner every morning and read the menu but always wound up ordering bacon and eggs. One morning his waitress decided to see if she could get him to order something new. Before handing him the menu, she took a marker and crossed out the bacon and eggs. As the customer looked over the menu, the waitress said, "Sir, did you notice I scratched something you like?"

He replied, "Well then, go wash your hands and bring me some bacon and eggs."

**D**rinking the new low-carb beer is similar to making love in a canoe. Both are fucking close to water.

*Send your jokes to Party Jokes Editor, PLAYBOY, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, or by e-mail to [jokes@playboy.com](mailto:jokes@playboy.com). \$100 will be paid to the contributor whose submission is selected. Sorry, jokes cannot be returned.*



MARTY  
MURPHY

*"Still think discussing global warming is going to be boring?"*



MELTZER: LARRY

BEFFEN: DAVID

STEWART: MARTHA

GATES: WILLIAM

SPIELBERG: STEVEN  
> // ACCESS



# THE IDENTITY ADDICT

HOW A RESTAURANT WORKER WITHOUT A HIGH SCHOOL DEGREE STOLE  
MILLIONS FROM THE RICHEST PEOPLE IN AMERICA

BY MARK BOAL

## PROLOGUE →

**I**n the shadow of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, which roars overhead day and night, stands the Metropolitan Detention Center, a complex of massive windowless buildings surrounded by concrete bunkers and razor wire. The MDC is a serious federal prison; it houses some 2,500 of the most dangerous sociopaths to have passed through the New York courts, including mobsters and suspected terrorists. In March 2001 it added to its population inmate number 26965-053, a sad-eyed 32-year-old Jordanian American whose given name is Abraham Abdallah but who, at the time of his arrest on 12 counts of felony fraud, was also known as Paul Allen, George Soros, William Gates, Andrew McKelvey, Charles Schwab, Steven Spielberg and Martha Stewart.

Abdallah is an identity thief. According to experienced hands in the Federal Bureau of Investigation and New York Police Department, he is the best identity thief who has ever lived. While he was working as a busboy and prep cook at a Brooklyn restaurant, Abdallah, who is a high school dropout, penetrated security at the most sophisticated financial

firms in the world—Merrill Lynch, Citibank, Fidelity and Charles Schwab, to name a few. He assumed the financial identities of more than 200 of the individuals on the *Forbes* 400 list, which is subtitled, for the unknowing, "The Richest People in America." Abdallah took possession of more than \$260 million in other people's money and was well on his way to hitting his goal of \$1 billion. He had filed plans to open his own offshore bank, and indeed he may well have succeeded had he not committed the costliest mistake of his career.

It was a young detective from the NYPD's nascent Computer Investigations and Technology Unit who found and followed the clues to put together the investigation that brought him down. Abdallah's arrest in early March 2001 created a brief blast of media attention, but the Brooklyn man avoided the press and refused all comment on his crime, leaving untold the unlikely tale of how an uneducated restaurant worker had managed to commit the most brazen identity thefts in American history. Shortly after his arrest I wrote him a long letter requesting an interview. His reply, filled with misspellings and botched grammar,



**Abdallah, in police custody in 2001: the greatest identity thief of all time.**

was a polite turndown. Three years later, however, after a voluminous correspondence had passed between us, he finally consented to see me at the MDC.

I walked through a security gantlet of metal detectors, X-ray machines and rows of electronically controlled gates—a procedure that involved getting my hand stamped with ultraviolet ink—and was finally led into a featureless room where Abdallah, now 36, was waiting. He was zipped up in an orange prisoner jumpsuit, looking older than he had in the mug shot that appeared in the tabloids. His thin black hair had lost more ground to his scalp, and his eyes were dark and puffy from sleeplessness. He seemed shy and spoke softly with a pronounced Brooklyn accent. We had both grown up in New York, so we reminisced about the city of the 1980s and the fake-ID joints in Times Square that were frequented by underage drinkers. Finally he told me I could turn on the digital recorder. "I'll tell you the story," he said, "but you have to realize that, even though I'm the best, the truth is they make it so easy to do these frauds. Any 12-year-old could do it."



The year is 1986. A smiling, bushy-haired 17-year-old Abdallah sits at a table, talking—laughing at times—as he tells of his former life as a stockbroker. The teenager brags about his black Corvette, which he'd equipped with a telephone. He talks about the mortgage he took out on a piece of pricey real estate and how he withdrew \$50,000 at a time from his bank accounts. Of course, the real stockbroker, whose name and identity Abdallah had picked up from a direct-mail solicitation, ultimately discovered this activity, and the escapee went down as the identity thief's first brush with federal law.

In a training video produced by the U.S. Postal Service that Abdallah participated in as part of a plea bargain, he tells investigators how it was done: All he did was

fill out a couple of forms using information from the broker's business card and wait for the money to arrive. "I really just did it to see if I could," he says cheerfully. "I never meant to hurt anybody."

"Could you take out a credit card in my name?" asks a voice off-camera. Abdallah smiles. "Of course," he says. "Once you get a credit report, you can get anybody's—I don't care if it's Ronald Reagan's."

"What about a mortgage? Could you take out a mortgage in my name?" the voice asks.

"Depends on how good your credit is," says Abdallah.

The video ends with the arresting agent declaring that identity theft is the crime of the future. He warns that stopping it "may well be beyond the scope of this agency."

He was right on both counts. Identity theft has been on the rise since the 1980s, in large part because credit card companies began direct-mail marketing campaigns and fraudsters learned to take advantage of the mail-in applications. In the 1990s, as banks and consumer database companies moved their businesses online, identity theft became an even easier crime to commit, and today it is proliferating along with Internet access. Last year thieves struck a reported 10 million people, an 80 percent increase from the year before, according to the Federal Trade Commission and an independent research firm. The actual numbers are thought to be far higher because the crime typically goes undetected for years. When a theft is discovered, the perpetrator is rarely caught; fewer than one in 700 identity thefts are ever investigated. This brand of larceny is a virtual crime, and thieves leave little or no physical evidence.

Banks and insurance policies absorb the cost of the crime—\$47.6 billion last year—on the corporate level. "The banks are in a tough position," one FBI agent tells me. "They're torn between customer service and security. They want to make it easy for customers to access information, to see their accounts online. But that also makes it easy for criminals."

No one has taken better advantage of this situation than Abraham Abdallah. During a criminal career that started, when he was 15, with simple credit card fraud and evolved to include complex wire-transfer schemes and overseas money transfers, he trained himself to become a master thief, a "pioneer when it comes to fraud," in the words of one FBI agent who had tracked him for a decade. Indeed,

among fraud investigators, Abdallah's career is often used as a case study and cited as empirical proof of the system's vulnerabilities. "Abraham wrote the book," says the veteran FBI agent. "If society had a few more like him, we would be in very big trouble."

By the time he was 30 years old, Abdallah had been arrested 25 times. Over the years the crime never changed; he simply raised the stakes with each attempt, culminating in the six-month spree against the *Forbes* 400. By his own account, in late January of 2001 he possessed about \$260 million free and clear. But rather than jet off to the Bahamas with a suitcase full of treasury notes, as he had promised himself he would do, he stayed in Brooklyn and continued scamming. He says he suffers from a peculiar addiction: The act of stealing identities has become so intensely pleasurable that he must fight it as an alcoholic would a drink. As the century turned, after serving a year in federal prison on fraud charges, he vowed to make a fresh start.



## PART 1: a new BEGINNING

**I**n the fall of 1999 Abdallah was a free man. He decided he would never go back to a cell. "I hate what I do," he wrote to the judge supervising his parole. "You have no idea what it's like to wake up every morning knowing you have ruined your life and knowing you can do better." He returned to his parents' town house in the leafy middle-class neighborhood of Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn and moved into his old room on the top floor, down the hall from his father and stepmother. He found a job bussing tables and doing kitchen prep work at Zaytoons, a Middle Eastern restaurant on Smith Street, a lively boulevard crammed with shops and boutiques just a few blocks from his house. Six days a week he walked to the restaurant, then descended a steep staircase to the basement, where, in a narrow alcove lined with butcher block, he spent his shift chopping vegetables—cutting box loads of carrots and cucumbers into smaller and smaller pieces.

The job satisfied the condition of his parole that he remain gainfully employed, but he disliked the monotony of the work, and he hated being 31 years old, living at home and earning \$150 a week. What he really wanted was to be a Wall Street executive, he says, a business success. He had nur-



**Computer cops Michael Fabozzi and C. Jahmel Daise at NYPD headquarters.**

tered this dream since he was eight years old, when he started reading *The Wall Street Journal* and tracking his favorite stocks the way most kids follow sports teams. "I always wanted to be one of those brainiacs—one of those guys who make a lot of money in the market—or a CEO," he says. He thought he could replicate the success he'd had thus far as a criminal: "Between \$10 million and \$15 million over the years" was how he estimated his gains. Before his most recent arrest, he had enjoyed a flashy lifestyle of expensive cars and high-end prostitutes, but now he would rise to the top legally. In his more optimistic moments, he even planned to get married and start a family if, in keeping with his family's tradition of arranged marriages, his father could find him a suitable bride.

While he toiled in the overheated restaurant basement, he developed a plan to buy foreclosed rental properties in Brooklyn. His older brother, Tony, who works for New York City Transit, was to act as the frontman in the business, and Abraham would be a silent partner. This would add to the family's holdings. The Abdallahs had owned as many as five buildings in Brooklyn worth several million dollars—and which the police allege, but have never been able to prove, had been purchased with ill-gotten gains. Walking to work one day, Abdallah noticed that the Smith Street area was lacking an ice cream store, so he added an ice cream franchise to the empire he planned to build. "I had the money for down payments," he says. "All I needed was 60 grand. That's nothing."

When Abdallah's parole officer learned of the plan, however, he put an end to it, given Abdallah's history of defrauding banks. "I wanted to open a Häagen-Dazs," he says. "Summer was coming. But I couldn't get the financing past my parole officer. He wouldn't give me an inch. Three months later a Ben & Jerry's opened a block away, and it made a killing." He shakes his head slowly. "Man, I wanted to be a success so bad."

With several felony convictions marring his record and no marketable skills or education—and seeing no way out of being a busboy for the rest of his life, Abdallah says—he began "feeling really stressed-out and depressed." He decided then to do what he did best, but this time he planned to give his ambitions free rein. "I figured for the same work and preparation required to do \$1 million or \$1.6 million, I could do \$100 million," he says. "So why bother with the small money?" In September 2000 Abdallah's copy of *Forbes* magazine's 400 richest Americans issue arrived in the mail, and he began going down the list, beginning with Bill Gates.

By this point in his career Abdallah had systematized his methods. He didn't try to steal an identity all at once. He broke down a person's financial persona into its components and gradually acquired each piece. The first and most important was the Social Security number, which, since its inception in 1935 as a way for the government to track retirement accounts, has become a de facto identity number. With a Social Security number and a little bravado, he could easily obtain everything else—bank records, passwords, mother's maiden name, place of birth, date of birth, address and phone number.

This is how he did it: Posing as an executive with Sprint, Abdallah called a Texas private investigator whose name he'd found online and said that Sprint was



# SELF-DEFENSE

## FIVE WAYS TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM IDENTITY THEFT

### (1) SECURE YOUR DIGITS

Though others will ask you for it, you should have to give out your Social Security number only to an employer for wage and tax purposes or to someone who needs to check your credit. Don't even think about typing it into an e-mail or an online form. Also, buy a crosscut shredder and use it on anything containing your Social Security or account numbers.

### (2) SCRUB YOUR COMPUTER

New breeds of worms, viruses, Trojans, keyloggers and password sniffers are unleashed every day on the Net, all aimed at stealing your personal information. Fend off the beasties with Norton Internet Security (\$70, symantec.com), which combines virus protection, a firewall, intrusion detection and spam blocking.

### (3) WATCH YOUR CREDIT

For \$4 to \$10 a month, each of the big three credit-monitoring companies (Equifax, Experian and TransUnion) will watch your credit information and notify you of any changes (such as a new credit card account in your name). Programs in California and Texas allow you to lock your credit report with a PIN so that anyone who requests your report will need explicit permission from you.

### (4) SURF SAFE

So-called phishing scams send you to faked websites that look like the pages of real businesses (like, say, the log-in screen for your bank). Check the URL of any page you visit and get out of there if it looks suspicious. As a rule, never click on links in e-mails from anyone you don't know.

### (5) PASSWORD PROTECTION

Using your pet's name, kid's name or birthday as a password is like painting a target on your back. The strongest passwords combine upper- and lower-case letters with numbers and symbols. Don't use the same password on more than one account. —Scott Alexander

looking for someone to conduct background checks. "All I need from you, if you're interested, is a copy of your rates and a copy of your PI license," he said. The investigator faxed all his information, and Abdallah used it to open an account with an online database company catering to private investigators. This site gave him "unlimited Social Security numbers and addresses for \$300 a month."

As he went through the list, he obtained the credit reports of his victims, a task he accomplished by duping the three major credit agencies, Equifax, Experian and TransUnion. On his computer, he made replicas of bank stationery. Impersonating a member of a bank's human resources department, he wrote to the credit bureaus. He used the Social Security numbers he'd obtained to request credit reports. Whenever he handled a document, he wore gloves to avoid leaving fingerprints. He never signed the documents himself, because he knew handwriting analysis was often used to identify forgers. Instead, he took his paperwork to the local basketball court and paid the kids there \$50 to do the job.

In October 2000 he was ready to take the next step. During a break from his restaurant shift, Abdallah called Merrill Lynch on his cell phone and introduced himself as George Soros. The account representative didn't fully believe what she was hearing. "Are you the George Soros?" she asked.

Abdallah didn't pause before answering. Though his reply was crucial—for he had already stirred the bank employee's suspicion, and a mis-cue this early in the conversation would transfer the call to the fraud department—he was now winging it, he says, to keep the conversation going long enough to allay her fears.

"No, that's my father. I'm his son," he said, calculating that it was safer to confirm her suspicion than to fight it. He reeled off Soros's Social Security number and birth date, and the account rep pulled up four accounts. "They make it so easy," he says. "They never check anything."

The accounts, he was told, had zero balances. Abdallah was disappointed. Jeez, he thought, where is this guy's money? Since he had a cooperative representative on the line, he decided not to waste the opportunity. "Under his name, I decided to open a separate account and deposit a counterfeit check for \$10 million. I had a fifty-fifty shot that it would go through," he says. "The guy is well-known in the industry, and \$10 million is nothing to them."

The unusual activity on Soros's account triggered a review at the bank, and when Abdallah's forged check arrived, it was scrutinized. The account numbers were accurate and the signature correct, but after investigators called the issuing bank, the coloring of the watermark was determined to be slightly off, so the check did not clear. The NYPD and the U.S. Secret Service were alerted.

Abdallah called Merrill Lynch's fraud department directly, this time posing as Richard Reinhardt, the Secret Service agent who had arrested him in 1991. He explained he was investigating a possible fraud and asked if they'd received any forged checks lately. "Oh yes," he was told. "We already talked to another agent about it."

He was not discouraged. "You always know the feds are going to get involved in a case like this," he tells me during the prison interview. He planned to stay a step ahead and keep tabs on their investigation by periodically calling the bank and posing as an agent.



## PART 2: OPERATION CEO

At the NYPD's Computer Investigations and Technology Unit, Detective Michael Fabozzi was a rising star who had made a canny career choice in the early 1990s. Back then, identity theft was a law enforcement backwater, and the squad had been staffed by a few technicians, computer repairmen and programmers. Fabozzi's decision seemed quixotic, but the Staten Island native, who had worked briefly in finance before becoming a cop, considered banking frauds more challenging than homicide and narcotics cases. As the Internet grew, Fabozzi's choice proved prescient.

Fabozzi keeps his brown hair cut in a modified Beatles style; together with his inquisitive brown eyes and slim, athletic build, it gives him a youthful appearance that belies his 39 years. He is a thoughtful guy, gentle in his demeanor but tall and fit. He played guard on his college basketball team, and he seems to approach police work with the playmaking mind-set he had shown on the court.

A few days after he was assigned to look into the Soros check, Fabozzi received a report from a bank investigator that the identity of Goldman Sachs chairman Hank Paulson had been stolen. The thief had posed as Paulson

(continued on page 152)

# King Of The Swingers



JUAN IVAREZ • JORGE G



## John Carmack

## 20Q

He invented *Doom 3*. He paid cash for a Ferrari. Now the video game genius is headed for space

1

PLAYBOY: Back home in Kansas, you and two friends were arrested for stealing an Apple IIe computer. How does a smart 14-year-old get caught doing something so dumb?

CARMACK: We crawled in through a hole in the window, but one of the guys in our trio was too big. He opened the window to get inside and set off a silent alarm. The cops came while we were carrying computers across the yard. The funny thing is I couldn't have used them, because I couldn't have explained it to my parents if I had brought one home.

2

PLAYBOY: It was your first offense and a minor crime. You were interviewed by a shrink—and you blew it again. What did you say that landed you in a correctional facility rather than on probation?

CARMACK: The psychologist asked if I would ever do it again. I said if I hadn't been caught I probably would have. It was the honest answer. After I was sentenced he told me it wasn't smart to tell someone I was going to do it again. But that was not what I said. The home was not a good arrangement. I stuck out like a sore thumb. Everyone else was a five- or six-time offender, all for drug-related crimes. I can't think of one positive thing I learned there, but I had a lot more exposure to the drug culture than I otherwise would have.

3

PLAYBOY: Since its first release, in 1993, the *Doom* franchise has earned more than \$200 million, about the same as a blockbuster movie. Is playing *Doom 3* a better experience than watching a film?

CARMACK: It's really quite different. A computer game that tries to stack up to a movie experience isn't going to be a good game, because the two are fundamentally different. A movie is all about carefully crafted perfection. The director is in control of everything that hap-

pens with the characters, the lighting and the sound. In a game, the player is in control most of the time. It's not going to be as tight. *Doom 3* is much longer than anything we'd done before. A lot of people will probably spend 40 hours going through it. Even if an editor or a director took those 40 hours and clipped out two of the coolest, watching them would probably be interesting only for the person who actually played the game.

4

PLAYBOY: Mesquite, Texas tried to ban video games and took the case all the way to the Supreme Court before it failed. Shortly thereafter you moved your company to that city. Were you trying to rub it in their face?

CARMACK: No, I didn't know about that when we decided to make the move. That must have been back when people associated video games with smoky pool halls and arcades. I admit that in years past we derived pleasure from rubbing our games in the face of the fundamentalist crowd. Satanic themes get a lot of people irate. We enjoyed offending the easily offended.

5

PLAYBOY: What is the best video game of all time?

CARMACK: The quintessential game that has influenced a lot of my game design is *Sonic the Hedgehog* on Sega Genesis. It's a really simple game: Go fast and be really cool. You don't need 20 little gadgets and gizmos.

6

PLAYBOY: Music, books and movies can live for generations, but video games quickly become obsolete. Does it sting to know that your creations may be forgotten next year?

CARMACK: I'm comfortable with it. I understand that I can read a 50-year-old book and know that somebody created

something 50 years ago that is still relevant. For the most part, video games aren't like that, especially the 3D games that have tried to push the technology. They're going to look much cruder much sooner. We put ourselves in a particularly bad place. Important games live on in people's memories, but they're not something your kids will play later on.

7

PLAYBOY: You once won \$20,000 in Las Vegas after teaching yourself to count cards. What's the secret?

CARMACK: Card counting is a lot easier than people think. It's a system to help keep track of the ratio of 10s to low cards. When low cards come out, it's good because it means more 10s and face cards are still in the deck, so you're more likely to blackjack and the dealer is more likely to bust. You're not memorizing which cards come out. You're memorizing only the ratio of cards. You still play the same basic blackjack strategy, but you change your betting. Of course, the casinos watch for that to see who's counting. The pros have strategies for slowly ramping up their bets. I didn't play like that, and they eventually kicked me out.

8

PLAYBOY: Your company, Id Software, is worth \$500 million, yet you employ only about 20 people. You've resisted growing into a much bigger company, claiming that money is not a major motivator. So what is?

CARMACK: The nice thing about being successful and making enough money to be financially secure is that it removes almost all the levers that people use to manipulate other people. Everything is built around the idea that you can be manipulated into doing something for more money. Of course, lots of people never have enough money, and they are the ones who can always be led around (continued on page 150)





# TWEEDS

NO FLY ROD REQUIRED: THE FABRIC OF THE RURAL GENTRY IS FINALLY READY FOR A NEW GENERATION

Fashion by JOSEPH DE ACETIS



PLAYBOY  
FASHION

PHOTOGRAPHY BY NICOLA MAJOCCHI / PRODUCED BY JENNIFER RYAN JONES

Distinguished? Sure. But other than shooting quail with a king, there hasn't been much a modern guy can do in tweed. Until now. These days designers are creating tweeds that are soft, move easily and pop with color—so you can look smart, not stiff. **THAT PAGE:** Huggie Bear is in a turtleneck (\$890), trousers (\$690) and a herringbone jacket with leather piping and elbow patches (\$2,230), all by **BOTTEGA VENETA**. His belt is by **TORINO** (\$85). His squeeze is wearing a dress (\$5,800) and scarf (\$560) by **BOTTEGA VENETA**. **THIS PAGE:** Hy Noon wears a jacket with suede patches by **BERETTA** (\$625), a shirt by **HICKEY FREEMAN** (\$135) and a sweater by **BOTTEGA VENETA** (\$245). Her outfit is by **ETRO**, and her boots are by **DOLCE & GABBANA**.

