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MUSIC**
ISSUE EVER!

- OutKast Speaks!
- Readers Vote!
- DJs Strip!

50 CENT
INTERVIEW

“The first time
I shot someone I
was in junior high”

**THE POLITICS
OF FEAR**

By E.L. Doctorow

**BASEBALL
MADNESS**

Our fearless
2004 preview

EXCLUSIVE

SUPERMODEL

**RACHEL
HUNTER**

STACY'S MOM IS
NAKED!

FOOL'S GOLD

The hunt for the
world's most
expensive coin

STEREO LAB

Building the perfect
sound system

FUN WITH TAXES

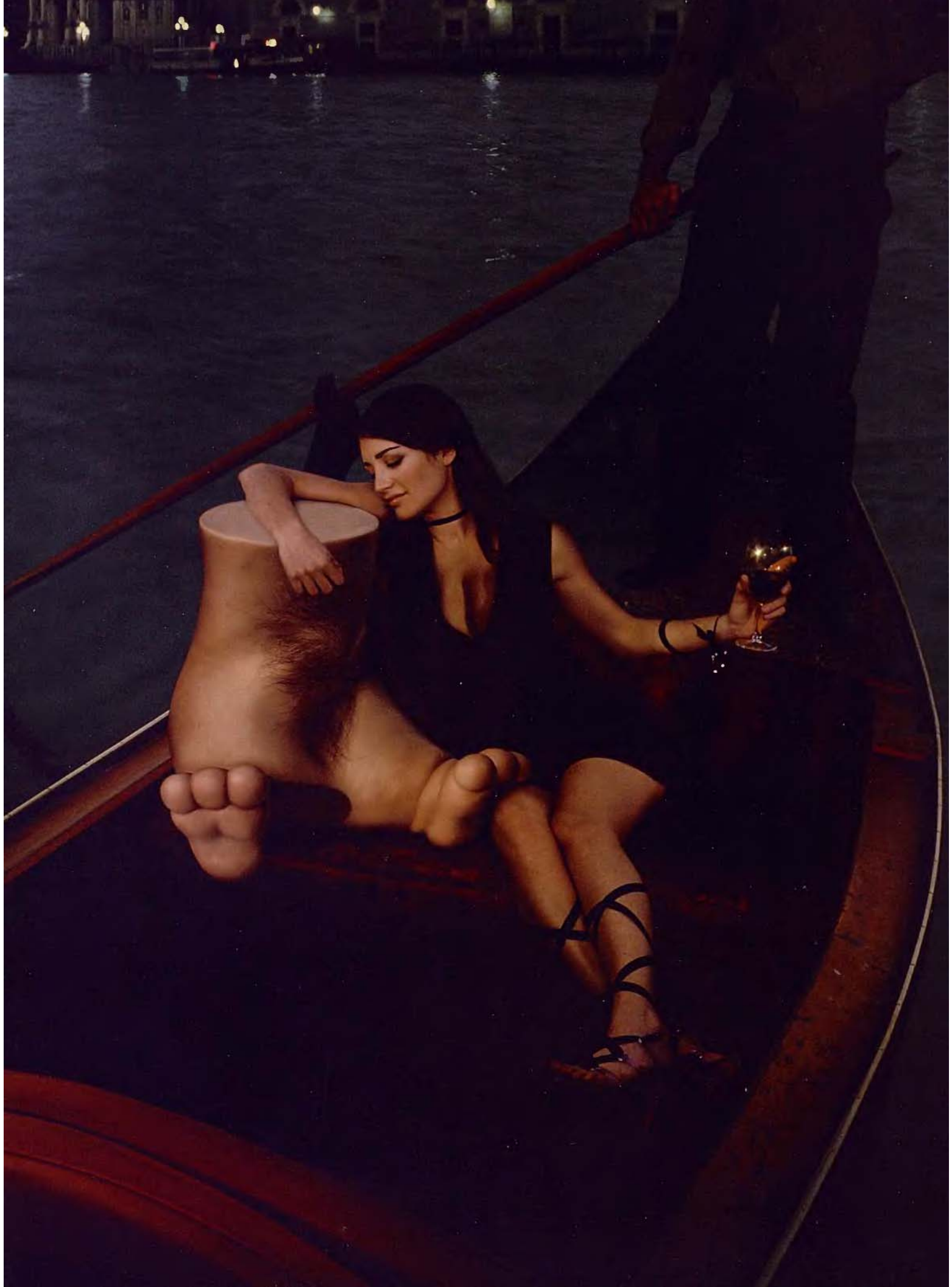
How to deduct liquor,
implants and undies





Dry Pits Win

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Na zdrowie, Secretariat.
Na zdrowie, Symphony no. 9 in D minor Op. 125.
Na zdrowie, New York City.
Na zdrowie, 10/14/1947.
Na zdrowie, Socrates.
Na zdrowie, Sophocles.
Na zdrowie, Picasso's Blue Period.
Na zdrowie, silver anniversaries.
Na zdrowie, 29,035 ft.
Na zdrowie, 8/28/1963.
Na zdrowie, Mr. Hogan.
Na zdrowie, *Reservoir Dogs*.
Na zdrowie, *Pulp Fiction*.
Na zdrowie, *Jackie Brown*.
Na zdrowie, *Kill Bill Vol. 1*.
Na zdrowie, *Kill Bill Vol. 2*.

Na zdrowie, Noel Baba.
Na zdrowie, George W. Ferris.
Na zdrowie, donuts with sprinkles.
Na zdrowie, Tex Avery.
Na zdrowie, Picasso's Cubist Period.
Na zdrowie, *Ulysses*.
Na zdrowie, Ulysses.
Na zdrowie, Liverpool.
Na zdrowie, Job.
Na zdrowie, Copernicus.
Na zdrowie, Don Quixote.
Na zdrowie, 11/9/1989.
Na zdrowie, FDR.
Na zdrowie, JFK.
Na zdrowie, PB&J.
Na zdrowie, Susan Sontag.