WOMEN'S STYLING BY MERIEM GRLET



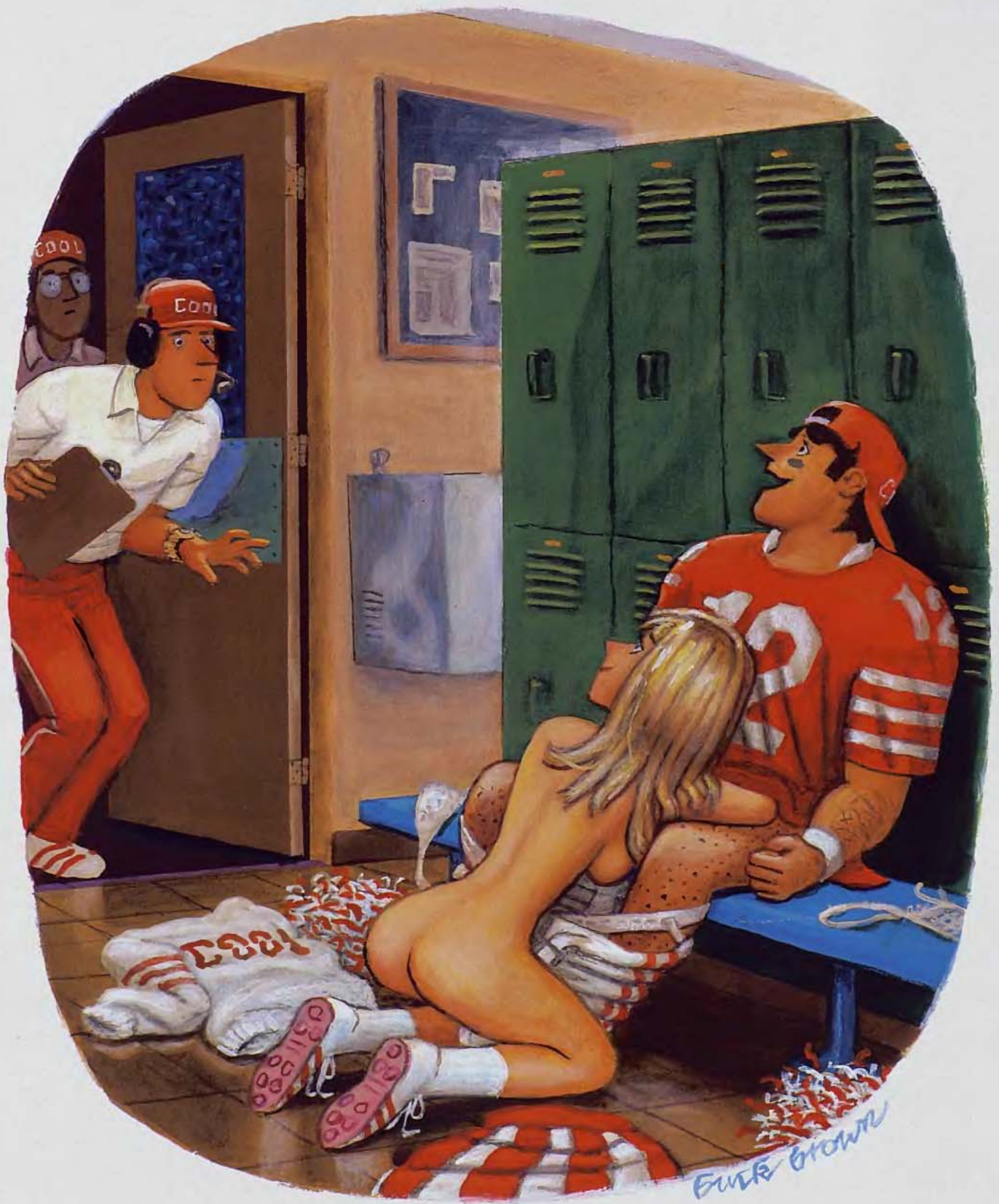
**THIS PAGE:** Bootsy is in a suede sports coat (\$2,400), camel-hair turtleneck (\$1,500), tweed pants (\$325), rubber Wellingtons (\$95), leather gloves (\$250) and a hat (\$595), all by **JAY KOS**. Mr. Pockets is in an outfit by **BERETTA**. His herringbone coat (\$825) features a quilted lining; the fishing vest (\$85) has pockets finished with contrasting flap covers. The sweater (\$245) is a half-zip, and the cords (\$295) have zip-off legs. **BOTTEGA VENETA** makes his suede boots (\$830). **THAT PAGE:** Mr. Plaid, Mr. Glen Plaid, makes his move in a cashmere two-button jacket (\$795) and Wool trousers (\$225) by **ALFRED DUNHILL LONDON**. His cashmere cardigan (\$750), dotted shirt (\$195) and silk tie (\$115) are all by **DUNHILL**. (Girls love the feel of cashmere against their skin.) His shoes are by **EDDIA** (\$504). She's in a skirt by **RICHMOND X** (\$350).







**THAT PAGE:** Frankie, left, is in a cashmere sports jacket (\$2,700) and wool-and-cashmere pants (\$525) by **BELVEST**. The turtle-neck is from **DOLCE & GABBANA** (\$425). **COUNTRY GENTLEMAN** makes his hat (\$34), **TORINO** his belt (\$95) and **SANTONI** his shoes (\$995). Deano, right, wears a wool cardigan by **GRAN SASSO** (\$260), a cashmere turtleneck (\$675), Donegal pants (\$325) and a felt hat (\$595), all by **JAY KOS**, and boots by **BASS** (\$99). Our bonnie lass is in her own bagpiper's outfit. The center of attention is in a shirt by **DOLCE & GABBANA** (\$1,695). Instead of wearing a skirt, she's tied a scarf by **ETRO** (\$690) around her waist. **THIS PAGE:** Imagine our beachcomber's delight when he came across this Venus on the half shell. He's in a suede bomber jacket with shearling collar (\$1,075), striped shirt (\$98), wool sweater-vest (\$115), herringbone trousers (\$175) and sports coat (\$595), all by **JOSEPH ABOUD**. She's in a dress by **DOLCE & GABBANA** (\$2,595) and a cashmere throw by **ANICHINI**.



*"It's okay, coach. She's just pumping me up for the game."*



### THE GENTLE SIDE OF ROUGH SEX

I love it when my man pulls my hair while we're having sex. Some guys pull hair from the ends and not from the roots, but you can pull a woman's hair out that way. I love being bitten softly on the back of the neck. Don't bite a woman on the front of her neck—only the back, the nape and the shoulders. I love to sink my teeth into my man as well. And I love when my man looks at me and says, "I know you were bad today" and then gives me a little spank.

## Centerfolds On Sex

DATE  
**DIVINI RAE**  
WORDS TO LIVE BY

Remember it's not just about the nipples. Kiss around the nipples and underneath the breasts. A man should ask his woman how she likes to be pleased orally. If she's shy about telling you, then try different things. Really pay attention to her moans. Does she like this better or does she like that? Don't forget about the inner elbow and the back of the knee. If you kiss those areas, your woman will go insane. She'll tell her friends you're the best lover in the world. She'll be so wet that she'll want you inside her immediately. But make her wait. Tell her, "I just want to ravish your body first. You're so beautiful." Say that and you're golden.





# TABOO SEX

HOW SHE LEARNED TO ADORE HER OTHER  
SIDE—AND THE MAN WHO TOOK HER THERE

**H**is was first. In my ass. I don't know the exact length, but it's definitely too big—just right. Of medium width, neither too slender nor too thick. Beautiful. My ass, tiny, tight and tightly wound. Twenty-five years of winding as a ballet dancer. Since the age of four, the age I first declared war on my daddy. Turning out the legs from the hips winds up the pelvic floor like a corkscrew. I worked my gut all my life standing at that ballet barre. Now it is being unworked.

His cock, my ass, unwinding. Divine.

This is the backstory of a love story. A backstory that is the whole story. A second-hole story, to be exact. Colette declared that you couldn't write about love while in its heady hold, as if only lost love resonates. No hindsight for me in this great love but rather behind-sight. This is a story in which the front matter is brief and the end matter is all. When you've been sodomized as much as I have, things get both very philosophical and very silly very quickly. My brain has been rocked along with my guts.

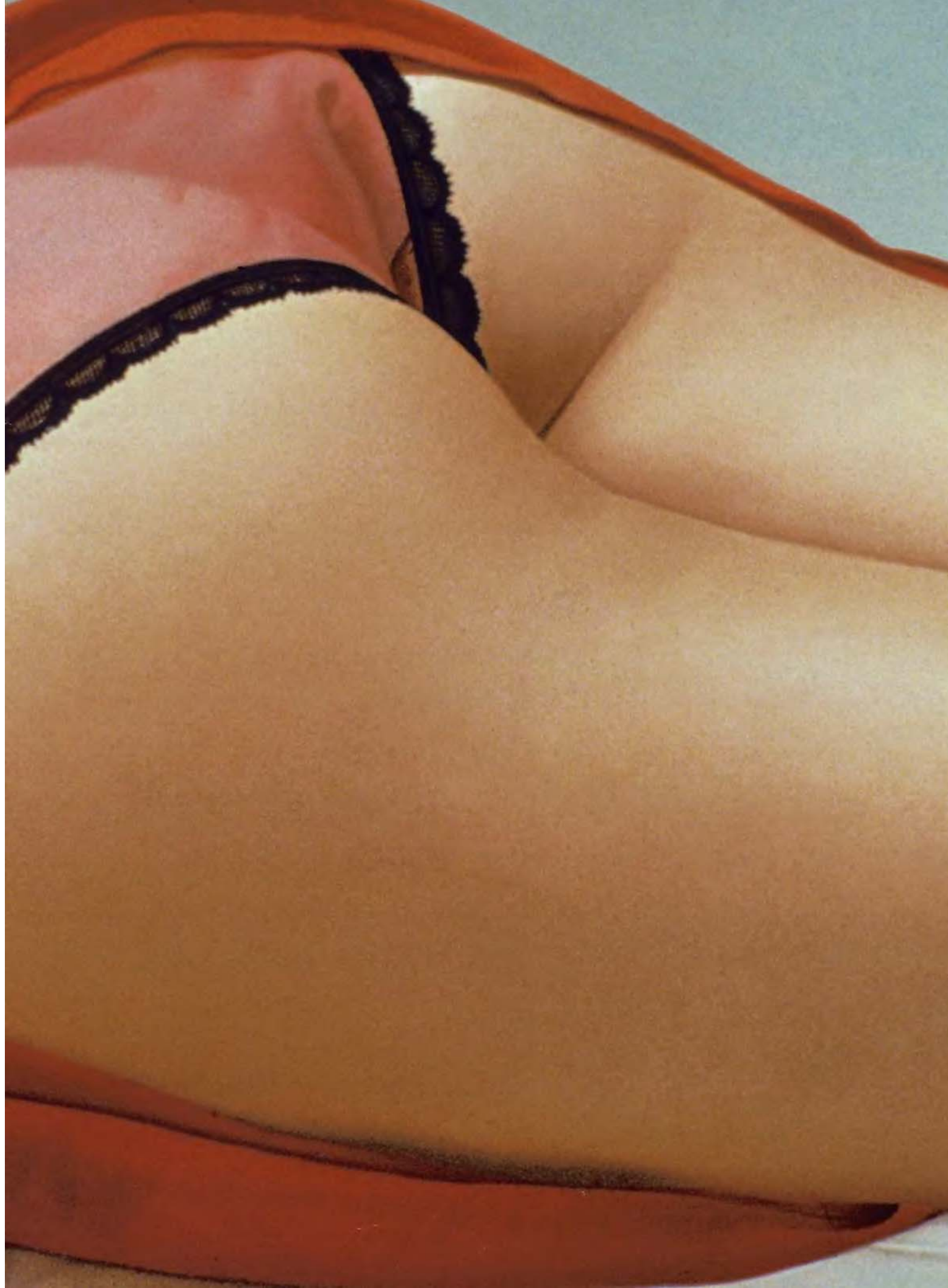
As he enters me I let go, millimeter by millimeter, of the tensing, pulling, tightening, gripping. I am addicted to extreme physical endurance, the marathon of uncoiling intensity. I release my muscles, my tendons, my flesh, my anger, my ego, my rules, my censors, my parents, my cells, my life. At the same time, I draw him inward. Releasing out and pulling in, one thing.

Bliss, I learned from being sodomized, is experiencing eternity in a moment of real time. It is the ultimate sexual act of trust. You could really

By **TONI BENTLEY**

PAINTING BY JOHN KACERE





get hurt—if you resist. But push past that fear, literally pass through it, and ah, the joy that lies on the other side of convention. The peace that is past the pain. Once absorbed, it is neutralized and allows for transformation. Pleasure alone is mere temporary indulgence, a subtle distraction, an anesthetization while on the path to something higher, deeper, lower. Eternity lies far beyond pleasure. And beyond pain. The edge of my ass is the sexual event horizon, the boundary beyond which there is no escape.

Anal sex is about cooperation. Cooperation in an endeavor of aristocratic politics involving rigid hierarchies, feudal positions and monarchist attitudes. One is in charge, the other obedient. There is no democratic, affirmative-action safety net swinging below ass fuckers. You can't half-ass butt fuck. It's a high-wire act—there are no understudies, no backups for anal Cirque du Soleil.

The truth always shows itself with the ass. It doesn't know how to lie. It can't: It hurts physically if you lie. The pussy, on the other hand, can and does all the time. Pussies are designed to fool men with their slippery slopes and ready opening. My pussy proposes the question; my ass answers. Sodomy is the event in which Rainer Maria Rilke's hallowed dictum to "live the question" is finally answered. Anal penetration resolves the dilemma of duality that is introduced and magnified by vaginal penetration. It transcends all opposites, all conflicts—positive and negative, good and bad, shallow and deep, pleasure and pain, love and death—and unifies them, renders all one. This, for me, is therefore the Act. Butt fucking offers spiritual resolution. Who knew?

I am an atheist by inheritance. I came to know God experientially, from being fucked in the ass—over and over and over again. I am a slow learner and a gluttonous hedonist. And I was even more surprised than you are now by this curiously rude awakening to a mystic state. There it was: God's big surprise, his subtle humor and potent presence, manifested in my ass. Well, it sure is one way to convert a skeptic.

If I were asked to choose only one place of penetration for the rest of my life, I would choose my ass. My pussy has been too wounded by false expectations and uninvited entries, by movements too selfish, too shallow, too fast or too unconscious. My ass, knowing only him, knows only bliss. The penetration is deeper, more profound; it rides the edge of sanity. The direct path through my bowels to God has become clear.

Norman Mailer sees the sexual routes

in reverse: "So that was how I finally made love to her, a minute for one, a minute for the other, a raid on the devil and a trip back to the Lord." But Mailer is a man, a penetrator, not a recipient, not a submissive. He hasn't been, I assume, in my compromising position.

My yearning is so cavernous, so deep, so old yet so young, that only a big cock buried deep in my ass has ever filled it. He is that cock. The one that saved me. He is my answer to every man who came before him. My revenge.

I see his cock as a therapeutic instrument. Perhaps the wound is not psychological but truly the space inside that yearns for God. Perhaps it is merely the yearning of a woman who thinks she cannot have him. A woman whose daddy told her long ago that there is no God.

But I want God.

Having a cock in her ass really gives a woman focus. Receptivity becomes activity, not passivity. His cock pierces my yang—my desire to know, control, understand and analyze—and forces

---

*Emancipation through  
the back door would  
never be, for any rational  
woman, a choice. It  
can happen only as a gift.  
A surprise.*

---

my yin—my openness, my vulnerability—to the surface. I cannot do this alone, voluntarily. I must be forced.

He fucks me into my femininity. Being a liberated woman, I believe it is the only way I can go there and retain my dignity. Turned over, ass in the air, I have little choice but to succumb and lose my head. This is how I can enjoy an experience my intellect would never allow, a betrayal to Olive Schreiner, Margaret Sanger and Betty Friedan and an affront, from the rear, to many modern feminists. But having been to the other side, I know there is no going back to control, to being on top, to men more feminine than I am. This is simply how my liberation manifested itself. Emancipation through the back door would never be, for any rational woman, a choice. It can happen only as a gift. A surprise.

Humiliation is my greatest devil, but when the eye of my terror is entered I experience my fear as unfounded. It is through this physical surrender, this forbidden pathway, that I have found

my self, my voice, my spirit, my courage. This is no feminist treatise about equality; this is the truth about the beauty and power of submission. I have happened upon the great cosmic joke, God's supreme irony. Enter the exit. Paradise waits.

I am, you see, a woman who has been in search of surrender my whole life—to find something, someone, to whom I could subsume my ego, my will, my miserable mortality. I tried various religions and various men. I even tried a religious man. And then he found me, the agnostic who demanded my submission.

"Bend over," he'd say, gently, firmly. I can hear it now—echoing in the bowels of my being.

You just don't know when he's going to show up. The one who is going to change everything forever, the one who's going to rock your world. He may even be someone you already know.

Three years prior to my awakening, a Pre-Raphaelite beauty at the gym started flirting with me. I'd never been with a girl, though I'd thought about it plenty. She was also interested in a Young Man who frequented the gym. That New Year's Eve she invited us both to her house and initiated a magical three-way. So magical, in fact, that we all reconnected throughout the year and again the following New Year's Eve. But soon afterward, the Young Man moved for a job and, though the Pre-Raphaelite and I met again, I missed the Young Man. Sweet sisters without a cock between us.

The decision to see the Young Man when he called after a two-year absence was surprisingly easy. Earlier that day my current boyfriend had juiced up my anger by pontificating about "our" relationship—as far as I was concerned, he was in "our" relationship alone. But we had one rule that legislated hope: We weren't monogamous. And so it was arranged. It was three o'clock now, and the Young Man would be over at four. Love in the afternoon, like Gary Cooper and Audrey Hepburn.

I bathed, shaved my legs, powdered my body with honey dust, set up the music, closed the curtains, fed the cat, lit the incense and candles and then—very excitedly, very apprehensively—put myself into a black thong, black bra and long black velvet gown.

The doorbell rang, late. I opened the door and he stepped inside, folded me into his big arms—no words—and pressed me close. I was his from that moment forth. I allowed it, and for the next three hours I melted into him in a way I never had with any man before.

(continued on page 146)



*"You know, we should make this an annual event."*

# WILD LIFE



When it comes to heat, no  
woman makes more sparks  
fly than Brooke Burke

photography by  
Stephen  
Wayda





What do you do after you've swum with sharks in Belize? What do you do after you've flown a Russian MiG 17? What do you do after you've donned a Zorro costume and performed a sword dance in Mazatlán? For Brooke Burke, former host of the cable-TV reality phenomenon *Wild On*, there was only one place to go next: Fantasyland. After three years of televised adventures, Brooke has taken her career to the next level by developing BrookeBurke.com, starring in a new video game, *Need for Speed Underground 2*, and posing for her second *PLAYBOY* cover and pictorial. If *Wild On* was the ultimate in reality TV, Brooke's next moves are the epitome of creative visualization. These days, you're nobody until you star in a video game, and Brooke is pumped about hers, which launches this month. "The technology is amazing," she says. "Users aren't going to see cyber Brooke. It's the real deal. They'll be able to interact with me. I play a character named Rachel. She is a sexy, confident, strong woman who runs the underground street-racing circuit. She helps the user become the number-one street racer. Kids will be able to trick out their cars and kick ass." A self-described car freak, Brooke admits to gussying up one of her real-life rides, her Hummer. "You've got to pimp out a Hummer," she says. "I'm adding bling all over." Cyber world aside, Brooke gets her adrenaline rushes by making people laugh. She has guest-starred on such sitcoms as *The Bernie Mac Show* and *Less Than Perfect*. "I've had a chance to do a bit of everything," Brooke says. "Now I know for certain that I really want to do comedy. Doing a sitcom is an immediate goal. I love the feedback and the energy you get from live audiences. Besides, I'd much rather make people laugh than cry."



Brooke's ability to laugh at herself has cemented her standing as much more than a beautiful face in a town flush with pretty faces. Asked about memorable moments from this shoot, Brooke, rather than talk about how great she looks, provides a self-deprecating story: "Did I tell you I fell off the horse? I was trying to ride it not only bareback but naked. My dad used to have a ranch, so I love horses. I'm comfortable around them. But the horse knew something funky was going on. We put a beautiful blanket on him, but I had no traction and no stirrups. The blanket started slipping, and I ended up falling off. You can imagine how funny it is visually to fall off a horse. Naked. There's video footage that I'm sure will haunt me at some point in my life."

While other Hollywood stars would have tossed a diva-size fit after having been thrown off a horse, Brooke stuck to a philosophy she has had since day one: Being nice in this business carries you far. "I've never been a diva," she says. "When I started *Wild On*, there was no room for attitude. It was a ghetto shoot. If I'd had an attitude, the crew would have left me to be eaten by the crocodiles."

The crew on our set adored Brooke, not only for her upbeat attitude but also for her creative input. "I didn't want to do anything cheesy or sleazy," she says. "I wanted it to be cool and sexy. I collect perfume bottles, and I have these old Moroccan ones we filled with oil. At first I was going to drizzle the oil on my body, but I ended up pouring out the entire bottle. At home, you'd destroy all your bedding. When are you really able to pour oil all over your body? So that was fun and sexy in a playful way."

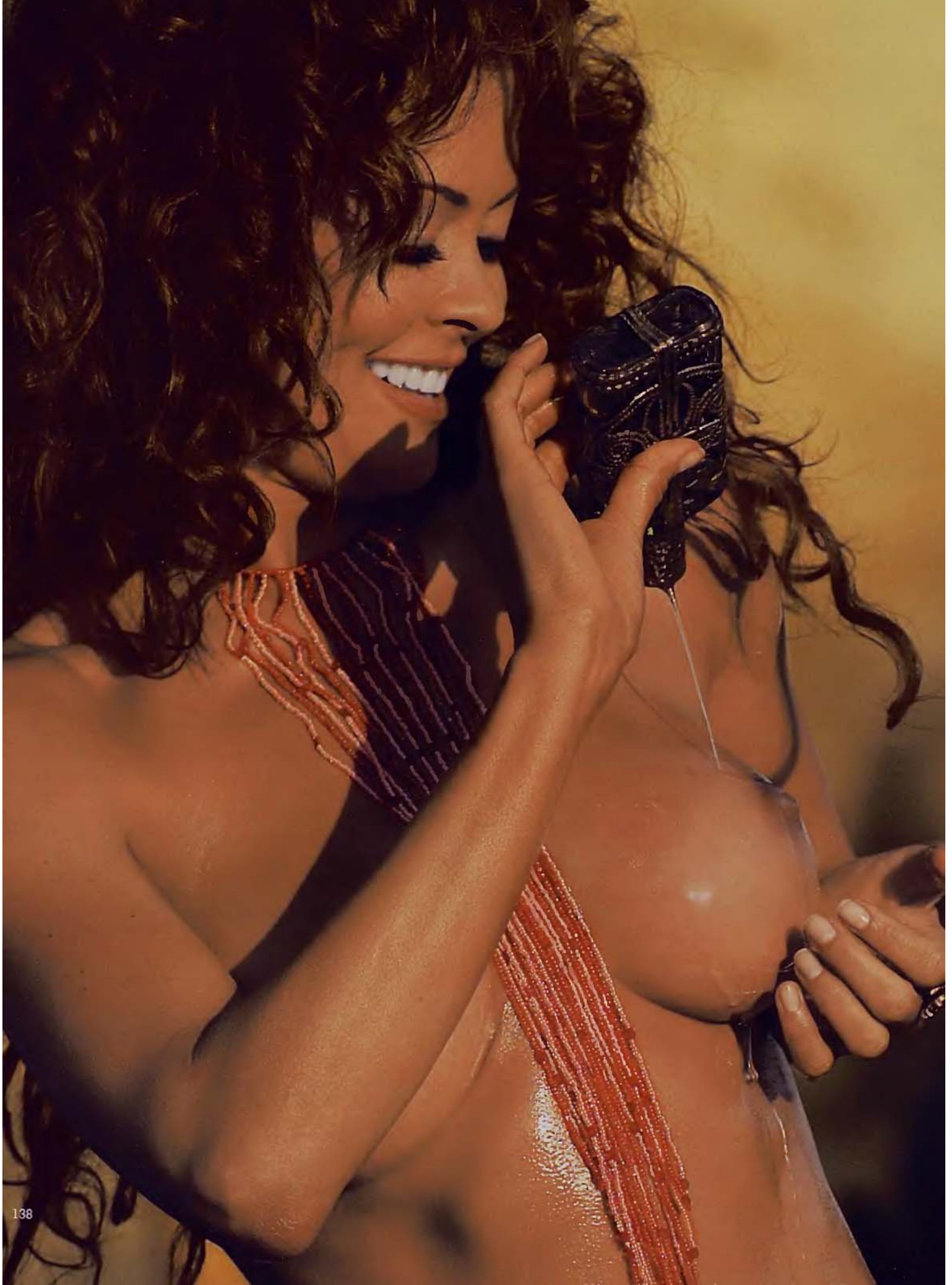
Last year Brooke made her stage debut in *Pieces (of Ass)*, in which a group of women











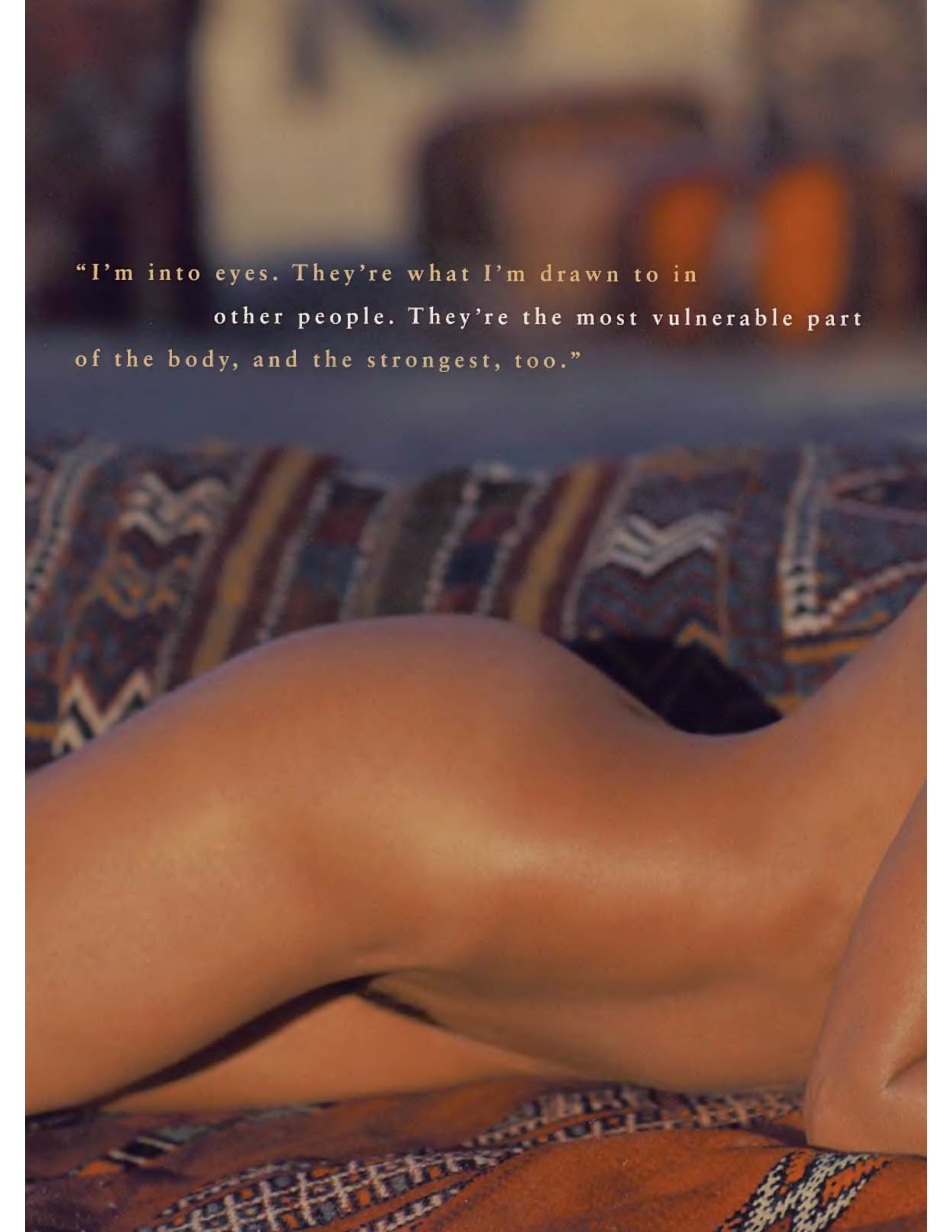
perform monologues they've written that address what it's like to be a beautiful woman. Brooke's contribution was a letter to her then-three-year-old daughter. "I expressed how important it is to be more than just beautiful," Brooke says. "I'm proud of the things I've done, and I hope my daughters will be also."

Brooke is also proud of her husband, Dr. Garth Fisher, who has become a celebrity in his own right on ABC's *Extreme Makeover*. While that and other plastic surgery shows have sparked some controversy, Brooke points out the good her husband and the program are doing in the world. "The show is choosing well-deserving people," she says. "There's so much TV about plastic surgery now—good and bad. Garth is making positive changes for a lot of people. The one thing I can say about *Extreme Makeover* compared with the others is that there are no losers. Everybody wins."

As for surgery, she's pro-choice. "People should have the right to make decisions about their own bodies," she says. "Other people should butt out. I don't think anyone should strive to be the most beautiful person. We all need to do the best with what we have. If surgery is something you feel comfortable with and you come from a healthy place and make an educated decision, more power to you."

And so Brooke continues her life's journey on her own terms—riding horses in the buff, tricking out cars and having a damn fun time all the while. "I have a great husband, a great family and a great career," she says. "I'm comfortable in my skin. *PLAYBOY* has some of the most beautiful women in its collection, so to do this again is a total honor. I really feel I'm coming into my own. I'm a woman now."





“I’m into eyes. They’re what I’m drawn to in  
other people. They’re the most vulnerable part  
of the body, and the strongest, too.”



# HOLY WAR

(continued from page 96)

Carter, like the younger Bush, was born-again. Bill Clinton was never in better oratorical form than in a church, especially a black church. But neither Wilson nor Carter nor Clinton applied religious tests to public policy, nor did any of them rely on churches to mobilize voters on their behalf.

President Bush's conversion experience was undoubtedly authentic. But his faith also provides political benefits. "There's no question that the president's faith is real, genuine," said Doug Wead, an Assemblies of God evangelist, "and there's no question that it's calculated." The rise of Protestant evangelicals as a political force has restructured American politics, and President Bush is taking full advantage of the millennial fervor.

When I was young, Protestant evangelicals were a disdained minority, made sport of by H.L. Mencken as inhabitants of the Bible Belt. Born-again fundamentalists could be relied on to be anti-Catholic and anti-Semitic. They had led the campaigns against Al Smith in 1928 and John F. Kennedy in 1960. They had lynched Leo Frank in Georgia in 1915.

But in recent years the Protestant right has forged an alliance with right-wing Catholics over abortion and with right-wing Jews over the Holy Land. Such alliances have made the Protestant evangelicals more respected and more politically potent. Religious statistics are notoriously unreliable, but it may be, as the Pew Center for the People and the Press asserts, that evangelicals now outnumber mainline Protestants. In the late 1980s, according to the Pew Center, 41 percent of Protestants identified themselves as "born-again or evangelical." Today 54 percent of Protestants identify themselves that way. Evangelicals make up 30 percent of the population and, with their allies among right-wing Catholics and Jews, make up close to 40 percent of the electorate.

Karl Rove, W.'s political wizard, is evidently worried about less than maximum turnout among evangelicals. W.'s father had alienated the religious right—one reason for his defeat in 1992—and the son is determined not to repeat the father's mistake. According to Rove, 4 million of their brethren did not vote for W. in 2000. In 2004 the Bush-Cheney campaign, according to *The New York Times*, "is asking conservative churches and churchgoers to do everything they can to turn their churches into bases of support without violating campaign finance laws or jeopardizing their tax-exempt status." W. himself told a White House conference of religious organizations that the federal government gave more than \$1 billion in 2003 to faith-based organizations. In August, as the presidential contest grew more heated, *The New York*

*Times* ran a story under the headline CHURCHES SEE AN ELECTION ROLE AND SPREAD THE WORD ON BUSH. *The Wall Street Journal* described the weekly conference call between the White House and conservative Christian leaders.

Meanwhile the Republican leadership in the House of Representatives introduced a bill that would permit religious organizations a limited number of violations of the rules against political endorsements. When the president endorsed the Southern Baptist Convention, a chorus line of ministers pledged to call for his reelection. It is indeed a far cry from President Garfield and justifies the rebuke by Ron Reagan, who said at his father's funeral that President Reagan "never made the fatal mistake of so many politicians—wearing his faith on his sleeve to gain political advantage."

The Bush presidency is the first faith-based presidency in the history of the U.S. David Frum, a quondam presidential speechwriter, reports that the first words he heard in W.'s White House were "Missed you at Bible study." A senior White House staffer told David Aikman, author of the admiring *A Man of Faith*, that he estimated there are seven separate Bible-study and prayer-fellowship groups meeting every week in the White House, involving some 200 of 500 White House staffers—all presumably meeting on taxpayers' time. Aikman quotes a BBC correspondent as saying, "It's not uncommon to see White House functionaries hurrying down corridors carrying Bibles."

W.'s first executive order as president was to set up in the White House the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. The idea behind this unprecedented office was to steer federal funds into religious organizations set up to help the needy. Religious organizations indeed contribute greatly to the rescue of casualties of an unfeeling economic system. "No discrimination against faith-based programs" is W.'s battle cry. "I welcome faith to help solve the nation's deepest problems."

But hard questions remain. What if a religious group hired only persons of the same denomination? What if the group proselytized among those in need of assistance? What if it failed to draw a bright line between secular and religious activities? What if a faith-based presidency opened the way to federal regulation of religion? What if a religious group took a partisan role in elections? The courts in due course will have to answer such questions. As usual, lawyers will be major beneficiaries.

Nevertheless, the president has carried forward his project of funding faith-based groups. He has established such offices in seven executive agencies—including the Department of Justice, the Labor Department, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of

Health and Human Services. And as noted, he sent more than \$1 billion in 2003 to religious organizations for charitable purposes. Yet religious organizations, for all their selfless work, can have only a marginal impact on "the nation's deepest problems."

To affirm his own heartfelt faith—and incidentally to assuage Rove's worries about the born-again vote—our president has embraced much of the evangelical program. "I don't think there's any question," says Richard Land of the Southern Baptist Convention, "that his faith was absolutely determinative in his decision making."

W. is unique among American presidents in his extensive application of religious tests to secular problems. This explains his opposition to stem-cell research—an opposition that so disturbs Nancy Reagan. Stem-cell research promises to expedite cures for Alzheimer's, diabetes, AIDS, Parkinson's and other diseases. But evangelicals are against it and so is George Bush.

The pressure to activate his evangelical base surely explains W.'s call for a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage. If the Supreme Court had upheld the decision of the Ninth Circuit Court to delete "under God" from the pledge of allegiance, W. doubtless would have proposed another constitutional amendment. During the 2000 election, he allowed that he thought schools should teach creationism as well as evolution. A National Academy of Sciences panel seeks to save the Hubble space telescope; the suspicion arises that some Hubble opponents see a conflict between Hubble and Genesis over the age of the earth.

Ideological restrictions on scientific inquiry and humanitarian action are especially burdensome on women. W.'s rigid opposition to abortion colors every decision that affects family planning. In July the administration for the third year withheld \$34 million from the United Nations Population Fund on the grounds that, while the UN agency does not condone abortion, it cooperates with Chinese programs that may involve abortion. The fund cutoff penalizes poor women around the world.

The tragedy of September 11 deepened Bush's relationship with his creator. On matters of life and death, Bush radiates a calm but disquieting certitude. His faith-based presidency encourages absolutist, black-and-white thinking: Either you're for us or for the terrorists—there's no room for nuance or doubt. "There's no doubt in my mind we're doing the right thing," he told Bob Woodward. "Not one doubt." Friends attribute to his religious faith this capacity to confront grave trouble with a certain serenity.

Woodward, who interviewed Bush for nearly four hours for his book *Bush at War*, came away with the distinct impression that "the president was casting his mission

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MAR 22, 97



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and that of the country in the grand vision of God's master plan." W. told Rove, "I'm here for a reason, and this is going to be how we're going to be judged." A senior aide commented that the president "really believes he was placed here to do this as part of a divine plan."

In a later book, *Plan of Attack*, Woodward reports that he asked Bush whether he had discussed the invasion of Iraq with his father. After all, the elder Bush had already fought a war against Iraq and Saddam Hussein, and it would have been the most natural thing in the world for a son to seek his father's counsel. Instead of disposing of the question as a private matter between father and son, the younger Bush insisted he had not consulted his father. "He is the wrong father to appeal to in terms of strength," young Bush told Woodward. "There is a higher father that I appeal to."

The higher father evidently tells him what he most wants to hear and imparts a messianic drive to his discourse. W. has remade himself through redemption and transformation, and he may well regard it as his God-given destiny to redeem and transform the Middle East. He sees his administration as agents chosen by God to combat evil and establish virtue. (Of course, Osama bin Laden, Mullah Omar and Muqtada al-Sadr think the same way.)

Of all American presidents, Lincoln had the most acute religious insight. Though not formally enrolled in any denomination, he brooded over the mystery of the Almighty. He was intensely aware of the unfathomable distance between the Supreme Being and erring mortals, and he would have agreed with Hawthorne that to claim knowledge of the divine will and purpose was the

unpardonable sin. Self-righteousness was the existential curse.

How Lincoln would have rejoiced in Mr. Dooley's definition of a fanatic. A fanatic, Mr. Dooley said, "does what he thinks th' Lord wud do if he only knew th' facts in th' case." The most dangerous people in the world today are those who convince themselves that they execute the will of the Almighty.

Lincoln summed it all up in his second inaugural. Both warring halves of the Union, he said, had read the same Bible and prayed to the same God. Each invoked God's aid against the other. Let us judge not that we be not judged, for "the Almighty has his own purposes."

Thurlow Weed, the boss of New York, sent Lincoln a letter of congratulations. "Men are not flattered," Lincoln replied, "by being shown that there has been a difference of purpose between the Almighty and them. To deny it, however, in this case is to deny that there is a God governing the world. It is a truth which I thought needed to be told; and as whatever of humiliation there is in it falls more directly on myself, I thought others might afford for me to tell it."

Reinhold Niebuhr was the great American theologian of the 20th century. About Lincoln's second inaugural, Niebuhr wrote, "This combination of moral resoluteness about the immediate issues with a religious awareness of another dimension of meaning and judgment must be regarded as almost a perfect model of the difficult but not impossible task of remaining loyal and responsible toward the moral treasures of a free civilization on the one hand while yet having some religious vantage point over the struggle. We, on the other, as all God-fearing men of all ages, are never safe against the temptation of claiming God too simply as the sanctifier of whatever we most fervently desire."

Is the evangelical domination of the Bush administration good for democracy? Democracy presupposes negotiation and compromise. Evangelical religion deals in uncompromising absolutes. Perhaps George W. Bush should read Lincoln and Niebuhr in order to understand the limits on human knowledge of the divine purpose.

Is it even good for religion? Let Andrew Jackson answer that question. Pressed by clergy to proclaim a national day of fasting to combat a cholera epidemic, President Jackson replied that he could not do as they wished "without feeling that I might in some degree disturb the security which religion now enjoys in this country in its complete separation from the political concerns of the general government."

Let us forever honor the wisdom of the founding fathers and the separation of church and state.



"Hey—what're you trying to pull? I didn't say that!"





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# TABOO SEX (continued from page 130)

*As with dancing, I knew I had to work with my discomfort, embrace it, to get to the next level.*

As his cock entered me to the full, the pressure made me flinch. He looked down at me and said gently, "I won't hurt you." And although it did hurt physically, somehow I understood intuitively that it wasn't about the pain; it was about something else. As with dancing, I knew I had to work with my discomfort, embrace it, to get to the next level.

Then he fucked me in the ass. Is this what he learned while he was out of town? It was my first time. Ever. My God, he was good. I mean bad. What nerve he had. So graceful. It was slow, very careful, very connected and painful. It was here, in there, that I first moved through pain and fear to that plateau on the other side called bliss. Bliss is not a pain-free zone but rather a postpain zone. Big difference.

That virgin voyage was an emotional and anatomical miracle: If I had walked on water, I couldn't have been more amazed. This was my first act of sacrifice that was not mired in the vicious circle of narcissism, the first that delivered me to an entirely new place instead of a new angle on the old one. I have been changed ever since. And it began physically with the act that proposed the mystery, and psychically with my decision to allow it—the best one I ever made. I simply wanted to let this particular man into me. I wanted who he was deep inside of who I was.

Of course, it also took balls to want and try and dare to fuck me in my tight little ass. I'll respect him forever for that. Finally, a man who was not afraid. The Young Man, Three-Way Man, was transfixed before my eyes. A-Man was born.

And so it began, in naive complicity, once a week, twice a week, three times a week. Mostly late afternoons. He was an expert, and I was willing.

Once initiated I couldn't help thinking about anal everything. Including the mechanics. The digestive system is a one-way pipe through which peristaltic contractions urge food from mouth to anus. Ass fucking comprises the bold and contrary attempt to travel the route in reverse.

Fucking a pussy is entering a cave with only one pinprick exit—the hole in the cervix that enters the womb, the "exit" to parenthood. A-Man and I exist beyond the intercourse that breeds babies. That's good too; don't get me wrong. But we live in the world beyond, behind. In the place where depth and love seem infinite, ever growing. The physical depth somehow leads into emotional

depth as if my soul slept in my bowels and is now awakened.

If you want to procreate, enter the front door. But if you really want to become part of a woman's internal workings, to penetrate her being most deeply, the back door is your portal. Anxiety, that ever-present agony, exists because of the inescapable knowledge that all must end. Enter an ass and you enter an endless passage. It is the exit to infinity. The back door to liberty.

A pussy, genetically, wants impregnation, the juice; an asshole wants the ride of its life. Both holes, I would postulate, address the problem of mortality as caverns for creation: vaginas for babies, asses for art. But pussies have been through too much. Give them a rest. They are old news—tired, betrayed, overused, reused—and have been overly publicized, politicized and redeemed. They are no longer naughty, no longer the place for defiance, rebellion or rebirth. Pussies are now too politically correct. The ass is where it's at: the playground for anarchists, iconoclasts, artists, explorers, horny men and women desperate to relinquish, even temporarily, the power that has been so hard-won by the feminist movement. Ass fucking realigns the balance for a woman with too much power—and a man with too little.

Inside my bowels, A-Man hits new walls, new angles, and that self-preserving voice of "Too much" echoes through my brain as I feel a resistance. But I have never said "Too much." I breathe through, adjust the angle and stay where he pushes until I open and receive him further. I expand into him and the pain subsides, transforms, into a profound sensation of freedom. Every point he probes pierces my armor of self-protection, and my two fears—love and death—momentarily lose their grip as I experience a moment of immortality.

More mechanics: The inner anal sphincter is not within conscious control. It is reflexively regulated by the brain in the gut, opening on demand. The external sphincter, however, is connected to and regulated by the conscious brain—witness the ability to grip and hold when necessary, when angry, scared or stressed. Unconscious internal sphincter, conscious external sphincter, only centimeters apart. Where else is one's unconscious and conscious mind so intimately connected, so readily regulated, so easily probed? It is a psychological

playground of the most intriguing potential. Put an ass on the couch and much is revealed.

All this is to say that when I get fucked in the ass I have learned to play with and even reverse that inherent consciousness about gripping my ass, clenching it, showing it to no one. After all, Freud observed that shit is one's first creative production.

You hear "anal sex" and you see nothing but shit—shit everywhere—but it just isn't like that. Hardly a trace, ever. All you have to do is include a nice little finger-in-the-ass bath prior to anal visitation. Anal sex is not about shit. It's about not being afraid of it, going past it—to find the shit that matters.

Despite its new legal status, sodomy remains the last taboo, sexually and socially. Oprah Winfrey talks about everything—rape, child molestation, incest, adultery, murder, drugs, homosexuality, bisexuality, even threesomes—but never about sodomy, except in the guise of abuse and criminal behavior. Always a scandal, never an advertisement. "Odd how 19th century literature is sealed off at both ends by an anal scandal," theater critic Kenneth Tynan astutely observed. "Wilde up Bosie's bum, Byron up Annabella's." Even the spellchecker on my computer, which recognizes more than 135,000 words, doesn't recognize *sodomize*.

There is, however, plenty of advertisement, albeit vaginal, in Eve Ensler's popular play *The Vagina Monologues*. But why is it that in all those interviews, all those questions, all those monologues, there is not a single mention of a woman's asshole? All that "liberated" pussy talk and yet so avoidant about what lies behind their sacred place: the hole of no return. It would be treason, I suppose, to advocate surrender at the rear for those who are finally claiming victory at the front. Victory from behind, however, seems so much more...how can I put it...honorable. I can't help wondering if my play, *The Anal Dialogues*, could find a venue even off, off, off Broadway. Perhaps in some dark performance space down some little-traveled back alley?

Clearly, yelling from rooftops—or on national radio waves—about butt fucking is expensive. In April 2004 the FCC fined Clear Channel Communications, the nation's largest radio broadcaster, \$495,000 for a 20-minute segment of *The Howard Stern Show* in which Stern discussed what he refers to as "anal." (It probably didn't help that the conversation was frequently punctuated by fart noises.)

Despite this sodomitic censorship, ass fucking has made several auspicious appearances recently on screens both big and small. The subject came up regularly in the popular TV series *Sex and the City*, whose heroines discuss not only men's growing interest in the ass but

also their own willingness to accommodate those interests, the appropriateness of doing so on a first date and the basic lube how-tos. Perhaps even more surprising was its mention in the Hollywood hit *Bridget Jones's Diary*. At one point, after Bridget has had sex with her caddish lover, Daniel Cleaver, she reminds him that what they just did is illegal in several countries. Without missing a beat, he replies that it's one of the reasons he's so pleased to be living in England today.

Is Cleaver the latest incarnation of the bad-boy lover, the zipless fuck for the 21st century? After all, the zipless ass fuck simply takes zipless to a new hole level. So does missionary ass fucking. The phrase itself conjures such perfect contradiction: the most patriarchal position, the most biblically sanctioned, and yet, well, what a difference an inch can make. The experience, on the other hand—best achieved with a nice firm pillow under the ass—makes me feel downright missionary. After all, here I am spreading the word, sharing the epiphany like a born-again believer, a convert, an anal zealot.

Ass fucking a woman is, clearly, about authority. The man's authority and the woman's complete acceptance of it. A man must have this confidence, in himself and his cock, to fuck a woman in the ass. Without it, his cock will direct the action: He will move too quickly, hurt his partner and rarely be given a second chance.

Why A-Man has this authority I do not know. But I suspect it's something God-given, a deep knowledge of personal responsibility. This kind of self-possession can get a man a long way with a woman, or at least partway up her ass. In the end, it's who you are that will get you somewhere.