WHO HAS EARNED THEIR NA ZDROWIE? WHO HAS EARNED

Na zdrowie, Expressionism.
Na zdrowie, Impressionism.
Na zdrowie, 11,723.
Na zdrowie, Picasso's Rose Period.
Na zdrowie, Cape Canaveral.
Na zdrowie, Pebble Beach.
Na zdrowie, $E=mc^2$.
Na zdrowie, Zorro.
Na zdrowie, Patek Philippe.
Na zdrowie, 🇵🇱.
Na zdrowie, Garp.
Na zdrowie, USA 4 USSR 3.
Na zdrowie, Pragmatism.
Na zdrowie, Abstract Expressionism.
Na zdrowie, Święty Mikołaj.
Na zdrowie, Jólásveinn.

Na zdrowie, Voltaire.
Na zdrowie, Candide.
Na zdrowie, 8/26/1920.
Na zdrowie, VIAGRA®.
Na zdrowie, Old Faithful.
Na zdrowie, Jay-Z.
Na zdrowie, 12 seconds.
Na zdrowie, 120 feet.
Na zdrowie, Sisyphus.
Na zdrowie, Picasso's Neoclassical Period.
Na zdrowie, 5/21/1927.
Na zdrowie, Warhol(a).
Na zdrowie, 'Drella.
Na zdrowie, Dr. Salk.
Na zdrowie, Keats.
Na zdrowie, @.

Na zdrowie is the well-meant and well-deserved Polish cheers. *Na zdrowie!*

Na zdrowie, Larousse Gastronomique.
 Na zdrowie, free parking.
 Na zdrowie, 4/12/1961.
 Na zdrowie, Picasso's Surrealist Period.
 Na zdrowie, Playboy Mansion.
 Na zdrowie, Jeanne Louise Calment.
 Na zdrowie, Roberto Clemente.
 Na zdrowie, ♻️.
 Na zdrowie, Mom.
 Na zdrowie, Dad.
 Na zdrowie, foie gras.
 Na zdrowie, Gutenberg.
 Na zdrowie, Jong.
 Na zdrowie, Jung.
 Na zdrowie, 4/30/1803.
 Na zdrowie, $Fg = G m_1 m_2 / r^2$

THEIR BELVEDERE?

Na zdrowie, Althea Gibson.
 Na zdrowie, Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité.
 Na zdrowie, MINI Cooper.
 Na zdrowie, 2/2/1943.
 Na zdrowie, 4/15/1452 - 5/2/1519.
 Na zdrowie, cogito ergo sum.
 Na zdrowie, 214 BC.
 Na zdrowie, 11/11/1918.
 Na zdrowie, Pancho Villa.
 Na zdrowie, genome therapy.
 Na zdrowie, 5/24/03.
 Na zdrowie, Ramapithecus.
 Na zdrowie, ®.
 Na zdrowie, Chris Moneymaker.
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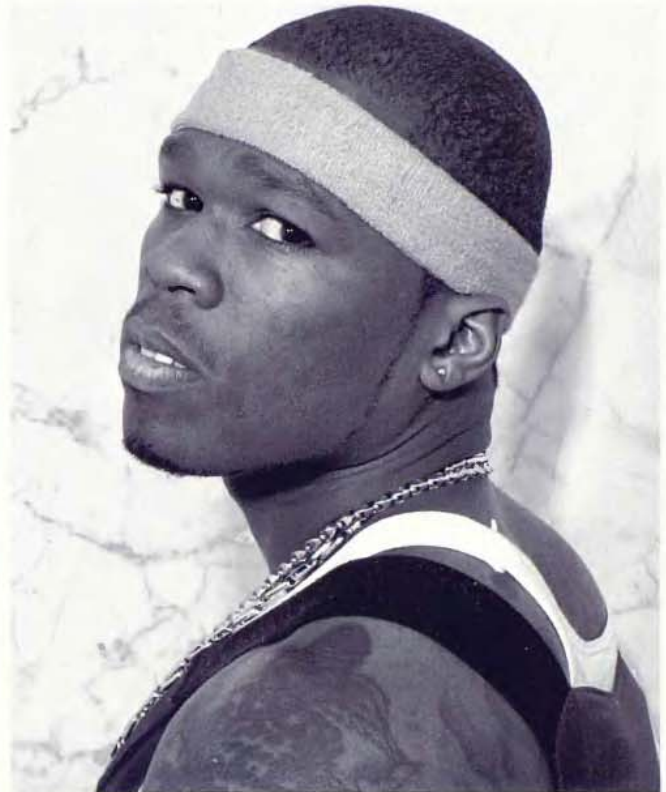
DISTINCTIVELY MELLOW

**SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Cigarette
Smoke Contains Carbon Monoxide.**

In *Curse of the Double Eagle*, **Bryan Christy** investigates the biggest coin bust in modern history, which involved an iconic—and illegal—1933 gold piece. “When I first got wind of the story,” he says, “it bothered me that the U.S. Mint could partner with a smuggler to sell a coin it claimed was stolen from its own vault. But the pull of this coin is amazingly strong. People with every reason not to get involved just couldn’t resist helping themselves to their little piece of the pie.” Christy found himself in a shady, little-known underworld. “The dusty coin dealer’s shop is a back door to an incredible world. Millionaires, mobsters and men preparing for divorce all come to the door.”



This month’s fiction, *Yellow*, is by **Scott Smith**, the author of *A Simple Plan*, the best-selling novel that was made into a film starring Billy Bob Thornton. After the success of *A Simple Plan*, Smith spent much of his time writing for Hollywood. “I’d been writing screenplays and wanted to get back into prose,” he says. “*Yellow* felt like an easy transition from screenwriting, because the story is dialogue-driven. The two guys start out innocently sparring and eventually sink to this level where one of them is completely broken by the end. They were fun characters to write. Anything that shakes up the equilibrium is fun to write.”