He told me once that he likes being where he shouldn't be: crossing the velvet rope, hand in the candy jar, late to work, cock in my ass. A-Man made it so deeply into my ass because he dared. He's the only one who never yields to my will. Anyone who dares to be that intimate, that crazy—well, he might just get to a place he never got before.

I do not believe it is the arrogant, macho man who is the great ass fucker: He's too busy competing with other men. In my limited experience, the great sodomite is the patient, gentle man, the one who knows how to listen to a woman, how to be with a woman. He is the one who can imaginatively experience her submission—her relinquishing control—with her and thus knows precisely how to get her to that place. He absorbs all that she gives up. He is a kind man, A-Man.



# WHERE



## HOW TO BUY

*Below is a list of retailers and manufacturers you can contact for information on where to find this month's merchandise. To buy the apparel and equipment shown on pages 36, 41-48, 120-125 and 178-179, check the listings below to find the stores nearest you.*



### GAMES

Page 36: *Activision*, [activision.com](http://activision.com). *EA Sports*, [ea.com](http://ea.com). *Majesco*, [majesco.com](http://majesco.com). *Midway*, [midway.com](http://midway.com). *Tecmo*, [tecmogames.com](http://tecmogames.com). *Wired: Sorrent*, [sorrent.com](http://sorrent.com).

### MANTRACK

Pages 41-48: *Biotherm*, [biotherm.com](http://biotherm.com). *Bulova*, [bulova.com](http://bulova.com). *Classé Audio*, [classeaudio.com](http://classeaudio.com). *Davidoff*, [macy.com](http://macy.com). *Dunhill*, [dunhill.com](http://dunhill.com). *Gran Patrón*, ask your local liquor store to order. *Hotel Secreto*, [hotelsecreto.com](http://hotelsecreto.com). *Issey Miyake*, [bloomington.com](http://bloomington.com). *Kenneth Cole*, available at Kenneth Cole stores. *Land Rover*, see your local Land Rover dealership. *Max Longin*, [maxlongin.com](http://maxlongin.com). *Rio Carbon*, [rioaudio.com](http://rioaudio.com). *Santa Cruz*, [scskate.com](http://scskate.com). *Velox*, [forzanos.com](http://forzanos.com). *Yves Saint Laurent*, [neimanmarcus.com](http://neimanmarcus.com).

### TWEEDS

Pages 120-125: *Anichini*, 800-553-5309. *Bass*, 800-766-6465. *Belvest*, available at Louis Boston. *Beretta*, available at Eurochasse in Greenwich, Connecticut. *Bottega Veneta*, 877-362-1715. *Country Gentleman*, [hats.com](http://hats.com). *Dolce & Gabbana*, available at Saks Fifth Avenue. *Dunhill*, [dunhill.com](http://dunhill.com). *Eddie*, 310-275-4500. *Etro*, 212-317-9096. *Gran Sasso*, available at Jonathan's, Cedarhurst, New York. *Hickey Freeman*, 800-295-2000. *Jay Kos*, available at Jay Kos, New York City. *Joseph Abboud*, [josephabboud.com](http://josephabboud.com). *Richmond X*, 212-246-6724. *Santoni*, 212-794-3820. *Torino*, [torinoinc.com](http://torinoinc.com).

### POTPOURRI

Pages 178-179: *Ducati*, [ducati.com](http://ducati.com). *Forbidden X*, [cigarinthebottle.com](http://cigarinthebottle.com). *Garden of Dreams*, available through local bookstores. *iRobot*, [irobot.com](http://irobot.com). *Jakks Pacific*, [jakkstvgames.com](http://jakkstvgames.com). *Plantronics*, [plantronics.com](http://plantronics.com). *Playboy*, [playboystore.com](http://playboystore.com). *Sidekick II*, [tmobile.com](http://tmobile.com). *Waring*, [waringproducts.com](http://waringproducts.com).

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## OLIVER STONE

(continued from page 70)

bottom of a pile of rejected scripts. I happened to see it and liked the title. I read it and thought it was a great idea. But I never could have made that movie as it was written. Quentin was pissed that I changed it, but since then I've spoken to him, and we get along fine. I respect him, and I think he respects me. But there's no question he hurt the movie quite a bit.

**PLAYBOY:** How did he hurt the movie?

**STONE:** He went around the world saying it was a bad movie.

**PLAYBOY:** He apparently retaliated in his script for *True Romance* with the character of a filmmaker who made a movie called *Coming Home in a Body Bag*. It was a none too subtle attack on you.

**STONE:** I guess that's what he saw me as. It's an ugly character. God, a horror show. But if that's the way he saw me, that's the way he saw me. Since then, he's gotten to know me better, I hope. At the time, for whatever reason, I was politically incorrect. I couldn't figure out why *Pulp Fiction* was politically correct but *Natural Born Killers* was white trash. I still can't. The movie was meant to be over-the-top. *The Doors* was another. Maybe that's partly why I still get dragged down by the political jackals who run alongside the pack. My movies excite the audience. To tell a story like the Kennedy assassination in an exciting

way is a dramatist's delight. If I pull off *Alexander*, it'll be the greatest coup of my life. But yes, I got whipped a lot. Fine. I got some bad press, some awful reviews. I got good reviews, too. It's a steady kind of whiplash. I'm fine with it both ways, and I think I understand it, but for a while I lost confidence.

**PLAYBOY:** When did you lose confidence?

**STONE:** I just had a period of adversity. I got worn down by 10 years of attacks. I did 10 films from 1985 to 1995. I wrote a book. I did three documentaries and three commercials. Every time I made a movie I was perhaps overachieving in that I was working fast. I was always fearful that I wouldn't be able to make another movie, so I would start the next movie before I'd finished the first. I had a group of people to support, too, a team I work with. I tried to run a production company and produced 12 movies. I started to have my fill of this business. There were the attacks against *Natural Born Killers*, the attack by John Grisham, the attacks against *JFK*, bad reviews, *Nixon* was ignored. Yeah, it eventually got to me. I took a break at that point, which is exactly what I needed. I had a beautiful daughter then. I was devoted to my wife. I felt comfortable not working. I lost my team and lived more and more like a pariah, but I saw my daughter grow up, unlike my sons.

**PLAYBOY:** How were you a different father to her than to your sons?

**STONE:** It's not that I became a model father, but I enjoyed witnessing it. I'm still not the guy who likes taking his daughter to volleyball practice, but yes, I spend quality time with her. I have no patience to read to her, though. I can't stand reading to a child at bedtime.

**PLAYBOY:** How were you different with your children from your first marriage?

**STONE:** I love them all. I'm so proud of them. But with the older kids I was away a lot more. I just wasn't around. I wasn't taking the kids to the movies, but how many of these stupid fucking kids movies can you see anyway? Now I go to the movies with my older son, Sean, who is 18, and it's different. He's a great movie companion.

**PLAYBOY:** Are you substantially different from your parents?

**STONE:** I'm sometimes different, sometimes the same. We all wrestle with that one. We don't want to make the same mistakes, but sometimes we do.

**PLAYBOY:** Was your childhood happy?

**STONE:** Not particularly. I grew up in Manhattan. There was no nature anywhere. I wore ties and suits every day. I was an outsider, I think. I tried to stay anonymous. I wanted to be Willie Stone, which was the name I used then. I used Willie because of Willie Mays. Willie had a crewcut. He attended all-boys boarding schools and all-boys summer camps. I was never around women.

**PLAYBOY:** Is it true that your father brought you to a prostitute so you could lose your virginity?

**STONE:** Yes, because I guess I needed his help. There were no women around at school. My father was a generous man, and I love him to this day for it.

**PLAYBOY:** Some people might find it inappropriate for a father to bring his son to a prostitute.

**STONE:** There's a great tradition of that, I believe. For me it was great. There were no scars. I can see that bad habits could develop, but they didn't for me. I've had healthy relationships since then. I think more, not less, fucking is good—1960s love is not a bad thing.

**PLAYBOY:** When did you first use drugs?

**STONE:** I lived an isolated life before I went to Vietnam. I didn't know who Elvis Presley was. I didn't know rock and roll. I didn't know grass. I didn't know what a black man was. I didn't know any of that until I went to Vietnam. It all hit there. It's all in *Platoon*.

**PLAYBOY:** After Vietnam you were arrested for possession of drugs.

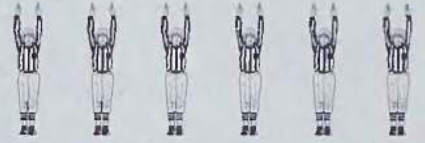
**STONE:** And the charges were dismissed in the interest of justice [laughs]. Basically I was doing light drugs like grass and psychotropics. I never heard of harder drugs until much later, when I got to Hollywood.

**PLAYBOY:** Did you become addicted to those drugs?

**STONE:** No, but I had a troubled period with them.



"Now, which of you ordered the chef's surprise?"



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**PLAYBOY:** Did you go into rehab?  
**STONE:** No, I quit cold turkey and went to Paris. I never did those fucking drugs again. It beat the shit out of me. I thought I was becoming a worse writer. It was dangerous. I thought I was blowing my life. I cut my ties and moved to Paris with my then wife.  
**PLAYBOY:** Do you still use drugs?  
**STONE:** Maybe. It's not smart to talk too much about it. I believe in natural things, but I also take care of myself.  
**PLAYBOY:** Do you exercise?  
**STONE:** I do. I go to the gym. I have exercised for most of my life.  
**PLAYBOY:** How is your current relationship different from your marriages?  
**STONE:** I found a South Korean woman who is terrific. She's amazing, supportive. I'm so lucky to have found this love in my life. She was there when I'd retreated and my daughter was born. Finally I found the time to write *Alexander*. It could have happened only when I was demoralized and withdrawn, so ultimately it was a good thing. Going into *Alexander* was symbolic as much as anything else. I had to persevere, and I did. The movies tend to reflect where I am emotionally. I'd been deluding myself, and so I was drawn to a movie about self-delusion, which was *Nixon*. The football movie, *Any Given Sunday*, came from anticorporate fires that were brewing in me. It was a protest against those forces. On and on.  
**PLAYBOY:** If your movies are emotional barometers, what does *Alexander* say about you now?  
**STONE:** The process helped raise me out of the morass of the present world. It took me back in time to an ancient place where men had higher ideals and strived to execute them. When I decided to make the movie, I thought, What harm can come to me by being associated with that kind of energy for three years? It helped me enormously. It made me more positive, stronger. It may sound ridiculous, but I feel *Alexander's* spirit helped me surmount huge obstacles.  
**PLAYBOY:** In the meantime you made two television documentaries about Fidel Castro. What prompted them?  
**STONE:** I'd met him in 1987 when I showed *Salvador* at the Havana Film Festival. I didn't return there until 2002, when a Spanish producer set up an interview. It wasn't going to be a big documentary, just an interview for Spanish television. We talked a lot about Brigitte Bardot.  
**PLAYBOY:** For which you were accused of pandering to him.  
**STONE:** Unfairly. I saw great value in a deep look into a man who has had an enormous impact on history. I was never a journalist, grilling him on his human rights record. That wasn't my purpose. I wanted to get inside his head. I did, too. I was accused of humanizing him, but what does that mean? I suggest that it's

useful to understand world leaders on the deepest possible level. Once again, though, people want a black-and-white story—Castro, Cuba, communist. What more is there to be said?  
**PLAYBOY:** Didn't you have the opposite agenda, to deify Castro? You have described him as moral, selfless and wise.  
**STONE:** I didn't go in with much of an impression at all. I admired him because he'd done something extraordinary with his life. Through the interviews, I came to respect him. What other world leader would talk so straight to you, with the camera rolling and without a PR assistant? Let him be heard, for Christ's sake. The American people have a right to hear the guy who lives 90 miles away on a hostile little island. I was criticized for humanizing him, but if I had demonized him, they would have loved it.  
**PLAYBOY:** Did you hear from him again?  
**STONE:** Yeah, he likes *Comandante* [a film with a Q&A format that ran on Spanish television] very much. It was shown in Havana, and it's a huge success. I returned to do the HBO documentary *Looking for Fidel*. I'm not sure he liked me after that, because I interviewed dissidents in Cuba, and he didn't want me to do that.  
**PLAYBOY:** For the HBO movie, you held a bizarre discussion with men who tried to flee Cuba. They were being tried. Castro was present. They were contrite, but it seemed phony. They would have been punished had they spoken to you freely. Did you feel that Castro orchestrated the conversation?  
**STONE:** No, because he had no idea what they would say.  
**PLAYBOY:** Yet he held all the power. Had they criticized him or his government, he could and probably would have punished them.  
**STONE:** It was still an amazing opportunity to show them and their plight. The sentences they received were horribly severe. I hope he reconsiders. It seems to me he could have taken a more reformist line after the fall of the Soviet Union, but he would argue that the anti-Castro forces in the United States are very dangerous for him.  
**PLAYBOY:** Are you bitter and pessimistic?  
**STONE:** I hope not.  
**PLAYBOY:** How do you retain a sense of optimism when things are as corrupt and bleak as you depict them?  
**STONE:** You find other kinds of beauty. Moments can be deadly, so moments can be beautiful. You must find the beauty. So get on with it. If one door is blocked, move to another door. Adapt. If they try to stop you, find a way to persevere. Yes, if you call attention to yourself, you'll get nailed. I try to shake it up, and sometimes I suffer for it. But I won't stop. It's my duty.



# John Carmack

(continued from page 119)

by the nose. I wouldn't do something for more money unless it was already something I wanted to do.

9

PLAYBOY: You dropped out of the University of Missouri after one year. Does college have any benefit for an aspiring game programmer?

CARMACK: I tell people who are looking to get into the industry that the best thing they can do is demonstrate their ability. Do a game model in which you show what you can do. That means so much more to me than a diploma. A diploma is not even going to register. An MIT or a Caltech alum might get at least a raised eyebrow, but in general you're much

better off being the team leader of the most popular game mod on the Net.

10

PLAYBOY: You own Armadillo Aerospace, a rocket-research company that is competing for the Ansari X Prize, a \$10 million contest for the first team to launch a three-man crew out of the atmosphere and then do it again within two weeks. How close are you to liftoff?

CARMACK: We have two vehicles right now, a subscale model and a full-size model. We've done hover tests under a crane with the full-size model, and we just revamped the propulsion system. We're starting to fly the smaller one in untethered free flights. I had hoped we'd be further along than this, but we ran into a problem and spent the better part of last year developing a new propellant combination.

11

PLAYBOY: Why private space flight? What's the matter with NASA?

CARMACK: NASA has evolved itself into a corner and doesn't have the opportunity to go back and do the necessary wide-ranging experimental work. Once these rockets were worked out, they were scaled as big and as fast as possible. The launcher, the satellite and the payload now cost more than a billion dollars. You don't experiment with billion-dollar payloads. If you go back and read NASA technical reports from the 1960s and early 1970s, they are wonderful. Technical reports from NASA today read like a survey of management practices.

12

PLAYBOY: Your team recently purchased a Russian space suit on eBay. Are you going to use it? Aren't you afraid it will be a case of getting what you pay for?

CARMACK: A lot of stuff is available, but I wouldn't want to be in the position of depending on something that I didn't know I could get in quantity. The space suit was an exception, because at \$5,000 it was really cheap. We bought some adapters and fittings so we could pressurize it with our air system. As we were pressurizing it, one of the zippers blew out, which is really scary when you're looking for leaks and trying to patch things up. It just exploded. The zipper had clearly been stitched on by hand. It's amazing, because American space suits cost millions of dollars. The U.S. had this huge research program to develop pressure-sealing space suit zippers that would hold pressure on the inside and the outside. It is incredible technology. Russian space suits have a rubberized internal layer separate from the outside. You climb in, and—no kidding—you wrap it up, tie a rubber band around it and pull the zipper over that. That's the Russian procedure, and it works just fine.

13

PLAYBOY: In the late 1990s you were notoriously critical of Microsoft's graphics software. Now you're competing for the Ansari X Prize against Microsoft cofounder Paul Allen. Do you ever do anything that doesn't include some battle with Microsoft?

CARMACK: I've had legitimate differences with Microsoft over graphics technology, and that's been an issue for a long time. But in general, especially in hard-core geek circles, I find myself defending Microsoft. Its development environment totally kicks ass. The company has brutal business tactics, but if you look at it objectively, it does good stuff.

14

PLAYBOY: Seriously, which is better, Xbox or PlayStation2?

CARMACK: Xbox. Without a doubt.



*Art by [Signature]*

"He says he's a writer on 'The Bachelorette,' but he's really a designer for 'Queer Eye for the Straight Guy.'"

15

PLAYBOY: How has online file swapping affected the game industry?

CARMACK: Although I'm an intellectual-property owner, I come down sympathetically on these issues. The games I played when I was 14 were pirated. I did save up my money to buy a few games, but I had a shoebox full of copied ones. So it would be hypocritical of me to denounce that now. A lot of people love our games and pay for them, and maybe an equal number of people who haven't paid are also playing our games. Sure, it would be nice if they paid, but I wouldn't want to imagine a world that had the technical securities in place that would make it impossible for them even to play.

16

PLAYBOY: Why hasn't the game industry reacted as litigiously to file swapping as the music industry?

CARMACK: Probably because most game companies still love games. When you listen to people from the recording industry, it's hard not to get the impression that their business is about the bottom line and that they have no sympathy for anyone who would ever steal from them.

17

PLAYBOY: When you were 23 years old, you paid cash for your first Ferrari with the

money you made from *Wolfenstein 3D*. Did the salesman think you were joking?

CARMACK: This was back before my wife cleaned me up, so I was wearing jeans with holes in them. I pulled up in my Miata, walked into the dealership and said, "Sell me a Ferrari." They took it pretty much in stride. I bought a Ferrari 328 for \$68,000 and six months later had it turbocharged.

18

PLAYBOY: What is the one Ferrari model every guy should drive in his lifetime?

CARMACK: The F40 is fun because it's like a super go-cart. It doesn't have door handles; it has a pull cord on the inside. We were at a restaurant, and when the valet came to pull it around we could tell it was going to be the highlight of his week. He got in, closed the door and couldn't figure out how to start it because it uses a starter button instead of a key. Then he couldn't get out because it had no door handles. We had to teach him how to step out of the car.

19

PLAYBOY: Can you talk yourself out of a speeding ticket?

CARMACK: I got one speeding ticket when I was in one of my Ferraris. That's it. Another time I was let off of a speeding ticket I really deserved to get. The F40 had been in the shop for a long time. I

had just picked it up after work, it was about two A.M., and I was on this deserted road. I decided to see what the latest modifications could do. I tore over a hill at about 140 miles an hour, and just as I was upshifting into fifth, I passed a cop in the median. He instantly popped his lights on, and I just pulled over. I had my license and registration out, and I told him, "I deserve this 110 percent." He ran my license, came back and said, "Thanks for not making me try to chase you. Why don't you find some other place to do that?"

20

PLAYBOY: You're a notorious workaholic. What's the key to surviving an 80-hour workweek?

CARMACK: It's a problem only when you have conflicts. Most people run into problems with their wife or girlfriend when they work too much. If the work is what you want to do, it naturally follows that you're focused. So you sit there and get it done. That has always been one of my strengths: picking goals and doing what I have to do to get there. I was finished with my work on *Doom 3* while the rest of the team was in crunch mode. Everybody was working insane hours, and I'd feel bad leaving at 10 P.M. to put in a couple of hours on the rocket.



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*He decided he would steal the financial soul of Andrew McKelvey, worth an estimated \$2.1 billion.*

in a series of phone calls and e-mails to bank employees, then attempted to transfer \$1.5 million out of Paulson's personal account. Fabozzi also heard that Paul Allen—or someone pretending to be the Microsoft billionaire—had transferred \$10 million into an overseas account without obtaining the usual permissions. By the end of the month, after canvassing every major bank and brokerage house in New York, Fabozzi had more names to add to his list of victims, and he suspected there were others he didn't know about. He went to his boss and stated what had, by then, become the only obvious conclusion to be drawn from the list: "Someone is targeting business celebrities."

For Fabozzi the case held special significance. Not only did it involve prominent victims, it vividly illustrated a point he'd been trying to make for years about the financial system's vulnerability to identity theft.

He found few leads. The only trail the thief left behind was an anonymous Internet address, 249565rls@yahoo.com, which had been used to open several illegal accounts. Tracing the e-mail back to an ISP address, a computer's unique Internet identifier, Fabozzi found it had originated at the Brooklyn Public Library, where four dirty beige terminals were handled by thousands of people each week. Abdallah was routing his computer traffic through the public library's computers from a wireless laptop.

By November 2000, crack agents from the Secret Service and Postal Service joined the NYPD in Operation CEO, as it was now called, but authorities were no closer to finding their suspect than they had been on the day Fabozzi started the case. They were still hunting a man whose name they didn't know and whose face they'd never seen—a ghost who was stealing millions and whose only physical presence was a blip on the Internet. Operation CEO had become a personal matter for Fabozzi, and he grew so obsessed with the case that he had trouble sleeping. He awoke in the middle of the night, thinking, This guy really knows how the system works. He's doing it exactly the way I would if I ever turned bad.

Abdallah started a new con shortly after the Soros setback. His opportunity came in the mail, in the form of a rebate check from Canon for a printer he had purchased months earlier. This was not a coincidence. One of the things he

raw material for forging checks was to overpay for items so he'd be sent rebates; the face of the check lists the corporation's account number. By calling the bank, Abdallah was able to determine that his \$30 rebate check was linked to a Canon corporate account stocked with as much as \$50 million. Using his new printer, he produced a second check with the original check's account code, changing the amount payable from \$30 to \$6.5 million.

He made out the check to his newly minted identity, an IBM executive named John Williams. Abdallah gave Williams a complete work history. He drew up several years' worth of tax returns, thus verifying his income, and printed out pay stubs with an IBM logo. He took a photograph from *Sports Illustrated* and used it to doctor a passport. He applied for and was given a credit card in John Williams's name, and with it he opened an account at a Bahamas bank. After transferring \$100 from Williams's credit card to the bank to keep the account active, he sent the bank the forged \$6.5 million check. He waited three days for the check to clear, constantly checking Canon's account to see if its balance had changed. On the fourth day he lost patience and called the bank. "They said yes, the check is good," he recalls. "But then they said they called IBM and found out nobody by that name worked there."

The collapse of the Canon scam did not deter him. Looking for vulnerabilities, he was still testing the system. He recalls, "It became a challenge to see if I could get the checks to clear."

On December 21 Abdallah settled on a new mark. After reviewing hundreds of accounts culled from the *Forbes* list, he decided he would steal the financial soul of Andrew McKelvey, the owner of Monster.com, who was worth an estimated \$2.1 billion. He began by calling McKelvey's brokerage firm, Merrill Lynch. The interaction was captured by an automatic recorder.

"Good evening, this is John Smith with customer service. How can I help you?"

"Good evening, John. I'm having problems going online."

"What is your account number?"

Abdallah reads an account number into the phone, but the number is incorrect.

"You did something wrong. That can't be the number," says the customer service representative. "What's your name?"

"Andrew McKelvey."

"What's your Social Security number?"

Abdallah provides the correct number. "Were you trying to reach Merrill Lynch online, sir?"