“Go shorty, it’s your birthday.” With the multiplatinum success of **50 Cent**’s single “In Da Club,” those words became a universal call to party. The song’s dramatic bounce sent 50 straight to the top of the hip-hop hierarchy. “Gangster rappers do a lot of shouting and threatening,” says **Rob Tannenbaum**, who traded rhymes with the young star for the *Playboy Interview*. “But 50 Cent is very understated. If you didn’t know he had nine bullet holes in him, you might think you were talking to your postman. He has a good sense of humor. And he smiles a lot—especially when talking about gruesome things. He can be talking about all the people who want him dead and he’s smiling.” In fact, 50 didn’t even wear his bulletproof vest for the interview. “He understood we weren’t going to bust a cap in his ass.”



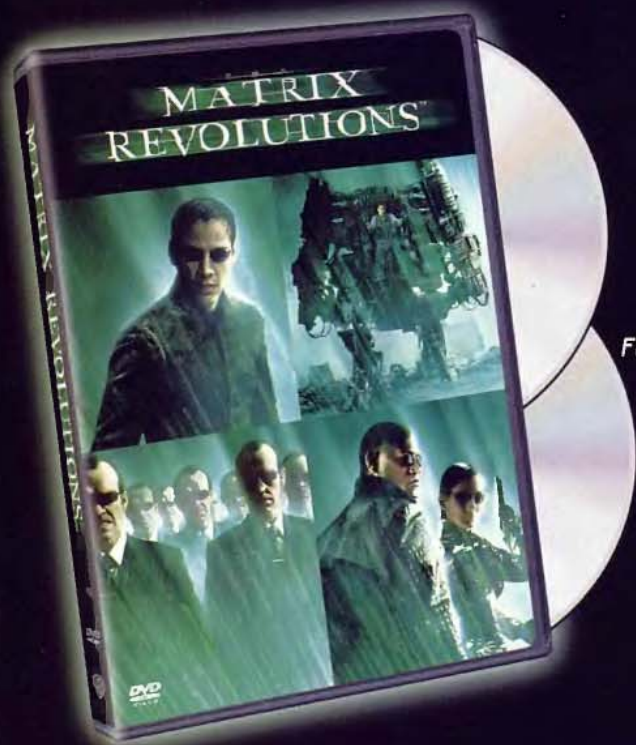
Every month *The Playboy Forum* features a five-point prescription for curing a seemingly intractable problem. In this issue we offer “Five Ways to Fix the Airline Industry,” by **Sir Richard Branson**, the world-famous entrepreneur behind the Virgin empire, including the highly successful Virgin Atlantic airline. “I could get busted for sexism for saying this,” says Branson, “but if you recruited Playmates as cabin staff, you’d certainly fill your planes—and keep them up forever.” Perhaps coming soon to an airport near you: Hefnair.



If it’s April, it’s time for the results of our annual music poll. But this package does more than look back—we’ve found the sounds that will make you one with your iPod for months. “There were more than a few knock-down-drag-outs about whom to highlight,” reports Associate Editor **Alison Prato**, who spearheaded our coverage. “Music is so subjective. One man’s Peaches is another man’s Garbage. The one group everyone agreed on was OutKast, which clearly dominated 2003. I mean, who wasn’t shaking it like a Polaroid picture?”



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SUPER BURLY BRAWL - Behind the final Neo/Smith showdown

FUTURE GAMER: THE MATRIX ONLINE - A look at the multiplayer game

BEFORE THE REVOLUTION - Matrix timeline

3-D EVOLUTION - Multidimensional stills gallery

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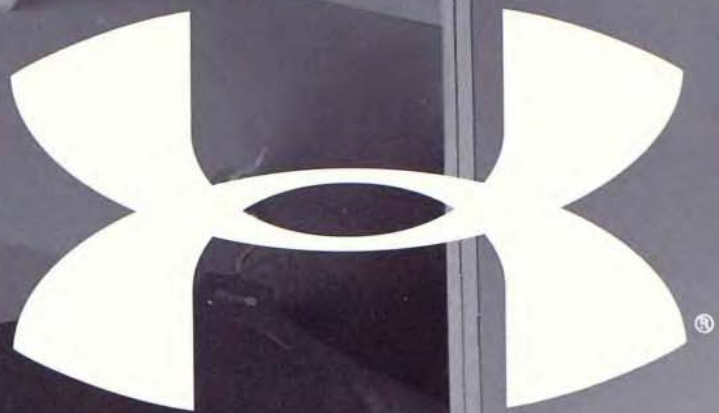


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PLAYBOY

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features

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It's the world's most desired coin: Millionaires, crooks and kings have all loved and lost an ultra-rare 1933 gold piece known as the Saint-Gaudens double eagle. Stolen from the U.S. Mint nearly 70 years ago, it flipped from one rich man's pocket into another's until the Secret Service finally nabbed it in an undercover sting operation. But could our government resist the chance to profit from this \$7.5 million anomaly? **BY BRYAN CHRISTY**

80 YEAR IN MUSIC 2004

OutKast became an in-crowd favorite, Coldplay burned bright, and Johnny Cash made one for the ages. Now our readers cast their votes on the past year's music scene. Plug into the winners of our annual poll, plus deep thoughts from Kelis, the Strokes and Lucinda Williams. That's music to anyone's ears.

88 FEAR

According to this esteemed author, our present circumstances have more in common with the 1950s than just a love of khakis. He sees parallels to the Cold War, suspects our leaders of capitalizing on fear to promote their agenda and senses a backlash bubbling its way to the top. **BY E.L. DOCTOROW**

92 WHEN TAXES ATTACK!

Just in case you need another reason to put off doing your taxes, here's a look at some tax scams and dubious deductions that will put your shoebox full of bogus receipts to shame. **BY CHIP ROWE**

120 OPEN SEASON

The 2004 major league baseball season is shaping up to be one of the strangest in the 150-year history of the game. Our annual preview primes you with all the juice—unfolding scandals, blood feuds that could explode into violence and projected standings, plus our picks for the October action. **BY ALLEN ST. JOHN**

136 20Q KEVIN SMITH

The Jersey-obsessed director explains why Bennifer won't curse his new movie, fantasizes about watching his wife with another man and tells fans whether they'll ever see the return of Jay and Silent Bob. **BY PAUL YOUNG**