"I'm trying to access my account."

"Okay, bear with me one moment. Do you have another account number? That would help me."

Abdallah repeats the wrong number he gave the first time.

"Did you by any chance close any of your accounts, sir?"

"No."

"Okay. Do you have an account with money in it?"

"Yeah, over a hundred," Abdallah says, being intentionally vague. By not specifying \$100, \$100,000 or \$100 million, he doesn't convey his ignorance and makes it appear as if he has the account information right in front of him on paper.

"Hold on for a second, please. Okay, is there a name on the account?"

"Andrew McKelvey."

"Is it in care of anyone?"

"Monster.com."

"Okay. I can't find the account you gave me. There are a lot of accounts with money in them, but they are business accounts. Do you have a log-in number?"

"No. How do I get access to the accounts?"

"I need to verify your personal information. What is your Social Security number?"

Abdallah answers, as if reciting from memory.

"Date of birth?"

He answers.

"Address?"

He answers.

"The account number is 55XX-XXXXX."

"Do I need the log-in ID?"

"That is the log-in ID. Do you have a password?"

"No, I don't."

"The computers are very slow. Please hold on."

"I know the feeling."

"Okay. The log-in is the last six digits of your Social. Here is the password: 34XXXX. Is there anything else I can help you with today, sir?"

"No, thanks."

"Thank you for calling Merrill Lynch, and have a nice evening, sir."

A few minutes after he hung up the phone, Abdallah called Merrill Lynch again. His objective, now that he had the proper codes, was to find out how much money McKelvey had available.

The Merrill Lynch representative asks how she can help him.

"Yeah, I wanna find out my account balances."

"What is your account number, sir?"

Abdallah provides the correct number he has just obtained.

"Just one moment, sir. Could you please verify your name, Social Security number and address?"





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Abdallah provides the information.

"I can tell you on that account, as of the close of business yesterday, you have \$53,370.86. It will not be updated until the morning."

Guessing that McKelvey has much more money stashed in another account, Abdallah asks, "Do you have access to my other accounts? I don't know the account numbers offhand."

"I'll take a look, sir. What kind of account would I be looking for?"

"A corporate account."

"I need you to verify your Social Security number."

He does.

"So you just want the two corporate accounts that I see here?"

"Yes."

"Which one did you want? The one that is managed by a financial management firm? The one that might have a great deal of money in it?"

"Yeah, that one."

"The one with \$270 million?"

"Yeah."

"Okay. The balance on that account is \$277,133,233, as of the close of business yesterday."

The conversation continues, and Abdallah asks how he can link that account to a so-called direct account, which he has already opened with Merrill Lynch in McKelvey's name. If he can link the two accounts and transfer money from the corporate account into the direct one, he can withdraw the funds as cash or send them to another bank account in McKelvey's name. Abdallah calls Merrill Lynch twice more in the next

hour and is finally able to link the two accounts. Abdallah then transfers \$200 million in stock to the new account.

#### PART III: YOU CAN'T IMAGINE

One day in early January 2001, Fabozzi was walking down the halls of police headquarters at One Police Plaza when he bumped into a colleague who happened to be working a separate investigation into credit card fraud. He mentioned that several of the stolen cards were being used to purchase computer equipment that was then shipped to a PostNet store at 29 John Street in lower Manhattan.

That address matched the one listed on Paul Allen's fraudulent account, and Fabozzi took an educated guess that the cases might be connected. "Next time you got a package going there, let me know," Fabozzi said.

That month, one of the stolen cards was used to buy a mobile credit card reader with a keypad. It was to be shipped to 29 John Street. Fabozzi set up a sting. Police intercepted the package en route to the PostNet store and hid a tracking device inside the box. But on the day of the pickup, the courier Abdallah had sent to retrieve the package suspected something was amiss and drove away with the trunk open as undercover agents started to approach the car. He drove off so quickly that not one of the agents was able to catch the car's license plate number, and nobody had seen the driver's face.

"I was absolutely furious," Fabozzi recalls. "It was a total disaster."

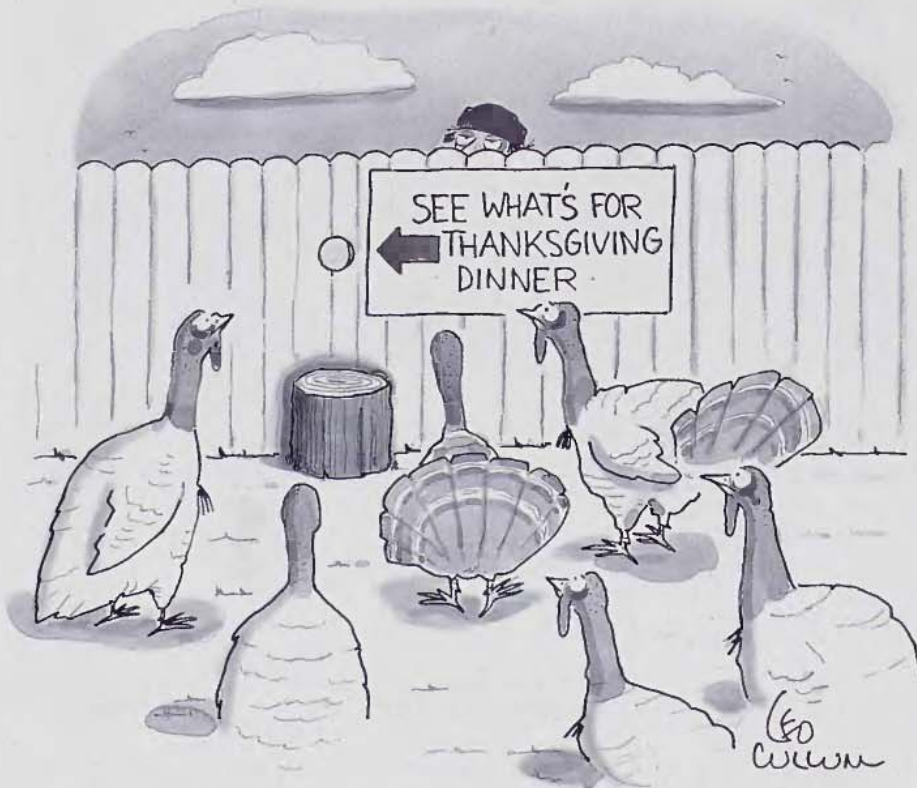
The elation Abdallah had felt about controlling such a large sum quickly disappeared. He began compulsively logging on to the Merrill Lynch website to check the McKelvey accounts. "I would try to say, 'I'm feeling good. I'm not depressed,'" he recalls. "And then when the high wears down, that's when I feel the guilt, because I have to do the whole thing again, do it all over, to get up again." He continued his attacks against others on the *Forbes* list. He compiled information on more than 200 of them and spent his days going down the list name by name, trying to infiltrate their financial identities. At one point he was able to impersonate Paul Allen and open accounts in his name. To make them seem legitimate, he set up a voice-mail account with the message "Hello, this is Paul Allen. I'm away from my desk. But if you leave a message I'll get right back to you."

To support the scheme, he also opened several hundred bank accounts in different names all over the country, as well as dozens more abroad in Singapore, Hong Kong, the Isle of Man and elsewhere. "It was such a pain in the ass opening up an account in all these tax havens that don't release information to the United States government," he says. He tried as much as possible to sign papers via fax, but when a signature was required in person, Abdallah was willing to travel.

In the winter of 2001 he had so many bank account applications pending in locations around the world, he decided it was worth the risk of leaving the country to get them settled. He dressed in a blazer and button-down shirt and flew to Amsterdam, the Bahamas and Fiji with a brunette call girl he'd hired for \$3,500 plus food, shopping and first-class accommodations. He says the trips were not pleasure cruises: "You have no idea how taxing it is. Sure, you have a girl, but when you're traveling just to open accounts, it's very tiring."

Acting the part of a harried executive who couldn't keep track of his funds, Abdallah said, "Could we just go down the list?" The customer service representative would read him the last three numbers of the account, and he would give her the whole account number. Then he said, "I need to set up another account, and I want to transfer something from each of these accounts into this account."

Abdallah transferred "about \$38 million," by his reckoning, from Intel's Gordon Moore into an account he'd opened in Gibraltar, which has strict bank-privacy laws. "It's amazing how easy they make it seem," he says. "There are no callbacks. There's no verification. Nothing. The representative asked me twice, 'What's your account code?' I told her I didn't have it with me. She said, 'Oh, you



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should always keep that handy in case you need it.' I said, 'I know, I know, but because of the balance in my account, I really don't like to keep the number with me. And I should remember it.'

Abdallah was constantly in motion—moving cash, hiding cash and withdrawing cash. He needed several notebooks to keep track of all the accounts he'd opened. "I was getting tired of the whole thing," he says. To maintain appearances he continued to chop vegetables daily in the basement of Zaytoons, but inside he was feverish. "I don't remember much of the time," he says now. "There was so much going on at once. I couldn't keep track of everything. I was staying up at night to open accounts in Hong Kong. I had to hire translators. And the forms they made me fill out—they were huge. I mean, pages and pages." He sighs and looks searchingly into my face. "It was so much. You can't imagine."

By this point, the cycle of excitement and guilt had become so destabilizing that Abdallah considered having himself "committed in the hospital," he says. But in the end, he couldn't bring himself to quit, to leave behind the thrill of getting over on the system. "I couldn't stop. I wanted to stop, but I couldn't," he tells me. "I wanted to be such a success so bad. I wanted to do this on my own."

He was torn between "lying low for a year with \$100 million" and continuing onward "for half a billion or a billion." He felt that the success he desired so strongly was close at hand. "Everything was in place for a billion," he says. "For all the work I had done for the first \$100 million, the second \$100 million was easier. And I thought, Well, why not go for a billion?" He planned to disappear in Europe after he got the money and eventually set up an investment firm.

But he felt there was one final step to becoming a success. During his most recent prison stay, Abdallah had rubbed elbows with two men he came to idolize: junk-bond king Michael Milken and a Swiss banker serving time for laundering drug money. He befriended both men, he says, and one day he asked the banker for some tips on how to hide stolen money. "Charter your own bank," the man said. So in late February, Abdallah decided to do just that. The theory as he explained it to me was "if you control the charter, you control everything. If you have your own bank and you deposit a check in your account, that bank has the last record. Once that bank closes, everything dies with it." A bank could be chartered in Africa for a \$20,000 fee, Abdallah learned, and he prepared the paperwork for filing.

At the same time, he had another scam going that needed one finishing touch. He had compiled several hundred credit card numbers from the *Forbes* list, and after testing many of them he'd determined which ones he could safely make

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charges on. He had set up a dummy corporation linked to his overseas accounts and had bought a \$25,000 credit card press. By using an actual card in his credit card reader rather than punching in the account number, Abdallah could save himself one-half percent on the two percent merchant surcharge that banks levy on vendors who use mobile readers. The idea of paying that extra charge, even though it was on money he'd stolen, drove him to distraction. "I'm a perfectionist," he says. "I can't help that. Everything has to be perfect. I can't stand something getting over on me."

While his prey was frenetically robbing the richest people in America, Detective Fabozzi couldn't catch a break. Then, in early March 2001, after six months of near misses, an alert came in on a stolen credit card. It turned out that Abdallah had ordered a new hard drive on one of the credit card accounts the NYPD was tracking. Fabozzi had his squad intercept the package. Other detectives posing as UPS workers then delivered it to its destination, a Brooklyn garage. A mechanic working at the garage signed for the package, and Fabozzi had him arrested on the spot. The detective persuaded the mechanic to call the next person up the chain. He and five other plainclothes detectives huddled in the back of the garage and waited.

Abdallah was chatting amiably on a cell phone as he shuffled toward the garage. When he looked up and saw the men, he spun around and scuttled to his car. Using the remote control, he opened the doors, hopped in and started the ignition.

"That's him," Fabozzi cried.

As the cops shouted and drew their guns, Fabozzi sprinted to the side of the car. Then the former college basketball player jumped up and dived headfirst into the sun roof. He put Abdallah in a headlock and started to squeeze.

"Where you going?" he shouted. "You going somewhere?"

"Okay, okay. You got me."

Fabozzi handcuffed him and leaned against the car to catch his breath while the others searched the car. In the front seat, police found a copy of the *Forbes* issue devoted to the 400 list. When he saw the magazine, Fabozzi knew this was the suspect he had been tracking for six months. Operation CEO had its man.

As the federal authorities prepared their case and looked through the evidence, the dog-eared copy of *Forbes* proved to be the most damning, for it was one of the few things directly linking Abdallah to the crime. Next to each name on the richest Americans list, Abdallah had written the person's Social Security number, date of birth, address,

bank information, bank account number and other personal details. A black portfolio contained a notebook listing all the fraudulent checks Abdallah had used in the past and a forged check that was about to be mailed to Merrill Lynch in a Fed Ex folder, with an application signed and filled out.

Abdallah pleaded guilty to 12 counts of fraud. He has not yet been sentenced. The likely range is 11 to 14 years, based on the severity of the crime, which prosecutors estimate at "in excess of \$80 million," an amount representing the maximum the law accounts for. Abraham's older brother, Tony, also came under investigation and had his bank accounts frozen. Detectives believed the three brownstones he owns in Brooklyn had been purchased with Abraham's funds; the authorities were not able to prove this, however, and Tony was cleared.

During Abdallah's arraignment, Richard Reinhardt, the FBI fraud specialist who had been the team leader on three of Abdallah's previous cases, sat in the back row of the courtroom. When Abdallah shuffled in, the two men nodded in friendly recognition. Then the thief gave his statement to the judge. He said he was deeply sorry and had never intended to hurt anyone but suffered from a compulsion that drove him to steal identities. Reinhardt had heard this before, and though he says he once believed it, he no longer does. "His track record speaks for itself," Reinhardt says. "He has a history as an adult of commit-

ting these crimes, and in my opinion he tries to learn from his mistakes. Sure, he can't stop. This is what he does. It's who he is. Is it a compulsion? Maybe. But that doesn't make him any less responsible."

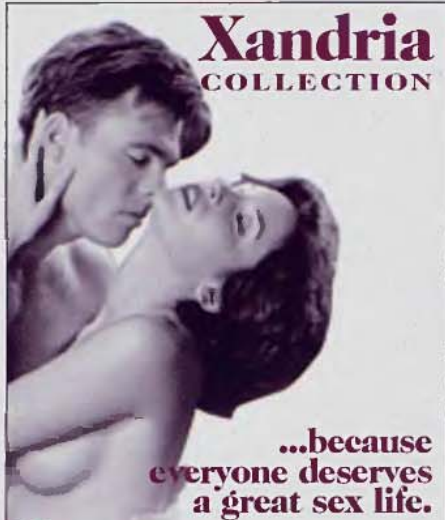
Reinhardt is now retired. I was able to contact him through the FBI, but he would not give me his phone number. "After dealing with Abraham and people like him for so many years, I have taken many serious steps in my retirement to make it hard to find me," he says. Another law enforcement figure who was significant in Abdallah's most recent case, the parole officer who took responsibility for him in Brooklyn—and to whom Abdallah reported on a weekly basis even as he ran large-scale frauds—has relocated to another jurisdiction. "Do me a favor," he says when I reach him. "Don't tell Abraham where I am, not even the state."

The notion that Abdallah, despite getting caught, might have succeeded in stealing and then hiding a large sum of money struck prosecutors and others familiar with the case as eminently plausible. For his part, Abdallah has said that he told authorities the "location of every penny," except for "maybe \$64,000 that I somehow lost track of."

Reinhardt, however, believes there may be a lot more to account for. "There was always a discrepancy between what you knew he took and what you could find," he says.



*"I have so much to be thankful for. For one thing, my date Claudia."*



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"It wouldn't surprise me if he were to have access to a lot of money when he gets out," says Fabozzi. "He's so good at creating identities that he could have an account in, let's say, the Isle of Man, with your name and your Social Security number, and as long as it hasn't defaulted and it's not interest-bearing, you'll never know about it. So he could have, say, \$5 million sitting in an account under your name, Mark Boal, and you'd never know. Never. It would just sit there. Then when he gets out, it's his. How could we possibly find that?"

During my last interview with Abdallah, I mention Fabozzi's scenario. If he had stashed \$10 million or \$20 million in a foreign bank, he probably wouldn't tell anyone, would he?

Abdallah looks at me as if I'm crazy. "Probably not," he says with a chuckle.

"They make it so easy," he says. "They just tell you whatever you want to know. So many customers call in for information, and they don't want to alienate them, so they try to please them. If you don't answer one question, they say, 'Oh, don't worry about it. What is your Social Security number? What is your date of birth? What is your address?' Like you can't get that information."

We talk for a few more minutes about his life in prison, and he volunteers that he is taking antidepressants to help him cope with stress. Then, as I get up to leave, he offers his hand and says, "Yeah, I could have had a billion." Even with the drugs' dulling effects, in his eye I detect a glint that suggests he is not quite ready to retire.

#### EPILOGUE: NEVER GOING TO HAPPEN

In May 2001, a couple of months after capturing Abdallah, Fabozzi testified about the case before a congressional committee on the misuse of Social Security numbers. Since then, President Bush has signed the Identity Theft Penalty Enhancement Act, and this may act as a deterrent against casual thieves. The vulnerabilities in the system, according to experts, remain the same as they were in 2001.

Fabozzi has kept a copy of the testimony he read that year. Sitting in his office now, three years later, he reads part of it aloud. "Entities that have access to a consumer's personal identifying information should be strictly accountable as to who they provide such information," he reads, then stops midsentence. "Well, that's never going to happen," he says.

He scans the list of recommendations and shakes his head. "Here's a good one," he says. "'The posting of Social Security numbers on the Internet should be prohibited.' Well, that's never going to happen either."

Fabozzi shrugs his shoulders. "There really is no protection against this stuff."



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# St. Mark's Day

(continued from page 86)

Thing is, I think the man is going mad.

I watched him the other night scurrying on all fours across the living room floor after a pair of perfectly amenable cockroaches. He'd been waiting for them to appear, and when they did he was onto them—with a fucking hammer. I mean, why break a butterfly on a wheel? I shouted out a warning but too late, too late. Just another brown gungy mess on the carpet. And he didn't stop there, either. He was off after the silverfish next, although with less luck.

And this is the problem: The increased insect activity has tipped him into a psychosis that will find its release only in the extermination of all of us. Obviously, it's a paranoid fury whose subject has been transferred from the baby—which, according to human social convention, he is precluded from attacking with a hammer—to other small and inarticulate creatures whose murder will attract no opprobrium. That's my theory, anyway. Whatever the case, we were once left alone. Now fear stalks the home. And this means that either I limit the incursions of my brethren to a sustainable level or we all suffer the consequences.

I swing down to the window. Outside in the tiny garden, a walled rectangle flanked by impoverished shrubs and tired perennials, hellebores and geraniums, an ichneumon is poised above some helpless fucking caterpillar—a cabbage white, I think—its enormous ovipositor trembling in the breeze. It catches my eye as it plunges the thing in, a look on its face of disinterest or maybe even contempt. Most denizens of the outside world think of us as decadent, which I think is a bit fucking rich. Especially from those creatures who rear their prey in the still-living bodies of other animals, if you'll forgive me for sounding sententious for a moment.

I wave to the ichneumon and mutter a silent prayer for the caterpillar and its dead parents. Imagine, to be orphaned at three weeks and then devoured alive.

Who'd be a caterpillar?

Anyway, the first task today is to deal with a thuggish horsefly, a cleg, which I saw banging its way around the bedroom first thing this morning, as brazen and conspicuous and threatening as an insect could possibly be. Nasty, provincial, unsophisticated, biting beasts they are, with no conception of tact or subtlety. Quite what it's doing here is anybody's guess. We're miles from the nearest livestock, clegs' usual hangout. They love thunderstorms, the clegs (a strange affectation, in my opinion, but each to his own), and there's been not even a suspicion of rain for days. It's a noisy and dangerous presence. Maybe I can persuade him to beat it. And then again, maybe not.

I fly through the living room, down the hall and up the stairs and check out the spare bedroom, through the open window of which Mr. Cleg must have blundered, unbidden and unwanted. He's not there now. This is potentially good news—he may have left the way he came in. But I suspect otherwise. Call it ESP if you like, but I can feel his presence in my house, and I've a good idea where he's gotten to.

The master bedroom is dark and has this sweet, heavy, milky smell. The woman is asleep in the bed, her ludicrously demanding and indulged child similarly reposed in a cot alongside. She sleeps whenever the child sleeps, which isn't often. Usually it cries, especially when the father is around. Trisha gets irritated by it, the constant mewling, and even more by the mother's limp and cadaverous appearance. She should look after herself better, Trisha always says, watching the woman stagger from room to room under some new baby-related burden. Somehow Trisha gets to be reproachful to me about the man's alternately slothful and eccentric behavior, as if that's what I'm like, too. It may sound absurd to you, but she accuses me of forgetting what it is to be an insect and of the freedom such a state necessarily confers.

And lo, sure enough, there he is, the cleg, making a circuitous approach to the cot, circling and then flying away, checking out the best seating for lunch. I fly across and join him in a holding pattern, but he breaks away and lands on the top edge of the yellow blanket pulled just below the baby's face. He doesn't even bother to register my presence. I rub my wings in an approximation of nonchalance and then glide down beside him.

"Hi, friend," I say with cheerfulness. "Name's Clive. Don't get many of you guys in these parts. You lost?"

The cleg looks at me curiously. "Am I lost?" he asks, the deep, rasping, country-bumpkin voice laced with sarcasm. "Am I lost? Now, let me see...." He affects a ruminative expression. "Here I am, hungry for lunch and scarcely two centimeters from the soft skin of an immobilized, prostrate and perfectly delectable infant. In the great scheme of things, that doesn't strike me as being especially lost...Clive."

This is not a promising start. I persist with my friendly and unassuming demeanor but come straight to the point. "Suppose there's no chance of persuading you not to bite that child, is there?"

The cleg fly snorts. "I think less chance than there is of me persuading you not to wallow in shit, housefly."

"It's just a friendly request, is all. I have to live here," I tell the creature.

The cleg grins at me and moves a few centimeters onto the child's face. "Where's the baby?" he squeaks in a mocking cartoon voice, covering his huge compound eyes with his slimy an-

tennae. Then suddenly he pulls them away. "There he is!"

A bite from a mosquito is a subtle and delicate operation. Humans often don't realize they've been bitten until the anticoagulant has long since done its work and the mosquito is gone. Not so with a cleg. I'm telling you, it's possible to hear a cleg fly's bite from 30 yards away; those great big jaws chomp down and the pain is instantaneous and intense.

The baby lets out an appalled wail. The mother wakes immediately with an expression of inarticulate panic, tears back the bedclothes and stumble-rushes to the cot.