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108 YELLOW

To explain his wife's potbelly, a man lies to his friend that she is pregnant. But what if she actually is pregnant—and the little bump of joy isn't his? **BY SCOTT SMITH**

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61 50 CENT

For a hip-hop star, nothing earns respect like getting shot nine times. In a loaded Playboy Interview, 50 Cent shoots back with no-bull answers on everything from his drug-dealing past to his high-flying current life—and why his many enemies should still fear him. **BY ROB TANNENBAUM**



cover story

Rocker Rod Stewart's most famous song asks "Da Ya Think I'm Sexy?" Well, not really, Rod. We much prefer his ex-wife, cover girl Rachel Hunter. The New Zealand beauty became famous modeling swimwear. Now the supermodel takes off her bikini and shows off her super body for photographer Sante D'Orazio. Our Rabbit helps give Rachel a boost.



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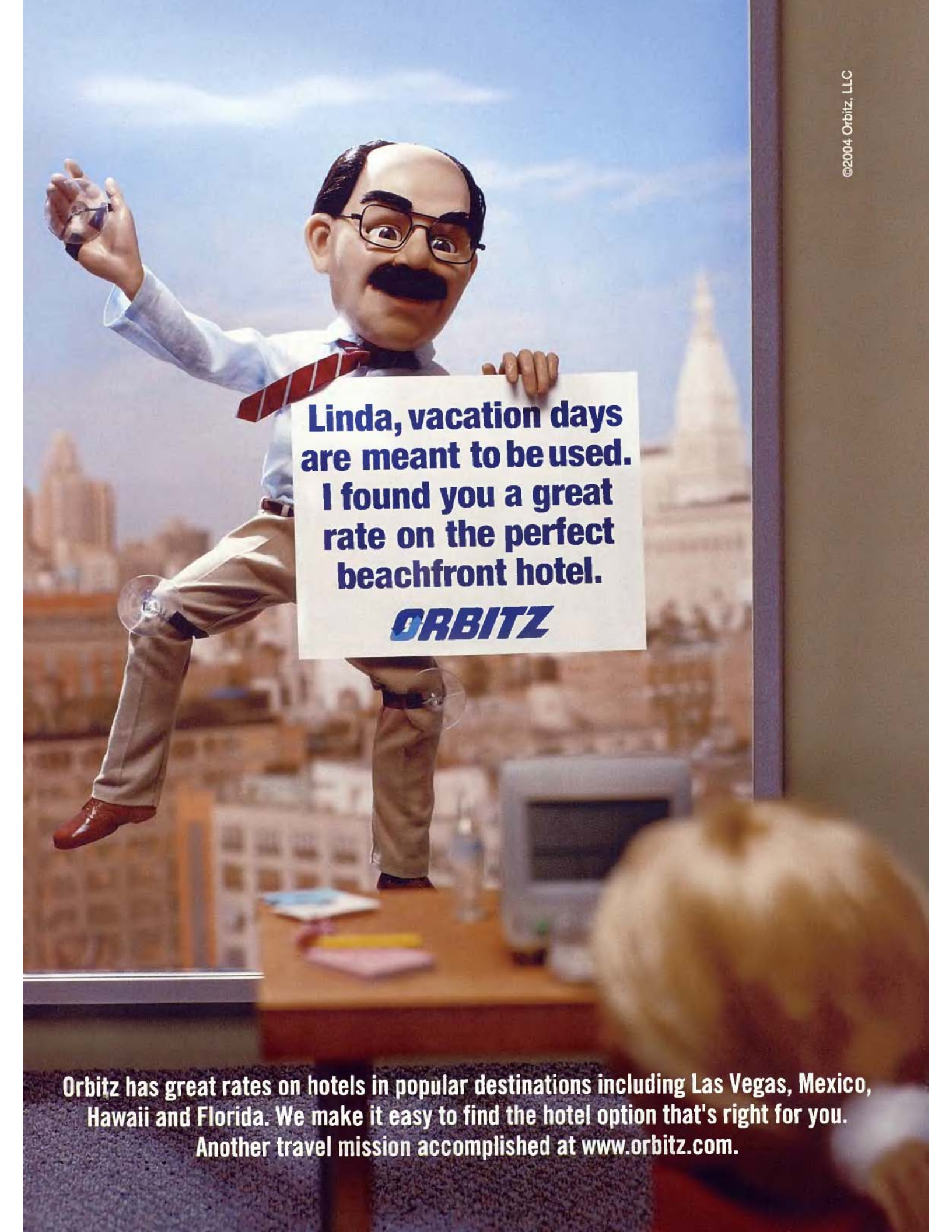
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BY JOSEPH DE ACETIS

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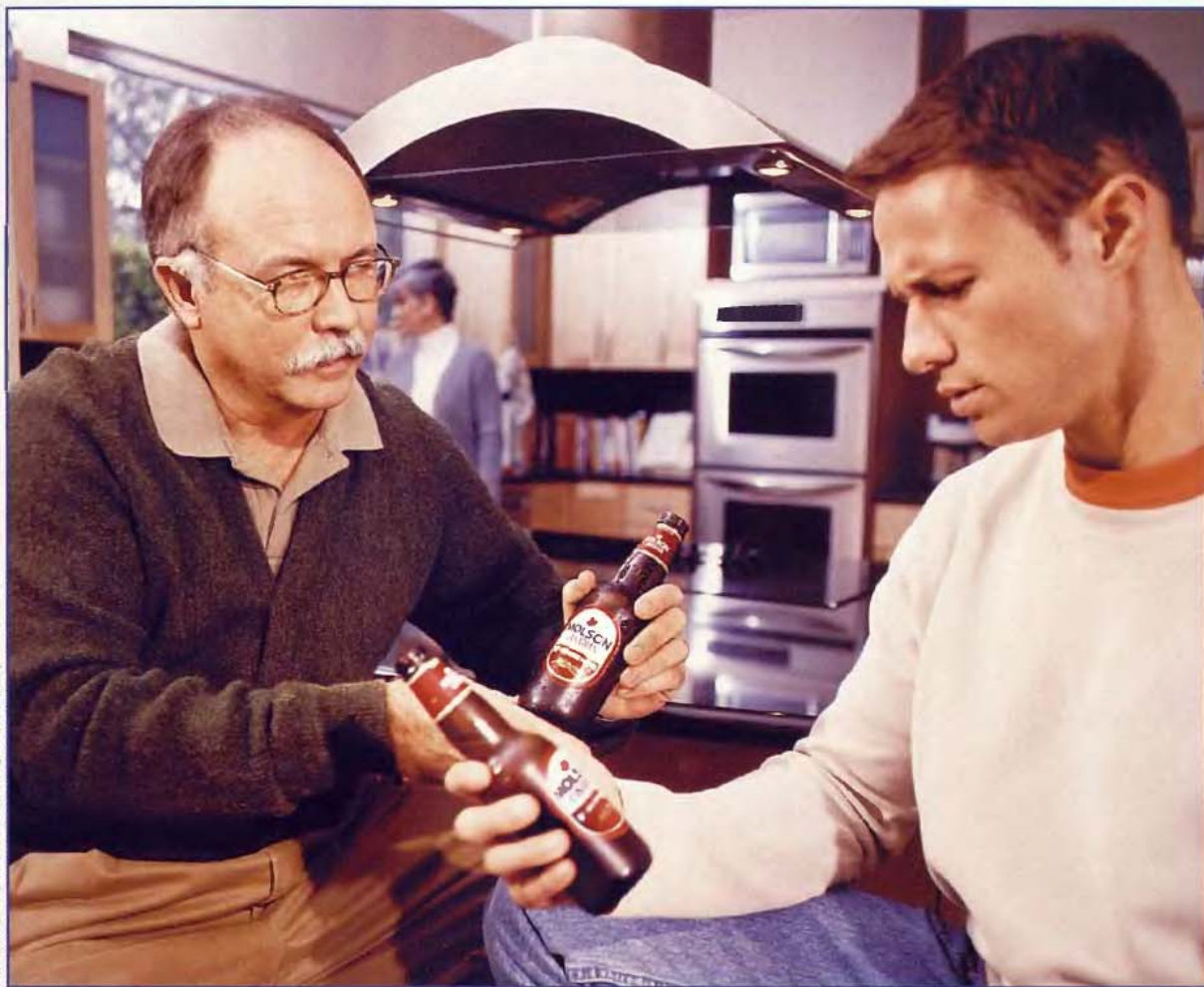
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HEF TAKES NEW YORK



Hef and his six girlfriends took a jet to New York City for a whirlwind media blitz and a gala party celebrating PLAYBOY's 50th anniversary. (1) Hef and his platinum party posse boarding a Gulfstream V for the flight. (2) Cristal, Bridget and Holly at Radio City Music Hall. (3) The gang at Broadway's *The Boy From Oz*. (4) Backstage with Hugh Jackman, who stopped the show to congratulate Hef. (5) Bridget and Holly ice-skating at Rockefeller Center. (6) The Bernaola twins in Playboy designer outfits with Playmate Nicole Wood at Henri Bendel. (7) Hef signing copies of *Playboy—50 Years: The Photographs* for former New York Club Bunnies. (8) Bendel's window display. (9) Having a bite to eat at Jekyll & Hyde. (10) Hef and Christie at an interview with Charlie Rose. (11) Hef and Matt Lauer on the *Today* show. (12) Christie and Hef ringing the bell at the New York Stock Exchange. (13) At Bungalow 8 with Robert Iler and 50th Anniversary Playmate Colleen Shannon. (14) Hef and the girls. (15) Victoria Silvstedt with the Man.



PLAYBOY'S NEW YORK CELEBRATION



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PLAYBOY's 50th anniversary party at the New York State Armory was like a scene from a 1930s MGM musical, including a giant cake with dancing Bunnies, Femlin cocktail waitresses, VIP areas inspired by the Big Bunny and, of course, a dance-floor grotto. (1) Hef toasting the crowd with Pam Anderson and Playmates. (2) Lara Flynn Boyle. (3) Steven Van Zandt, Christie's husband Billy Marovitz, Christie and Hef. (4) Shannon Stewart and *Sex and the City's* Jason Lewis. (5) Patricia Hearst and her husband Bernard Shaw. (6) Nicole Wood and *Queer Eye's* Carson Kressley. (7) PLAYBOY's artist-in-residence LeRoy Neiman. (8) John Rocker. (9) Ford models. (10) Donald Trump and Melania Knauss. (11) Dale Earnhardt Jr. (12) Helen Gurley Brown, who credits Hef with helping her turn *Cosmo* into a women's version of PLAYBOY. (13) Irv Gotti and Ja Rule. (14) Colleen Shannon. (15) Dr. Ruth with the Donald and Hef's girlfriends Zoe, Izabella and Sheila. (16) Playmate Jet Bunnies. (17) Ashanti and Pam, who came out of the cake singing "Happy Birthday" to Mr. Playboy.



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As the official lighter of the Playboy 50th Anniversary Club Tour, we have the inside on tickets. Register to win a pair at zippo.com.

PLAYMATE OF THE HALF CENTURY

Not only is your 50th Anniversary Playmate, Colleen Shannon, gorgeous, she's also a DJ (January). I'd love nothing more than to be on the dance floor when she spins tunes.

Kyle Tamminen
Thunder Bay, Ontario

Colleen got her great looks from her mother, Jane, who was Miss El Dorado County, California in 1960. Jane was the only girl I dated in high school, and we've kept in touch all these years. With a mother like Jane and an opportunity



Colleen Shannon spins heads—ond tunes.

like being the 50th Anniversary Playmate, Colleen has a fantastic future.

Lloyd McCullar
Houston, Texas

MAILER ON BUSH

Norman Mailer (*Immodest Proposals*, January) has the guts and the wisdom to express what so many of us feel. Bush has wrecked our lives. Norman, will you run for president?