"Christ!" she gasps, brushing her hair away from her eyes and watching a rivulet of scarlet blood trickle down onto the blanket. She picks up the baby and cuddles it, wiping the blood away with her nightdress, and looks around the room for the culprit. The cleg is circling the light triumphantly, replete for the moment, baby blood fresh on its hard bristles. The woman sees it but, sleep-dazed and encumbered by her son, is not quite sure what to do. Jesus, she looks wrecked, the poor cow, all gray lines and red eyes and sunken pallor, her hair matted and taupe-colored. She looks as if she's going to die, or has already died maybe, like a mayfly clinging on through the humid depths of August. She grabs a magazine from beside the bed and swats awkwardly and ineffectually at the cleg. The cleg hardly needs to swerve and simply hangs above her in the air, cackling to himself.

"Quick way out of here?" shouts the cleg.

"Try the spare bedroom, first right out the door. Top window is always left open, the way you came in," I mutter, grudgingly, hidden from view on the outside of the bedroom curtain.

"Much indebted, much indebted. Thank you, Clive."

And he's gone. The air currents ruffle the hairs on my back.

The woman is still hugging the baby and making cooing noises at it and kissing its forehead, but it nonetheless continues to wail like a fucking creature possessed; the blood on its face is even now still flowing. The cleg bit deep.

And the upshot of this is that the man will go on another killing spree with his hammer. And maybe he'll throw in an aerosol insecticide and sweet-dripping, mesmerizing flypaper this time. I worry about this every day and wonder what the hell I can do. But I get no moral support. Trisha is pretty laissez-faire about the state of the house. Bring one cockroach, bring on 10, is her mantra, whatever shall be shall be and so on. If the man persists with his campaign of annihilation, then we just move somewhere else. Come on, Clive, she says, exasperated, you're worse than he is, pointing to the madman hunched up on the sofa, his brain under alien con-





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<b>1868</b>	Steinhausen masterpiece is created	1st Automatic movement in a wrist watch	<b>1923</b>	Lips produced the first battery powered watch	<b>1953</b>	Girard-Perregaux introduces the Swiss quartz watch	<b>2003</b>	Steinhausen masterpiece is reproduced for first time
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trol. We're not meant to be like that. We're flies, she says. We don't worry about stuff.

We stay or we leave.

And of course she's right. Traditionally, we do not inflict ourselves upon others of our brethren. But the notion of moving on is too exhausting for me to contemplate—another house to suss out for spiders and this time with 27 kids in tow. I just think, Nah, it's too much too late in life. Sometimes I see death fizzing and shimmering before me in the middle distance, like columns of dancing air warped by summer heat, except it's no mirage. Death really is just out there in the middle distance.

Not that we have short lives, as you conceive of it. You may pity us what seems a paltry allowance, but it's not a short life, really. It's all we know or expect. And now I reckon I have about one quarter of my allotted span left. Maybe a fifth. Who knows? The days are uncountable.

I thought about killing him, the man. But you guys are getting resistant to our toxins: Maybe we insects should put our heads together and come up with something new. A few days ago—after another orgy of violence, directed this time at a harmless if aesthetically questionable pair of slugs who'd made it to the entrance of the kitchen and only then realized they weren't traversing the garden wall after all—I slipped outside through the hall window and buzzed low down the street looking for shit. Thank God pooper-scoopers never took off in this neighborhood. I found what I was looking for in about five seconds, a long, gleaming, pale brown dog turd, the end of which deliquesced into a pool of diarrhea, evidence of a typically remiss dog diet. I swooped down and nibbled and then took off vertically straight back into the house through the same window and glided low and noiselessly to the hastily manufactured ham sandwich on a plate by my host's left elbow. I padded around on the bread, puked a few times, padded some more, rubbed my front legs together and then swung up and away with a quick "Bon appétit" and watched from the wall all feverish with the excite-

ment of a job well done as he consumed his despoiled lunch. It was a risky business. I could have been flattened against the table in a nanosecond, and all he got as a result was a three-day bout of mild food poisoning, probably streptococci, which allowed him to wallow like a big Jessie on the sofa and wine at his wife.

I'd hoped for toxoplasmosis at least. Blindness, dementia, etc. Maybe even kidney failure. But no, instead just that vague physical unease and lassitude and a markedly increased commitment to wage war against the rest of us.

Back in the master bedroom, when the whirl of activity has died down, I find a companion sitting doggo on the curtain. It's a member of that most unfairly maligned and equable of species, the mosquito. You have some big animus against these fuckers, don't you? But you're barking up the wrong tree. Hell, they've adapted to malaria, why can't you? This one's a male, so of not even minor irritation to humankind, but I assume his wife is zumming around in a room nearby with her delicate and hungry proboscis. I bumped into this character yesterday and we exchanged the usual pleasantries; he told me he'd be gone pretty soon, back to hang out at the dank and stinking brick culvert from whence he was born, a few hundred yards away from this house. I signal a cheerful hello to him. He shakes his head in sympathy.

"Cumbersome bastards, those clegs, but there's no reasoning with them," he says.

"Tell me about it," I sigh. "What I want to know is why the fucking oik was here at all. You could smell the farmyard on him. Must have flown miles."

"Him and plenty of others," the mosquito replies. "There was a bush cricket in the living room yesterday: totally bizarre. I asked what it thought it was up to, but all I got was, you know, *Na na na na na na na*."

The mosquito rubs its big back legs together in a passable imitation.

"Plus," he goes on, "what's with the cockchafers and the centipedes? Totally out of order. House is falling to bits. I'd get out if I were you. There's something

weird afoot. And there was a fucking raven in the garden yesterday."

"Thought about leaving, believe me," I tell him.

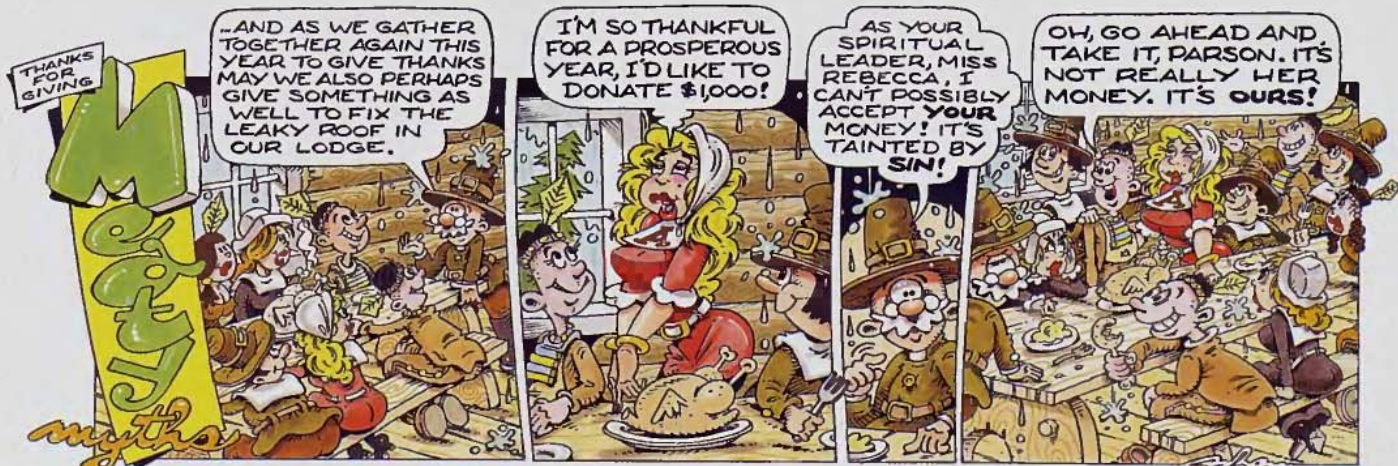
"Our fourth child, Alex, got eaten by that huge fucker in the kitchen, the tege-naria. I shouted out, but he couldn't hear because the radio was on, just flew straight into the web."

"I'm sorry."

"Yeah, well, kids, you know? Anyway, we'll all be out of here as soon as Emma's had her evening repast. Watch it, she's pulling the curtains...."

We both take off and almost collide in the widening gap as the curtains are pulled back. We settle as unobtrusively as possible in the middle of the bedroom wall. Looks like mum's decided to take the baby downstairs, maybe to treat the cleg bite, although she needn't bother: The cut will heal and be gone by this evening without a risk of infection. Me and the mosquito tarry awhile in silence, each of us with our own thoughts. I wonder a bit about the centipedes, evidence that the house is returning to a sort of primordial state, the thin patina of human involvement diminishing by the hour. Next, the wood lice will come, but whether anybody will be around to greet them is a different matter. Trisha is, as ever, absolutely right. Dissolution is not something we're equipped to battle against: It happens and we succumb. You, meanwhile, battle—and succumb all the same, that extravagant expenditure of energy like the thinnest of vapor trails across an evening sky, clear and sharp before blurring almost imperceptibly into nothing at all.

After a while the mosquito mutters a brief good-bye and spins away to join his mate. From downstairs I can hear the building blocks of the evening argument being slowly put in place, human voices rising in cadences of complaint and antagonism. And beyond all that, the brush of insect wings against glass, of insect feet upon linoleum and carpet, of insect jaws upon wood and stone, and the gentle ticking of the clock on the wall.



# BAGHDAD

(continued from page 76)

Group (which he denies is named to please his American friends), and overseeing his personal security force, which has joined the American private military company Kroll to defend the USAID's reconstruction work in Iraq. He discusses plans for a \$2 billion pleasure park in the heart of Baghdad, where the country's elite can make merry on a golf course and in restaurants and bars. Perhaps as a foretaste he has assembled a large love shack from bamboo, mud and daub, with a floor covered in traditional woolen carpets. A petite housekeeper with dyed chestnut hair prepares for the evening's sleepover for Janabi's friends and accompanying hours. "Five girlfriends," the security chief informs me.

Ava, the stylish office manager at the journalists' training center where I used to work, chides me for my prudishness in suggesting that Baghdad might not be ready for Janabi as president.

"What we need is a sexual revolution," she says. In contrast to the lives Iraqis have led for the past 17 months of American tutelage under quasi-house arrest, she longs for the prewar days, when she picnicked with her artist friends in the palm groves and long grasses that ring Baghdad. Iraq's greatest problem, she tells me, is psychological—its people are all living lies, acting like pictures of Koranic virtue painted by the mullahs, with their warnings of hellfire for those who fail. "Women have to pretend they are virgins before marriage," she says. "We've suppressed our true selves *wara al-abaya*"—behind the veil.

## KILLJOYS

Even Janabi is not immune to the mullahs. His close relative Sheikh Abdullah al-Janabi is Iraq's prime party pooper, its killjoy par excellence. He lives in Falluja, a city 30 miles west of Baghdad. The Saad bin Abi Wakkas mosque, where he holds court, is widely regarded as the epicenter of Iraq's 15-month insurgency. From here he dispenses fatwas, or religious injunctions, enjoining his army of Kalashnikov-bearing disciples to kill American infidel soldiers and the agents (or "spies"), such as Saad Janabi, who work with them. Last April he chased the U.S. Army out of Falluja. From this jihadi haven he now plans, say his followers, to carve out an emirate across the entire Sunni triangle that would stretch from Iraq's northern border with Syria down the Tigris and Euphrates valley to Baghdad. The two Janabis last met in winter and exchanged harsh words.

In many ways they are remarkably similar. Both command private armies and dream of building caliphates. But Janabi the killjoy cites an alternative Islamic tradition in which an angry puritanical prophet wages a holy war against

polytheists, Persians and Byzantine Christians. This Janabi rages against the Shias, the majority sect in Iraq, as idol worshippers who have swapped Saddam's ubiquitous icons for icons of their own. Their pantheon of haloed imams, or spiritual forefathers, beams down from billboards across southern Iraq.

In his emirate, most entertainment is banned. Cinemas are torched, as are the cassette shops selling pirated porn and pop. The only films permitted are snuff videos of "martyrs" who car-bomb police stations—and of four American Blackwater security guards drawn, quartered and hanged on a footbridge over the Euphrates by a mob of 70 cheering townsmen. The families coming to collect relatives beheaded as spies are banned from public mourning and from reciting the prayer for the dead, just as under Saddam.

The heads of Iraq's puritanical Salafi movement, such as Sheikh Mehdi Sumeidy, also thump "Onward Muslim Soldiers" from their pulpits, reveling in a warrior faith. "The Americans have come to our land to rape our women, kill our men and sow corruption," the sheikh bellowed at thousands of congregants gathered for his Friday sermon in Baghdad's towering Ibn Tuboul mosque. "The infidel must be removed."

Before the war, Sufi mystics—such as Sheikh Janabi—and Salafis were fierce enemies. Now they have formed an alliance against a common enemy. After prayers at Sumeidy's mosque, ushers

push leaflets into worshippers' hands that contrast the good deeds of the Muslim who cries "Jihad in the name of God" and the "coward" who meekly whines about America's abuse of Iraqis in Abu Ghraib prison.

Statistically, say coalition officials, attacks peak after Friday prayers, and a growing number of mosques serve as launchpads for mortar attacks. One Salafi mosque not far from Sumeidy's—the Lovers of Mustafa—had holes blown in its side when two car bombs parked in its forecourt exploded prematurely at the conclusion of dawn prayers. And in a raid on Sheikh Mehdi's mosque, U.S. soldiers uncovered a cache of weapons, earning the holy man five months in jail.

Wearing a starched white tunic, Sheikh Mehdi is a charmer. He talks fondly of the American guards who held him captive in the Abu Ghraib detention camp. The Army doctor who saved him from the torture inflicted by his Iraqi captors was so kind, "he must have been Muslim." (The Iraqis, he says, hauled him from the ground by a rope tied to his hands, which were cuffed behind his back. This procedure—known as the chicken torture—dislocated his arms.) He sighs for the uniformed American woman who kept guard over him like an illicit lover. (He claims to have converted her to Islam by flattering her "beautiful eyes.") He even gasps when recalling how American administrators provided him with a megaphone, boxloads of Korans and four tents to open a school



"Honey, this is Sheila—that nymphomaniac I was telling you about."



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for jihad inside the prison, turning Abu Ghraib into a sausage factory for transforming Baathists into Islamist militants.

The results of the Salafi schooling can be found flying on black flags across Iraq. THREE WAITERS WERE MARTYRED WHEN THEIR CAR OVERTURNED ON A BAGHDAD HIGHWAY. GOD REST THEIR SOULS, reads a painted message on black sheeting strung across the entrance of my local restaurant, al-Saa, where I used to lunch on vine leaves and stuffed peppers. The restaurant had been a favorite of American soldiers, who would park their tanks at its gates. The gossip was that its proprietor had been negotiating to open an outlet at a U.S. base outside Falluja. According to Iraqi newspapers—although not to the trembling proprietor—the bodies of the waiters had been mutilated and dropped at Falluja's morgue. Serving the coalition, says Sheikh Mehdi approvingly, is apostasy, a crime punishable in Islamic law by death.

During that July week of the killings, Baghdad's gourmets were grumbling. Nearby proprietors closed their restaurants in solidarity. Some who also fed American troops went into hiding, including the Christian owner of Candles, who plied the best hors d'oeuvres in the city. An army marches on its belly, and the insurgents were out to stop it. In earlier fighting, the highways had been strewn with the charred remains of food trucks bringing supplies to the bases. Coalition officials griped about the shortage of lettuce. And in mid-July 40 Indian chefs at the Falcon base in southern Baghdad resigned en masse after two mortars hit their trailers, miraculously without causing injury. To avoid the kidnapers, fresh migrant labor had to be imported by charter plane at a cost of \$100,000.

Iraqi expressions of disillusion about the failed relationship with America are frequently disingenuous. It takes two to make a relationship work. But even Ahlam, the cook at my former office who spends her life mixing with Westerners, now longs for the time before U.S. administrators came to Baghdad to abolish Iraq's army and rob her husband of his career as an officer. Now she is the breadwinner, and her humbled husband has turned drunken and violent—against his family, though, not against American forces. Sometimes she would come to work bruised, crying at the latest threat of divorce that would leave her homeless. Even that, she says, she could cope with. The final straw came when she asked an American tank commander to lower his aerial when he was driving his tank through her neighborhood because it was knocking down the electricity wires. Failing to understand her remonstrations, the commander trained his tank turret on her. Now she just wants U.S. troops out.

As the months roll by, increasing

numbers of Shia Muslims in eastern Baghdad—the underdogs under Saddam—echo the Sunnis from the west in fighting to evict U.S. forces from their neighborhoods. The preachers in Sadr City, the vast Shia slum that arcs around the city's northeast, sound much like Sheikh Mehdi. After months of alleyway sniping, turbaned clerics under the command of a young and sweaty firebrand, Moktada al-Sadr, negotiated a truce with U.S. commanders that, for a time, left them almost as free as the Fallujans to pursue their Kulturkampf against the trappings of Western influence. Gangs of kneecappers scoured Baghdad's neighborhoods to root out liquor merchants, peddlers of Craven brand cigarettes (which the mullahs had declared were made in Israel) and girls in trousers and cowboy boots, like Ahlam's daughters. Barbers flouting a ban on Western haircuts had their shops torched and the heads of their clientele shaved bald.

Hossam is a teenage CD peddler. "Saddam forced us to sell pop songs and banned religious cassettes," he says. "Under the mullahs the rules are reversed, but the punishment stays the same." He has draped his stall in Imam Ali posters, much as he once hung Saddam posters. Partly they are an amulet to ward off evil; more properly they are a deterrent against the inspection of the porn videos hidden under the sermons. One of the more nerve-racking moments I had in Baghdad was while I was walking through the streets with a FedEx parcel of magazines sent from Playboy headquarters. Should a car bomb chance to explode, I feared, pic-

tures of Playmates would be sent fluttering over Baghdad, confirming the clerics' worst suspicions of what sinful foreign infidels had in store for Iraq.

The Shia zealots prefer their females in the flesh. In Basra, a southern port under British command, the local agitator, Abd-al-Sattar al-Bahadili, goaded his rampaging God squads to "kidnap British female soldiers and hand them over to religious leaders to be taken as slaves." For each woman, he promised a \$170 reward.

Their favorite catches are gypsy girls, known to Iraqis as *ghajar*. For generations gypsies have hooked Iraqi men with their pulsating dances and intoxicating liquors, especially on Fridays, when boys would skip communal prayers for an afternoon in their laps.

Historically, Iraq's Shia clerics are not prudes. Their spiritual leader, Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, through his website ([sistani.org](http://sistani.org)), prohibits chess but permits anal intercourse—with the woman's consent. Oral sex is okay—provided no liquid gets in the mouth. And he suggests temporary "enjoyment" marriages as a way to avoid adultery. But the ayatollah's intemperate young Luther, Moktada al-Sadr, is not one to live and let live.

In raid after raid, Sadr's militia—the Mahdi's Army, armed with pickaxes, sledgehammers and rocket-propelled grenades—has reduced gypsy homesteads to rubble, chasing out the inhabitants and leaving scavengers to pick through the ruins. The worst pogrom occurred in the southern town of Diwaniya last March, when preachers ordered their followers to bulldoze the entire village of 300 families, mosque



"I like your aftershave."

and all. "It was a well of debauchery, drunkenness and mafia activities, and they were buying and selling girls," insists Yahya Shubari, Sadr's 30-year-old delegate, who ordered the nighttime assault. Swept up in the new righteous puritanism, many approved of the rout. "Men would come from all over the south and Baghdad to dance with the gypsies," explains Bassam al-Najafi, owner of a fly-ridden local restaurant. "Women were leaving their husbands to work there. Moktada al-Sadr is cleansing the town."

Most gypsies have since gone underground, but the sheikh of Nahawan, a town on the southern outskirts of Baghdad, is a rare tribal leader too fond of partying to let go of the gypsies he protects. Down a dirt track off a trunk road where trucks stop for repairs, we arrive at the home of Ohud and Itab, two buxom "sisters" clad in black. They bustle us into a dimly lit back room. Before the introductions are over I feel a hand in my pocket and a toe caressing my heel. "I'm looking for money," says Itab, laughing as she adjusts her bra strap. Her sister nuzzles my driver, who explains they had fumbled together 15 years earlier (which is less than plausible as Ohud would have been 10 at the time). "Please, please," he begs, as Thorne, our cameraman, and Ohud exchange flashes. "I now pray five times a day. I'm married."

But the rest of Ohud's "family" soon join in. The shirtless brother, Saad, turns up the televised Arabic pop channel, and the mother claps and snaps her fingers, keeping time. A ring of young children dance in the center, and from his stroller a toddler waves his arms and chews a cigarette his mother has stuck in his mouth like a lollipop. Gypsy love-making is a family affair.

Itab reappears, squeezed into a low-cut, body-hugging floral gown, and pulsates a dance to fulfill Alousi's dreams. "They have to learn how to dance like their sisters," says their mother, Um Saad—a more profitable education, she adds, than going to school.

She complains that America's arrival in Iraq caused the family to fall on hard

times. The presence of American tanks had for a time brought reassurance against the zealots. But Saad is suffering from withdrawal after the liquor-store torchings triggered a fourfold increase in the cost of alcohol. "Is this democracy?" he asks. "We want to dance and drink, not pray."

The toothless father, Abu Saad, says disapproving neighbors have taken to informing Sadr's militia about their activities. "The neighbors mock you during the day and sleep with you at night," he says. In one raid, the militia stole a client's car; in another they held the family at gunpoint while they purloined the family savings of 5 million dinars. "All the world belongs to God, and Sadr

off car bombs, his police charged the beer peddlers on the banks of the Tigris beneath the Jadariya bridge. They laid into the peddlers' cardboard-box stands of Turkish and Israeli lagers with all the zeal of Jesus upending the money changers' tables outside the temple. It had been one of the last remaining spots where teenage boys could escape Baghdad's stifling fundamentalism and gather in the evening breeze.

Three nights later Allawi's police struck again, raiding Baghdad's red-light district, the old Jewish quarter Between (so called because it's "in between" two once reputable districts). In the cleanup, police said, they netted more than 500 drug pushers, pimps and other pariahs Saddam had released from jail in a prewar amnesty.

"Allawi is a dictator who is trying to use his muscle to threaten and terrify, but there are better ways," says Janabi, the would-be playboy caliph. "We have oil; we have an economy. We should enjoy it."

AMERICANS

Against this puritanical onslaught, America has retreated behind the blast walls that, like giant tombstones, encircle its enclave spread over much of downtown Baghdad. As the insurgency intensified, tanks rumbled into position at the gates of the seat of Anglo-American power in Iraq, the Green Zone. Bent on the prime goal of survival, the U.S. military decreed that its entire food supply be trucked


in from abroad to prevent the host population from poisoning it. Fraternization with locals was declared a punishable offense.

From behind their walls, administrators ruled Iraq in a virtual reality. Once inside the enclave, few U.S. personnel ventured out to the Red Zone. In his final months, Ambassador Paul Bremer, the proconsul, passed ever-greater numbers of decrees with ever-diminishing impact. Sadr's decrees against Craven cigarettes had more efficacy.