Joe White
New York, New York

CENTERFOLD EXTRAORDINAIRE

I've never forgotten my first glimpse of a Centerfold, but it was so great to see her again—Miss August 1982, Cathy St. George. Seeing her in that gold frilly top, holding a paintbrush brought back such fond memories.

Brett Kenschaft
Denver, Colorado

Your centerfold of covers and Playmates (January) reminded me of where I've been every month since 1960. I

started reading PLAYBOY when I found the gardener's stash at the officer's club on Williams Air Force Base in Arizona. Since then I have read PLAYBOY and its great authors wherever I've been stationed across the globe.

Jim Goddard
Tampa, Florida

Looking at your Playmates was bittersweet. I was born in March 1955, the only month in which PLAYBOY didn't publish an issue. To make up for it, you should consider having two Playmates in an upcoming issue. It would make a lot of March 1955 fellas besides me quite happy.

Peter Kernast
Trenton, New Jersey

STATISTICS 101

You provide us with Playmates who are record holders in such categories as tallest and shortest (*Raw Data*, January). But many winners posed prior to 1977, which is the year you actually began publishing Playmate Data Sheets. How did you find out this information?

Greg Johnson
Rockford, Illinois

Playmates always filled out Data Sheets. A few years ago, one editor spent a weekend locked in our photo library, where we preserve Data Sheets for future historians. (We had to send security to get him out.) He compiled the Playmate data, which you can find online in our Cyber Club.

You state that only eight men have appeared on your cover. I hope the Rabbit has fired his agent for not being included in this statistic.

Bert Maynard
Cobourg, Ontario

Our Rabbit wears a smoking jacket and sips a martini, but the women will still tell you he's an animal.

PARTY PALACE

Hef's original concept of a bachelor pad was swank in execution yet boyish in detail and struck a fantasy chord with men everywhere (*The New Playboy Bachelor Pad*, January). The idea is to create a space where a woman might want to go beyond her traditional boundaries. So tell me, how's a guy supposed to get laid on a corrugated-cardboard couch?

Joby Grow
Coatesville, Pennsylvania

Sexiness is in the eye of the beholder. The couch is quite comfortable.

JUST JACK

I loved the Jack Nicholson interview (January). Because he is one of the

world's greatest actors, he was the perfect interview subject for your 50th anniversary issue.

Robert Knight
Los Angeles, California

RATED XXX

In your directors' fantasy portfolio, Kevin Smith gives us the image we have been waiting for since Superman and Lois Lane's saga began (*Lights, Camera, Fantasy*, January). Including his extraordinarily beautiful wife in the shoot shows he's a talented artist and one hell of a lucky gentleman.

Jim Watters
Toronto, Ontario

In his re-creation of *Scarface*, Brett Ratner makes the model look like Michelle Pfeiffer. Is she Miss February 2001, Lauren Michelle Hill, in a wig?

Guy Blake
Kingston, New York

You have quite an eye for a guy, Guy. That is indeed Lauren Michelle Hill.

HUNTER AIMS AND FIRES

My generation doesn't seem to have the spunk that Hunter S. Thompson's had (*Fear and Justice in the Kingdom of Sex*, January). The optimism and activism of the 1960s were finished off by the 30th anniversary of the Woodstock festival, starting with brazen corporate sponsorship and ending with arson and rape. What can you expect from a gen-



Hunter S. Thompson fears the future.

eration raised under Reagan and Bush? We're a group that worships rock stars who, instead of trying to change the world, try to sell us soda and sneakers. Our parents did acid and smoked weed to expand their minds and then fed us Ritalin and MTV to dull ours.

Brandon Haskins
Los Angeles, California

Don't worry, Hunter. Liberalism isn't



Get all
jazzed up
with
Newport
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WARNING: Cigarette Smoke
Contains Carbon Monoxide.

dead. You've helped keep it alive. But don't say Bush is like Nixon. The Republicanism of today isn't the boys' club of yesterday. It's less stodgy and ultraconservative.

Kevin and Susan Harty
East Haven, Connecticut

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US

PLAYBOY isn't allowed in Iraq, so my cat must have knocked your 50th an-



Soldiers in Iraq go on R&R with PLAYBOY.

niversary issue off the table and into the Christmas package I sent to my cousin, who is a serviceman there. It was one of the best gifts he and his unit received.

Al Ochsner
Geneva, Illinois

Our sincere thanks for 50 years of beautiful women, funny cartoons, great fiction, provocative editorials and insightful interviews.

Callahan family
Kansas City, Kansas

I picked up PLAYBOY's sixth anniversary issue in 1959. In it, Hef states that he didn't know how long the magazine would last. On your 25th anniversary, I sent him a note saying, "The fact that you are reading this indicates your success." I'm still a subscriber!

Raul daSilva
Hamden, Connecticut

As a young girl I saw my dad's copies of PLAYBOY. The women in your magazine have always been an inspiration to me. During my senior year of high school my best friend and I dressed up as Playboy Bunnies and won a contest. PLAYBOY taught me that sensuality is more than skin deep, and this lesson has helped me stay happily married.

Chris Holmes
Harlan, Indiana

I'm a gay man, and my friends are always surprised to see your magazine on my coffee table. As a teenager I came across PLAYBOYS that were half buried under some leaves near my house. I spent hours reading them

because then, as now, PLAYBOY supplied thoughtful writers who provided insight into politics, culture, music and the mystique of women.

J. Todd Settle
Seattle, Washington

Your 50th anniversary issue was one of the best. I'm a good judge, because I'm one of the 1,452 lifetime subscribers and have been since 1963. PLAYBOY is among my best investments.

Dr. Ernst Fasan
Neunkirchen, Austria

REVOLUTIONARY GADGETS

I think you made an error in *50 Products That Changed the World* (January). You show a photo of the Pontiac GTO from 1965, not 1964. It doesn't really matter, though, because both years' models are hot cars.

George Matula
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

We have punished the photo researcher responsible for this error by making him wax all our Hyundais.

You say that Pop-Tarts were the first toaster-ready anything. What about frozen waffles?

Marc Levine
Asheville, North Carolina

You got us: Frozen waffles did come first.

CELEBRITY PICTORIALS

The fact that such women as Farrah Fawcett, Nancy Sinatra, Carmen Electra



Nominated for best celebrity pictorial.

and Belinda Carlisle have posed for you (*Golden Memories*, January) speaks well of PLAYBOY's reputation as a class-act magazine.

Mike Cosentino
Chicago, Illinois

I'm 28, and it's great to see some of the fine celebrity pictorials I missed, such as Joan Collins and Bo Derek.

Eric Arledge
Saint Simons Island, Georgia



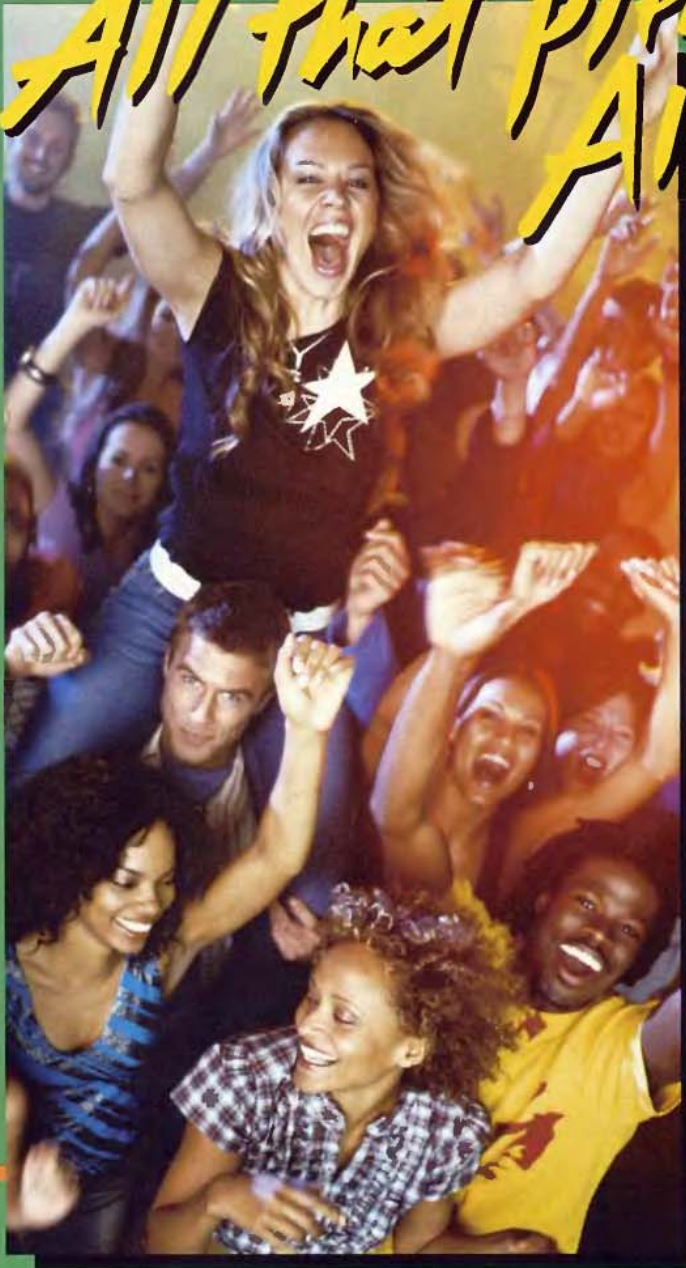
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babe of the month

Allison Dunbar

Another reason the new *Sopranos* was worth the wait

Bada-bing indeed. *The Sopranos* has always found fresh lookers for Tony's wandering eye, and in several new episodes Allison Dunbar handles that chore as the wife of a Miami crime boss. "It's the whole mob life," Allison says. "White pumps, lots of hair. She's classic." She's also a far cry from the actress herself, who grew up in mobster-light Delaware. "When I got the audition I thought, Oh god, what do I do? I ran over to my friend's house in New Jersey. She whipped out gold necklaces

"I pulled into a gas station and heard catcalls and 'How much, honey?'"

and a leopard-print bra, and I made my hair really big. And it worked." Getting into character can lead to awkward moments, however, especially if you played a porn star on Comedy Central's *Strip Mall*. "For that audition I hemmed up a dress to about eight inches. When I pulled into a gas station I was hearing catcalls and 'How much, honey?'" Obviously those wolves didn't know that Allison is married to Boston Bruins defenseman Sean O'Donnell, who made one recent Miami trip memorable. "We were in a store," Allison says, "and they had decks of cards with pictures of naked guys. So at the hotel at two A.M., we slipped one under each suite door. That's when I realized I'm with the right guy."



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TELEVISION

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barometer

IT'S APRIL AND...



...you're sucked in by the *Masters* (April 5 to 11). Drama at Amen Corner. Jim Nantz babbling feel-good homilies as the cameras ogle a Swedish ex-nanny. And then pomp galore at twilight, when a grown man named Hootie swaddles the victor in a hideous green jacket.

...you're free at last, free at last! For the average wage-earning American, April 16 is Tax Freedom Day, when your year-to-date 2004 income finally surpasses what you'll fork over to Uncle Sam come tax day 2005. Good thing you haven't spent any of it yet.



...though you generally avoid poisonous reptiles, you might jump into the pit at the Rattlesnake Derby in Mangum, Oklahoma (April 23 to 25). The fang festival celebrates pros (not you) who haul in truckloads of live rattlers, as well as amateurs (you) foolish enough to chase anything with a twitchy tail.

...you won't be winning the Pulitzer Prize—again. These things have a way of sneaking up. Your entry was due in February, the short list came out in March, and you'd be big news now if you'd won. There's always the Nobel—hope you did the paperwork in January.