The handover to Iraqi authority has so far done little to narrow the chasm between America and Iraq. The American embassy in Baghdad staged its Fourth of July celebrations in the gardens of its

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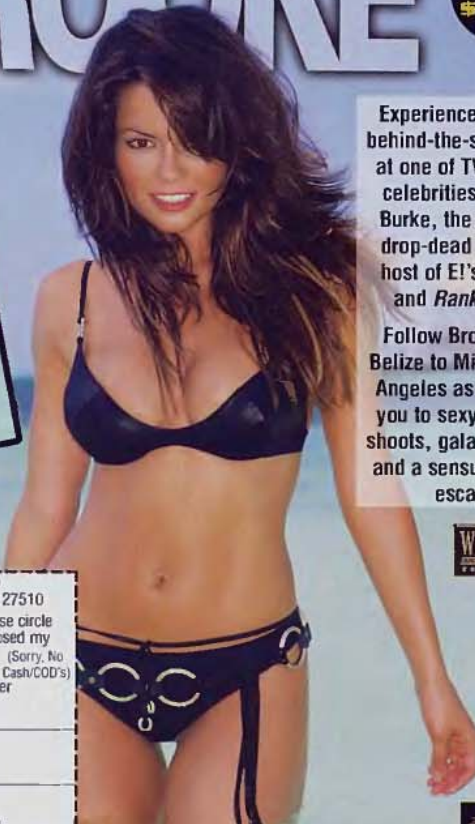
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is his earthly representative," explained the militiamen. The gypsies are desperate for American protection, but the soldiers rarely show up. "In the days of Saddam, we stayed open until six in the morning," says Abu Saad. "Now we shut at six at night."

On June 28 the Americans handed over authority to Iyad Allawi, Iraq's new prime minister. His cabinet was far less dominated by religious groups than the American-appointed Governing Council, and his staunch secularism initially brought sighs of relief. But he too was no party animal. While he shied from smiting the insurgents who were setting

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**A**s a faithful reader of your magazine, I just had to tell your readers about a recent experience I had with my boyfriend.

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Thankfully, I didn't have to make a difficult decision because everything changed a few days ago. I came home from work and he basically tore my clothes off before I even made it through the door. Right there on the stairs he practically pounced on me. Confident, aggressive, he made all the right moves. I definitely felt sensations I'd never felt before ... in places I forgot existed. We made love for what seemed like an eternity. I never knew what some of my friends meant when they said the earth moved from having sex - I do now. **“I can honestly say it was the best sex I've ever had in my entire life!”**

When I asked him what was going on - what brought about the change - he wouldn't answer me. So I did what any red-blooded American woman would do, I started snooping. It didn't take me long to figure out his secret. In his underwear drawer under the "men's magazines," was a tube of Maxoderm Connection. After reading the fine print and finding the website, I went online to [maxodermct.com](http://maxodermct.com) to discover more about this magic in a tube.

Maxoderm Connection (of which I'm having my boyfriend buy a lifetime supply) is a lotion that is applied topically to either the clitoris or the penis. **An all natural mix of herbs and who knows what, brings blood flow straight to the source - that's when amazing things start to happen. He achieves harder, stronger erections and my orgasms go through the roof!** We aren't into taking pills of any kind - not even aspirin - so I was relieved to find he was using something topical without any systemic side effects. Unless you want to think of great sex as a side effect, because that's definitely what's going on at our place - ALL the time!

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T.J.

T.J.  
Phoenix, AZ



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before  
... in places  
I forgot  
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P.S., Let your readers know I'm pretty sure they can still get a **FREE MONTH SUPPLY** of Maxoderm Connection with their order by calling 1-800-420-0332 or by visiting their website at [www.maxodermct.com](http://www.maxodermct.com). Oh and even better, their product is backed by a 90 day full money back guarantee.

"annex"—Iraq's presidential palace. Revelers partied, oblivious to the irony that they were commemorating the independence of one nation in the occupied grounds of another. Bare-chested bodyguards with holsters on their hips played drinking games. Advisors frolicked by the presidential pool, sporting T-shirts embossed with scorpions and the logo LET FREEDOM STING. A giant video screen relayed a fireworks display, the sound turned down low to prevent confusion with incoming rockets. On the roof, a couple was caught in flagrante making its own fireworks near the spot where one of Saddam's vast iron visages had formerly loomed over Baghdad.

The heads of the statues now lie in a forgotten corner of the Highlander FOB (forward operating base), just beyond the Green Zone's walls. Their decapitation from atop the presidential palace symbolizes America's greatest success in Iraq—the toppling of Saddam. For entertainment on Saturday nights, Sergeant Mike Kelly—known to colleagues as the defender of the heads—tanks up, takes aim and pisses over Saddam Hussein. Kelly says it's good for improving his accuracy both in his current work as a sniper and his civilian job as a hairdresser in Ventura, California.

"Little old ladies in for a blue rinse ask me how it's possible for me to be a sniper," says Sergeant Kelly, a white-haired 50-something with a Mohawk. "I tell them it's all about precision."

The fate of the heads is undecided. One, say its American guards, was smashed during its transition from atop the palace. A second may go to the Smithsonian. An Iraqi memory commission is seeking control of the other two.

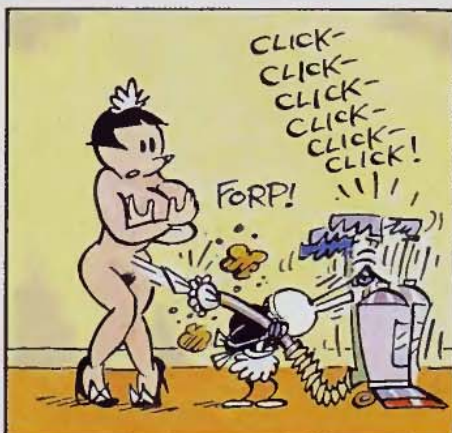
Pissing on totems aside, there's little to do for amusement. The U.S. military has infuriated soldiers by limiting access to issues of PLAYBOY, out of respect, it says, for local cultural values. Sergeant Kelly has tried to lure Iraqi women working at the base by offering haircuts. "Who's your boyfriend?" he solicits hopefully when Mona, who works at the cafe, arrives for her cut. "All of you," replies Mona, coquettishly eyeing the younger soldiers as her scarf slips from her head, leaving Sergeant Kelly crestfallen. But most outsiders have long given up hope for a local dalliance for fear of being caught in a tribal vendetta. Even the Christian girls began keeping their distance after a spate of church bombings rocked the community, which has a reputation for coluding with its coreligionists.

In the ruins of the Green Zone's Tomahawk palace—so named because a dozen Tomahawk missiles slammed through its ornate marble walls during the invasion—soldiers slouch, exchanging tales, like fishermen, of the ones who got away. A gunner just back from skirmishing in Sadr City reenacts the battles between youths aiming rocket-propelled grenades and the barrage from Bradley fighting vehicles. A gunner from Oregon reenacts the night. "Say hiya to Allah for me," he says, taking aim at the palace columns and erupting into a gargle of shooting noises.

Others find solace in prayer. Bookshelves stacked with camouflaged Bibles have been placed in Army canteens so that faithful Christian soldiers can call on God without getting shot when patrolling the palm groves. And Saddam's former throne room serves as the U.S. embassy chapel. Beneath the 99 names of Allah carved into an awe-inspiring crenellated marble ceiling, the coalition's Jewish servicemen gather each Friday night for a service to welcome the Sabbath and give thanks for their return to Iraq. Under the British 60 years ago, Iraqi Jews had numbered 250,000. Under Saddam they were whittled down to around 35.

# Dirty Duck

by Bobby London





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## SEPARATION

As Westerners and Iraqis built higher walls of mutual suspicion, I naively assumed that more than a decade in the Arab world might spare me from being caught in the fray. Like many journalists here, I hid my European features behind a growth of facial hair. My landlady, who lived in the downstairs flat with her two children, taught me the rudiments of Iraqi Arabic so that the trashmen would not grow suspicious and inform on me. She did her best to make me feel at home. She decorated my balcony with flags for Shia days of mourning and shrieked to chase away the geckos—known in Arabic as the *abu-brais*, or the “father of leprosy”—because, she said, they spread impotence. A widow in her 40s, she had kept her looks by dyeing her hair and maintained an impressive stream of men whom she introduced as her relatives. In the year I spent in Baghdad, she let me adopt her two boys as surrogates for my own children I’d left behind in London.

But on my last visit to Baghdad she apologetically tells me that foreigners should no longer mix with Iraqis. An Iraqi friend of hers was killed along with a busload of Christian washerwomen he was driving to an American base. She is terrified because her children told their school friends an Englishman lived in their house. She fears I could face the same fate. “Don’t be angry with me,” she begs. “Be angry with the Muqawama, the resistance.” She then bursts into

tears and says she has changed her mind. But I know she was probably right—she is safer without me.

Many Iraqis are bravely—almost suicidally—resisting a revival of the reign of terror. A friend of mine, Fahmi Jarrallah Rabia, who managed to keep his prewar job as senior advisor to the finance minister, found a black banner posted at the end of his street announcing his memorial ceremony on July 3. Fahmi ignored the death threat, defiantly going to work as always. But he forgot to inform his in-laws that the message was bogus. “My relatives turned out to mourn for me in the afternoon,” he says, laughing. “And I joined them for my funeral cakes.”

But for every Fahmi, there are many Baghdadis whose fears have sentenced them to self-imposed house arrest. Locked down in their homes, Iraqis search for new ways to resist the temptation to go out. My former next-door neighbors, engineers who worked for the Egyptian mobile-telephone provider, ordered call girls for their Thursday-night relief. They plied them with vodka and undressed them as they twirled to the sounds of their stereo. But they too have left. Others enjoy their newfound freedom to surf the Net, pan their satellite TVs and establish sexual and other contacts without venturing past the walls of their homes. My landlady’s sons, no longer allowed on the streets after dark for fear of kidnapping, are hooked on the Internet. Iraq’s latest hit, “Orange”—a gypsy video about a man who

wants to peel his girl like a piece of fruit—has been banned in more-regulated Arab states but is probably Iraq’s most popular screen saver. “Orange, Orange, why are you torturing me so?” sings Alaa Saad as a posse of gypsy girls performs the “dagger dance,” a routine that requires them to thrust their clenched fists toward their pelvises.

“He who can’t eat meat slurps soup,” says Ahlam, the office cook, in feigned disgust at the sex-starved researchers goggling in the office.

But Ahlam isn’t sure who is most to blame for turning Iraq into a nation of insomniacs. When the power is on, children are up all night online. When it’s not on and the fans and air conditioners have ground to a halt, the stifling heat makes it too hot to sleep. “The worst criminal in Iraq is the electricity minister,” says Ahlam, waving a carving knife. “I’d slice off his fingers, centimeter by centimeter.”

My landlady spends her evenings filling out visa lottery forms for America or visiting chat rooms in pursuit of a foreign husband to whisk her away to a less frantic world in which her glass menagerie will no longer be rattled by car bombs. On the July day when the fledgling authorities began reissuing passports, Baghdad ground to a halt as its nationals queued in thousands to exit Iraq.

Hundreds of thousands have already left. Alaa Saad, the gypsy vocalist, like many favorites of the former regime, has fled to the air-conditioned ice cooler of Dubai. More have sought refuge in blackout-free neighboring Jordan, where the Baathists who sponsor Iraq’s current killjoys have turned what was once the Arab world’s dullest city into one of its more playful. Pimps tout the Iraqi cafes of upmarket Amman, distributing invitations for Arabian nights at hotels such as Takit, where the girls wiggle for cash, or Club Juliana’s, where Filipinas entertain the same Iraqis who support the kidnapping of their fellow nationals in Iraq. “When the cat’s away, the mice must play,” says a recently exiled general, released from 26 years of serving Saddam. If only his country had such luck.

Before leaving Iraq, I drop by my old apartment to tell my landlady she can have my furniture. With the roads to Jordan closed, organizing a shipment is too complicated. She will keep it until my family finally visits. But we both know that won’t happen. For months Baghdadis were sitting on the fence, waiting to see if America would deliver a brighter Iraq. With the exception of Alousi, I don’t know anyone in the capital who hasn’t now given up hope.



# PLAYMATE NEWS



Brande lives it up in L.A.

## BRANDE'S STAR IS ON THE RISE

Those of you who tuned in each week to watch Brande Roderick frolic on the beach in *Baywatch Hawaii* might be disappointed to hear that her next project will be behind the camera. But don't worry—Brande's not giving up acting. She's just adding her name to the production credits. Brande takes the producer's seat—and the starring role—in a new reality show from New Line Television called *Brande's Brigade*. "It's a makeover show for the inside rather than the outside—with lots of adventures," she explains. "Traci Bingham, Angelica Bridges and I have a *Charlie's Angels* style of doing it. I



love being on the creative side of things, too, from picking out the clothes and locations to writing episodes. It is so so fun." It's also a lot of work, which Brande admits is pretty much all she does these days. Since her reign as Playmate of the Year 2001, she has shared a house with M.C. Hammer on VH1's *The Surreal Life*, traveled to Romania to shoot *Dracula II: Ascension* and turned a few heads with her role in *Starsky & Hutch*. "Hanging out with Snoop Dogg was cool because I've loved his music all my life," says Brande. "And it was sweet working with Ben Stiller and Owen Wilson."

## 35 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

Miss November 1969 Claudia Jennings was voted PMOY 1970 before earning the title Queen of the Bs for her dozens of low-budget movie roles. She was killed in a head-on collision just 10 years after this shoot. Says West Coast Photo Editor Marilyn Grabowski, "She was one of the guys and one of the girls. There wasn't anybody who didn't love Claudia."

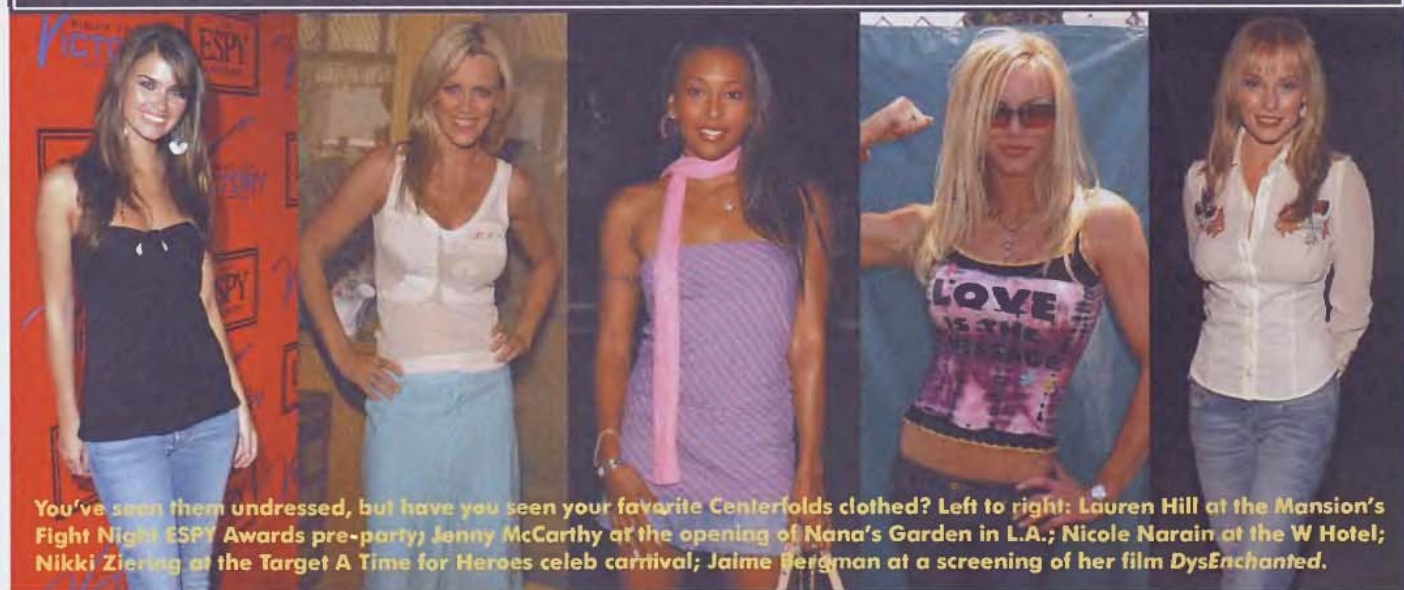


## LOOSE LIPS

"Pamela came into the gym and watched a workout. The money alleviated a lot of stress on my part. I think I'd be a nervous wreck if I didn't know she was backing me." —Olympic gymnast Mohini Bhardwaj, who can claim Pamela Anderson as her biggest fan

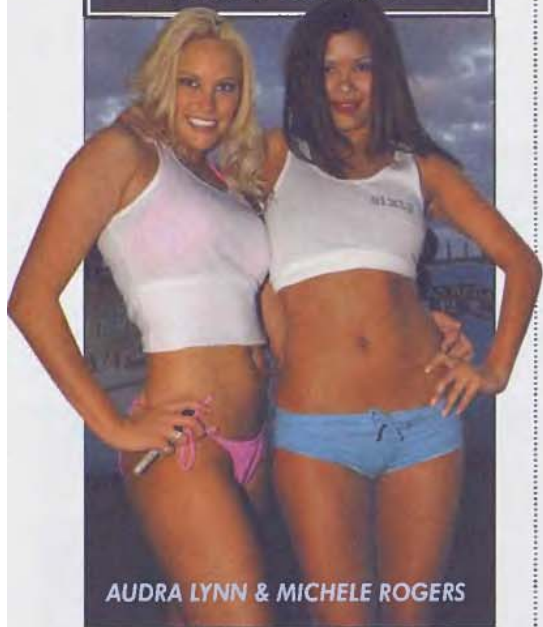


## FULL-FRONTAL FASHION



You've seen them undressed, but have you seen your favorite Centerfolds clothed? Left to right: Lauren Hill at the Mansion's Fight Night ESPY Awards pre-party; Jenny McCarthy at the opening of Nana's Garden in L.A.; Nicole Narain at the W Hotel; Nikki Ziering at the Target A Time for Heroes celeb carnival; Jaime Bergman at a screening of her film *DysEnchanted*.

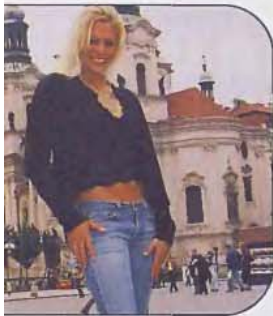
## HOT SHOT



AUDRA LYNN & MICHELE ROGERS

### THREE THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT STEPHANIE HEINRICH

1. She's in Nashville, working on a mass communications degree. "I've always wanted to go back to school," she says.
2. Although she's a self-proclaimed homebody now, Stephanie was a Mansion party animal. "Another girl and I once made a Slip 'N Slide in the Great Hall. Living there was the best time of my life."
3. Hef told her she's the Marilyn Monroe of the Internet—maybe that's the reason behind her ever-growing collection of Marilyn memorabilia.



### POP QUESTIONS: SHANNON STEWART

- Q:** You're from Louisiana and you live in Nevada. Which state is wilder?  
**A:** They're equally wild—and just as bad for you.  
**Q:** How do you keep cool in Vegas?  
**A:** I head to the pool at the Palms Hotel & Casino. Nothing beats the heat like its frozen grapes.  
**Q:** Who would you like to see next



on the cover of PLAYBOY?

**A:** Me! Or Fergie from Black Eyed Peas. She is so hot.

### MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

By Julian McMahon

"Miss January 1980 Gig Gangel is the hottest babe on the planet. I was obsessed with her when I was 12. I had a picture of her on the wall above my bed. My



parents were totally into it. My whole bedroom was plastered with her photos. I wonder what happened to her. One of her turn-ons was Ferraris, so she probably married some wealthy guy."



### PLAYMATE GOSSIP

Been watching HBO's addictive series *Entourage*? Then you've probably spotted Nicole Narain, Natalia Sokolova, Cara Wakelin, Irina Voronina and Pernellope Jimenez. Cara is also featured in print ads for the show.... In other television news, Cara, Irina and Pernellope, along with Sandra Hubby, Lauren Hill, Serria Tawan and Krista Kelly, all appeared with Mark Cuban and hosts Chris Rose, John Salley, Tom Arnold and Leeann Tweeden on *The Best Damn Sports Show Period* (below)....Actresses such as



LEIGH NEWMAN



The best damn Playmates, period

Sigourney Weaver and Jennie Garth are fans of Susie Owens's new perfume, Child. Go to [childperfume.com](http://childperfume.com).... Candace Collins and Patti McGuire (below) sent photos from their recent trip to St.-Tropez. "We had a ball!" Candace says....

Neriah Davis and Pamela Anderson were featured on E's

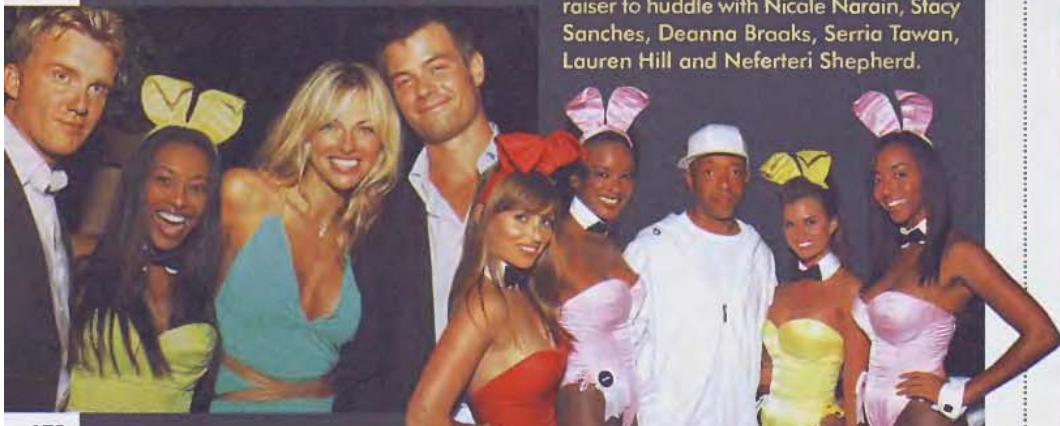


Candace and Patti: St.-Tropez slivers.

The Ultimate Hollywood Blonde.... Angela Little stars in the indie film *The Golden Bracelet*. And if you're into Harlequin romance novels, look for *A Cowboy and a Kiss*—Angie's on the cover.