...you're awed by nature's fury. April racks up more tornado deaths than any other month. You're most likely to play twister if you live in Tornado Alley, a flat swath that blankets Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and northern Texas. Time to ditch the trailer park, Toto.

aural pleasure

DUB THROAT
DIRTY TALK GETS COMPETITIVE WITH PORNO KARAOKE

Amplified moans, squeals and who's-your-daddys spill from the basement at New York City's Remote Lounge. Is this a cocktail bar or a way-off-Broadway production of *Caligula*? Both—it's the weekly Porno Karaoke party, and it's the hottest German export this side of Heidi Klum. Contestants, in pairs or threesomes, take turns on a small stage in front of a screen. As a soundless clip from a decidedly unsoft masterpiece of adult cinema plays, the team does its best to provide fresh dialogue and primal screams—anything to make the crowd laugh. Whether it's a female contestant's response to a delivery boy's package ("Is that all you got?") or a guy's reaction when confronted with vintage-porn bush ("I wish I'd brought a hedge clipper"), most amateurs reveal a surprising command of porn conventions. "Once it starts, everyone either stares and laughs hysterically or silently peeks through their fingers," says bartender Leyna N'Vietson. The karaoke is totally improvised—dubbers don't know what scene they'll get until they take the stage. "I like to mix the old and new," says Abby Ehmann, who took over as event promoter in January. "I'll go from *The Devil in Miss Jones* to *American Bukkake 21*." The crowd picks the winners. The key is how many people crave a cigarette after a girl's Meg Ryan-style orgasm. Because even if the performance is fake, it's still ad-libbed for your pleasure.

bar code

FIREWATER
EXTINGUISH YOUR THIRST,
SPEAKEASY STYLE

During prohibition, cocktail makers went to great lengths to disguise tools of their trade. One popular shaker was modeled after a fire extinguisher, often placed in speakeasy windows to tip off tippers. The fire extinguisher cocktail shaker from Authentic Models honors such innovation. In case of emergency (or not), load with ice and hooch, then pour out the nozzle. Alarmingly good.



body of knowledge

SLEEPING BEAUTIES

WHAT CAN HER SLUMBER STYLE TELL YOU? OUR SLEEP EXPERT ASSUMES THE POSITIONS

There she lies, the lucky lass with whom you've just shared a first night of passion. She's sound asleep, but she's far from a closed book. According to Brit psychologist Chris Idzikowski, there are six basic sleeping positions, and your mate's sprawl can say a lot about her personality.



THE FETUS (41%)

Odds are she was a tad tame—this time. "A fetal is shy and takes a while to open up," says Idzikowski. "But she is likely to be much more exploratory and innovative as the relationship proceeds." So keep the whip and the trapeze under your mattress until later—if there is a later. Turns out these shy fetals can also be "the most demanding group."



THE LOG (15%)

A good time was had by all. "She's easygoing, social and extremely trusting, so odds are good she'll have sex on the first date. She can be abstract in her thinking, so the potential for sexual innovation is much greater with her than with women from the other groups. However, that also means she can fake things pretty well, too." We'll take that risk.



THE YEARNER (13%)

It wasn't your debonair manner—if you bedded a yearner it's because there was something in it for her. "They're suspicious, so she's not likely to believe pickup lines. But because yearners are also the most rational, if the benefits of any particular options are explained, and they're reasonable, then she may come around." Yes, he's talking about sex.



THE SOLDIER (8%)

Wherever you found her, it wasn't in a bar. "Soldiers don't like noisy environments. You're talking about countryside ramblers here." Think twice before making a soldier your girlfriend: "They have high standards, so she could be quite tough in terms of what she demands of herself and a partner." Hey, maybe she'll make us drop and give her some push-ups.



THE FREE-FALLER (7%)

We hope you like sleeping on eggshells. "You have to be careful what you say to a free-faller or you're going to hurt her. They're quite sensitive." The good news is that she won't wake up expecting to be your girlfriend. "Because she's the most likely to be hurt, a free-faller is also the most likely to want to break away rather than hang on." See you next fall, doll.



THE STARFISH (5%)

You had a need, and she was there for you. "A starfish is a social empath. She's ready to help, and she can be quite accommodating sexually. She's most likely to go for a one-night stand, especially when someone is desperate." What could be better than scoring a starfish? Scoring two of them. "She's also the most likely to be bisexual."

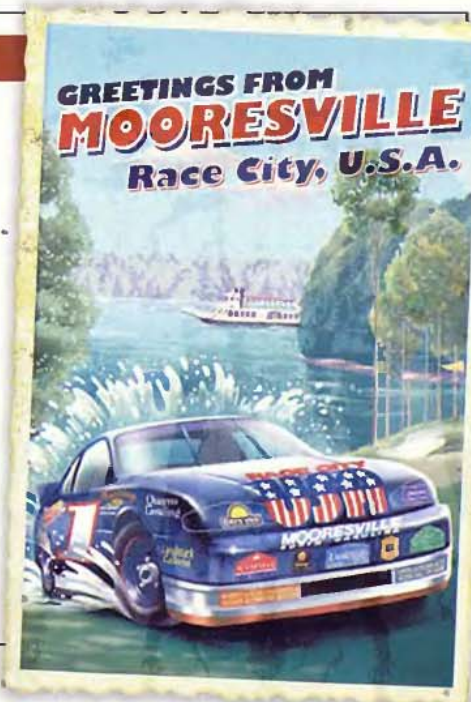
speed traps

SPIN CITY

FOR NASCAR FANS, MOORESVILLE IS THE ULTIMATE PIT STOP

Movie lovers make their pilgrimage to Hollywood. Elvis fans have Graceland. But where can a Nascar junkie go to kneel before Dale Earnhardt's black number three Chevy? Try Mooresville, North Carolina, also known as Race City USA. The motorhead mecca has a population of just 19,000 but is home to 50 Nascar teams as well as the palatial Garage Mahal, headquarters of Dale Earnhardt Inc. Mooresville's streets have names (Performance Road, Speedway Drive) that beg you to break the speed limit. The walls of local businesses are festooned with dented fenders, signed

photos and racing, um, art. Big Daddy's Restaurant sports four stock cars on