### PLAYMATE HOUSE PARTY

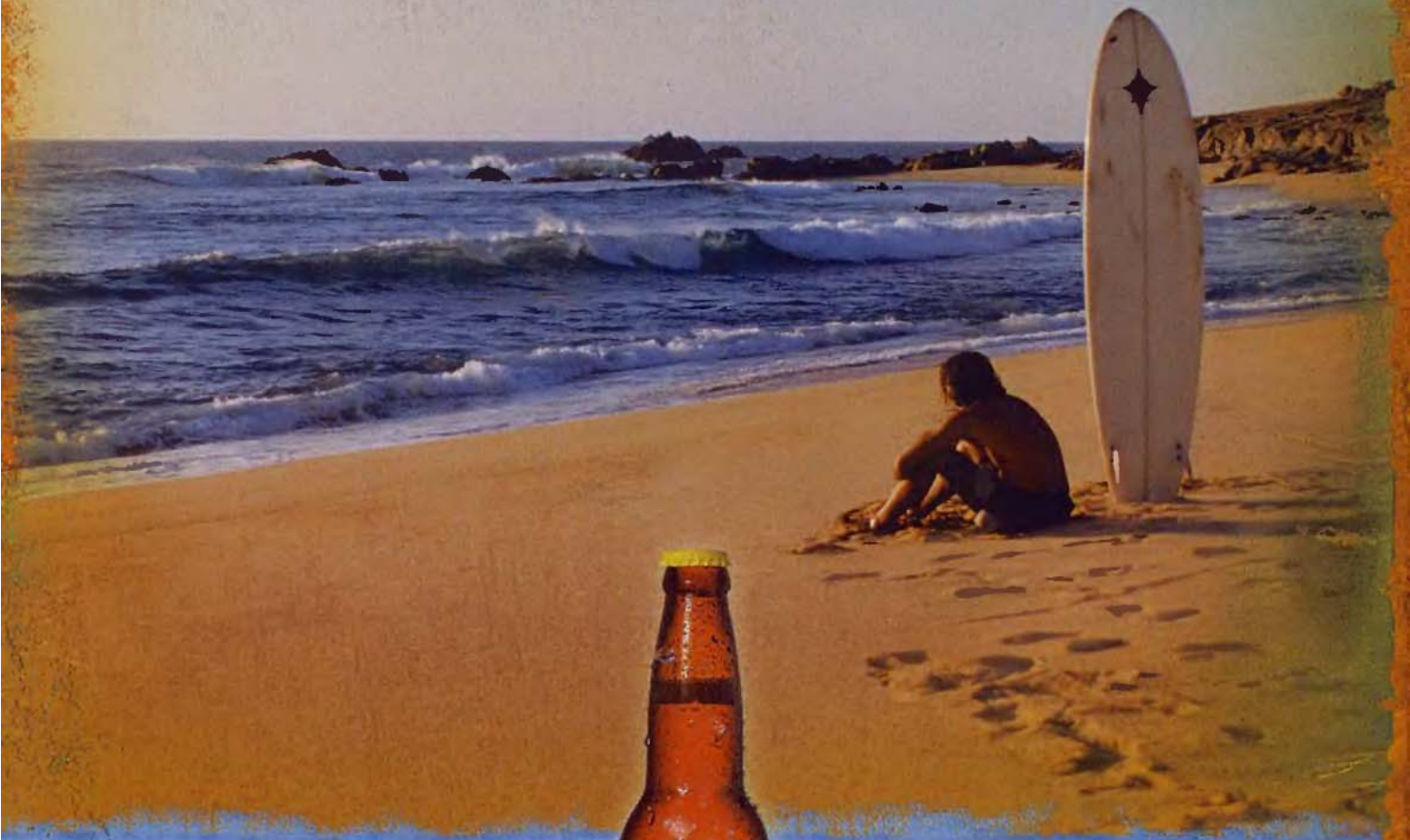
Our favorite line in Hef's *Little Black Book*? "And so one man created two houses and all men would forever want to go to these houses, to be inside." Just ask Anthony Michael Hall, Josh Duhamel and Russell Simmons, who stopped by a Mansion fundraiser to huddle with Nicole Narain, Stacy Sanches, Deanna Brooks, Serria Tawan, Lauren Hill and Nefertari Shepherd.



cyberclub

See your favorite Playmate's pictorial in the Cyber Club at [cyber.playboy.com](http://cyber.playboy.com).

**Tastes even  
better with sand in  
your ears.**

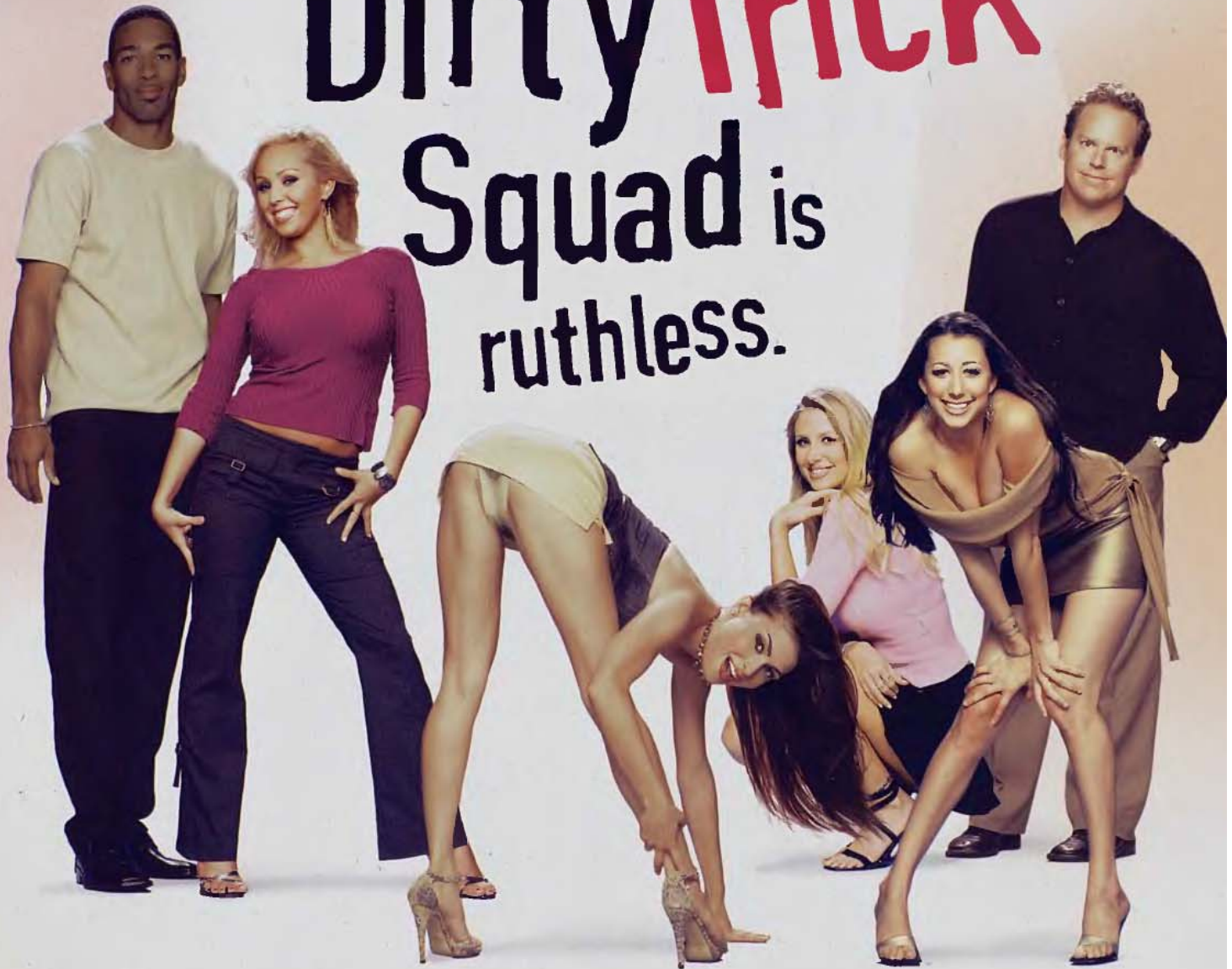


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# Playboy On The Scene

WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHERE IT'S HAPPENING AND WHO'S MAKING IT HAPPEN



## Speed Racer

**Juan Pablo Montoya's fans think he's the second coming. But for this Formula 1 driver, second isn't good enough**

**E**very now and then, Juan Pablo Montoya, the Colombian Formula 1 driver, holds a web chat with his fans. The messages pour in from every corner of the globe: "I'm your biggest fan! Do you want to be my fan?" "I think you're gorgeous!" "What kind of orange juice do you like the most?" One fan even asked whether he goes commando under his driving uniform. "I always wear my underwear," answered Montoya. The 29-year-old phenom has brought an Elvis-like iconography to the F1 circuit. Even his profilers get seduced. "His Latin origins are the source of a smoldering fire in his makeup," wrote one. Montoya started racing go-carts at the age of five. In 2000 he won the Indy 500 in his first attempt, then a year later signed with the BMW Williams team to race Formula 1, the world's premier circuit. In 2002 he posted the fastest F1 lap in history (average speed: 161.484 miles per hour), and he won the Monte Carlo Grand Prix the following year. Now married and based in Miami, he's trying to unseat Michael Schumacher, the F1 champ for four years running. Can Montoya take the checkered flag? Stay tuned as the 2004 season ends in São Paulo this month.

## Grr-grr Gershon

Life imitates art, as GINA GER-SHON proved at an NYC Cartier bash. Nearly a decade ago she turned us on in *Showgirls* and *Bound*. Obviously she's still a showgirl, but lately she's unbound in the best way possible.



CLAUD HERRON/REUTERS PRESS



## Breast to Jagger: Gimme Shelter!

JADE JAGGER is rock royalty, so we've come to expect sexy tops like this one, worn to the Serpentine Gallery's Summer Party. Who says we can't always get what we want?

SPLASH NEWS



## Nip and Duck

On her first two CDs, *Songs in A Minor* and *The Diary of Alicia Keys*, ALICIA KEYS bared more soul than all the Britneys, Hilarys and Jessicas combined. Onstage the Grammy winner is usually a bit more restrained, save for this one revealing moment captured during a Rock in Rio concert.



### Two Pair and a Straight Flush

Demonstrating that two Reids are better than one, TARA REID and her sis Colleen sported matching twin sets at L.A.'s Nacional. Later, Tara popped out solo leaving Concorde in Hollywood.



SALE (TOP); PHOTOFEST (BOTTOM)

### King Leer

We liked her better as James King, but still, we wouldn't kick model-actress-name changer JAIME KING out of bed for eating crackers. How's her acting career going? Two words: *White Chicks*. But she's got the modeling part down to a science, as shown at the aforementioned movie's premiere.



PHOTO: STEPHEN VAUGHAN/REX USA



### Let's Put Another Sash on the Barbie

The only fun part about watching beauty pageants is praying that some evening gown-clad priss falls down the stairs—or out of her gown. We also like to imagine how the contest winners look when they're horizontal. Here, the new Miss Universe, Australia's Jennifer Hawkins, reads our minds.

PHOTO: JIM SPELLMAN



### Hula Scoops

We've heard it a million times, but it never gets old: AINA JOHNSON was vacationing in Hawaii when she was discovered by a model scout. The result is shown here.

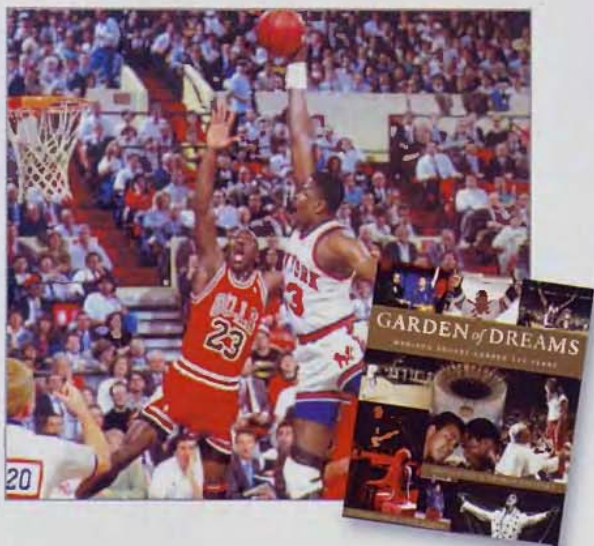
## RETRO ACTIVE

The lost souls who never recovered from their crippling addictions to the *bleep-bleep* arcade games of the 1980s still walk among us, pale reminders of a bygone era. But there is hope. Jakks Pacific's new retro-gaming joystick (\$20, [jakkstvgames.com](http://jakkstvgames.com)) has five old-school favorites packed right inside—*Ms. Pac-Man*, *Galaga*, *Xevious*, *Pole Position* and *Mappy*. Plug the joystick into your TV, grab a bottle, and let the healing begin.



## HE SHOOTS! HE SCORES!

Anybody who's ever stepped foot in New York's Madison Square Garden knows that the place has a magic all its own. *Garden of Dreams* (\$35, Stewart, Tabori & Chang)—the new coffee-table book by MSG's official photographer, George Kalinsky—takes you on a long, strange trip through the arena's 125-year history. Didn't make it to the 1989 Bulls vs. Knicks playoff series (pictured)? Or to any of the Stones, Dead or Hendrix shows through the years? Here's your front-row ticket to all those events and more.



## BIKER CHIC

Ducati's Historical Leather Biker Jacket won't make as much of a splash as the company's first Fabio Tagliioni-designed motorcycle did 50 years ago. But if you're a racing fan, the jacket is worth the \$319 price tag ([ducati.com](http://ducati.com)). It's covered in Ducati patches worn by riders who took the checkered flag at major international races throughout the Italian company's storied history. Bonus: The jacket looks pretty hot on a topless blonde, if you happen to have one lying around.

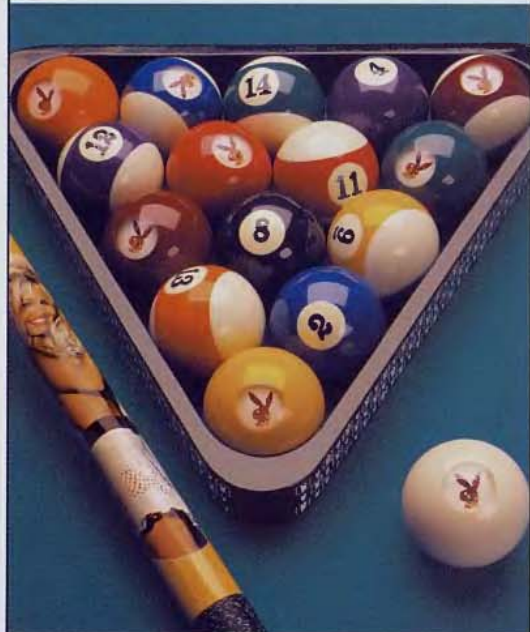


## THE GREAT COMMUNICATOR

Remember when you used phones to make phone calls? Danger's Sidekick II (\$299, [tmobile.com](http://tmobile.com)) is a hybrid PDA-cell phone that follows up its pioneering predecessor with a tighter, slimmer body, an upgraded camera and a redesigned cellular antenna that makes dropped calls a thing of the past. E-mail and instant messaging are a breeze thanks to the full QWERTY keyboard hidden under the screen, and the stylish screen swivel action gives the Sidekick the right balance of elegance and functionality. It's available exclusively with T-Mobile service, but if you can get past that annoyance, you'll have your hands on one of the most capable gadgets out there.

### BE A PLAYER

There's nothing like a good-looking woman who can bend over a pool table and rifle the eight ball into a corner pocket. Here's the next best thing: the official Playboy cue, with Pamela Anderson's likeness (\$30), plus the official Playboy balls (\$100) and rack (\$30). Make all the jokes you want (Pam on your shaft, nice rack, etc.), but first put your money where your mouth is. Available at [playboystore.com](http://playboystore.com).



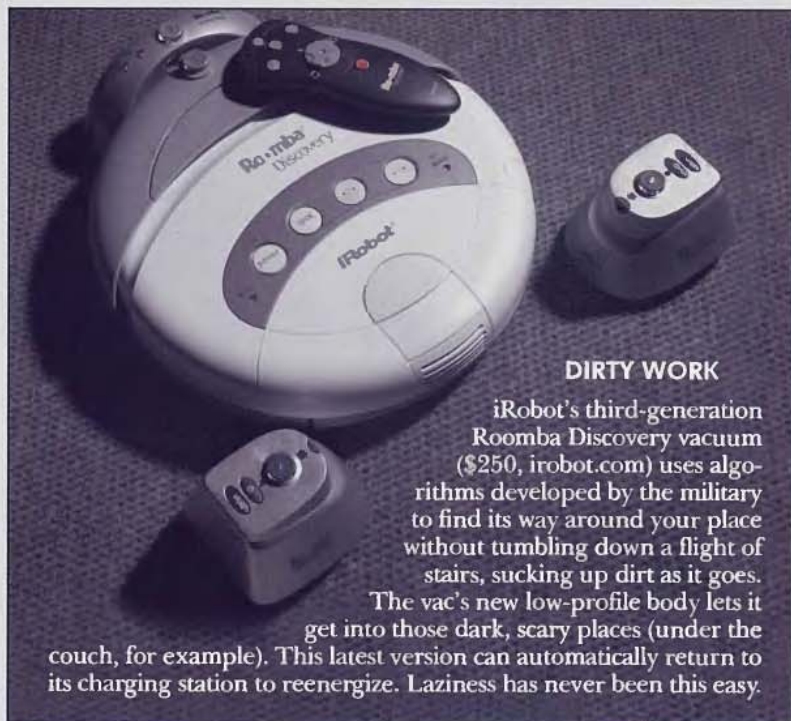
### SMOOTH TALK

For years now, Bluetooth cell phone headsets have allowed you to go wireless and hands-free. The problem? They've always been bulky and style-challenged. Plantronics's new M2500 (\$70, [plantronics.com](http://plantronics.com)) is a tidy counterweighted package you can tuck over your ear and forget about. A button on the headset lets you answer calls, meaning you can stash your phone in your back pocket while you gab.



### UNHOLY SMOKE

One of the rarest cigars in the world just got rarer. Ten years ago this month, Arturo Fuente released the first stogie with a wrapper, binder and filler all made from the choicest Dominican tobaccos, aged a decade or more. Now Fuente is upping the ante, aging the tobaccos for another month or so inside French-oak calvados barrels. Christened the Forbidden X (\$250, [cigarinthebottle.com](http://cigarinthebottle.com)), the 6½-by-49 cigars are then encased in a bottle of 40-year-old Grand Pommier XS calvados, blended specifically to complement this cigar's complexities. Now *that's* decadence.



### DIRTY WORK

iRobot's third-generation Roomba Discovery vacuum (\$250, [irobot.com](http://irobot.com)) uses algorithms developed by the military to find its way around your place without tumbling down a flight of stairs, sucking up dirt as it goes. The vac's new low-profile body lets it get into those dark, scary places (under the couch, for example). This latest version can automatically return to its charging station to reenergize. Laziness has never been this easy.

### THE RIGHT MIX

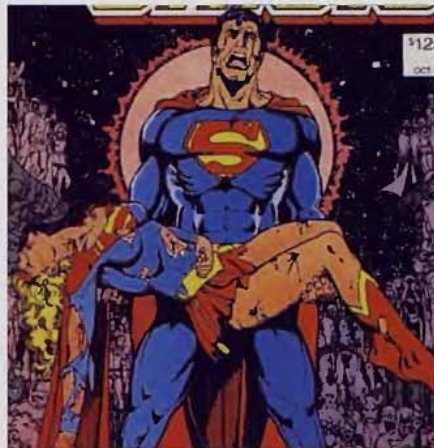
A great moment in kitchen history: The year was 1935. Big-band leader Fred Waring was in his dressing room at New York's Vanderbilt Theater when an inventor walked in holding a strange device. Waring, a gadget freak, bought the thing, and soon after, the Waring Blendor [sic], the world's first, hit stores for \$29.75. Nowadays the company Waring founded specializes in stuff that blends reliability with modern design. Example: the new polished-copper Pro MBB 520 (\$190, [waringproducts.com](http://waringproducts.com)), with a two-speed motor. Rum and fruit not included.



# Next Month



MISS DECEMBER UNWRAPPED.



THE SCANDALOUS WORLD OF COMIC BOOK ART.



PRIMO DINO: A RAT PACKER'S DELIGHT.



SEX IN CINEMA: RATED E FOR EROTIC.

**DEAN MARTIN**—BORN DINO PAUL CROCETTI, THE LEGENDARY RAT PACKER LIVED AND DIED THE HIGH LIFE OF BOOZE, BROADS AND BRIGHT LIGHTS. **BILL ZEHME** SALUTES THE ICON THE ITALIANS CALLED A *MENEFREGHISTA*—ONE WHO SIMPLY DOESN'T GIVE A FUCK.

**BERNIE MAC**—THE ORIGINAL KING OF COMEDY HAS GONE FROM BEING DEAD BROKE AND DOING STAND-UP IN CHICAGO TO BEING RANKED AMONG THE 50 GREATEST TV DADS FOR HIS EPONYMOUS SITCOM. NEXT UP: *OCEAN'S TWELVE* AND AN AS YET UNTITLED FLICK WITH ASHTON KUTCHER. A *PLAYBOY INTERVIEW* CRACK-UP BY **DAVID RENSIN**

**PLAYBOY'S 2004 MUSIC POLL**—WE'LL SHOW YOU OUR IPOD IF YOU SHOW US YOURS. IT'S AN ELECTION YEAR, AND THE LAST THING WE WANT IS HANGING CHADS (OR PRINCES OR FATBOY SLIMS). OUR YEARLY ROUNDUP FEATURES THOSE WE LOVED—KANYE WEST, THE HIVES, THE STREETS, JULIE ROBERTS, FRANZ FERDINAND—AND THOSE WHO LEFT US PUSHING THE FAST-FORWARD BUTTON (SORRY, LENNY). RIP. MIX. BURN. VOTE.

**COLLEGE BASKETBALL PREVIEW**—PROGNOSTICATOR **DAVID KAPLAN** HAS EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE COMING SEASON—THE WINNERS, THE LOSERS, THE BIGGEST HOOP DREAMS.

**COMIC BOOK ART COLLECTORS**—WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT BUYING, SELLING AND TRADING COMIC BOOK ART COULD LEAD TO BLACK EYES AND BROKEN LEGS? **GLEN DAVID GOLD** HEADS INTO GEEKDOM'S SEEDY UNDERBELLY.

**CELEBRITY THANK-YOU NOTES**—WE DID OUR BEST INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING—OKAY, DUMPSTER DIVING—TO FIND HANDWRITTEN HOLIDAY SENTIMENTS BY MICHAEL MOORE, LANCE ARMSTRONG, NICKY HILTON, LINDSAY LOHAN AND COURTNEY LOVE. EXCLUSIVE *PLAYBOY* HUMOR.

**THE OLD BADGER GAME**—THREE BACHELOR BADGERS LIVE ON FRANK FRINK'S RANCH. WHEN FRANK'S WIFE BECOMES SWEET ON ONE OF THE CRITTERS, IS SHE AFTER LOVE OR A NEW FUR COAT? SMART FICTION BY **ANNIE PROULX**

**SEX IN CINEMA 2004**—UNFORTUNATELY, MOST OF THIS YEAR'S SEXIEST MOVIES DID NOT STAR PARIS HILTON. STILL, WE TOOK ON THE ARDUOUS TASK OF FINDING THE SEXIEST SCREEN MOMENTS. BRING YOUR OWN POPCORN.

**PLUS:** A MIND-BLOWING A-LIST PICTORIAL, NORMAN MAILER, 20Q WITH DUSTIN HOFFMAN, A TRIBUTE TO PHOTOGRAPHER POMPEO POSAR, OUR ANNUAL GIFT GUIDE AND MISS DECEMBER, TIFFANY FALLON—UNWRAPPED IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS.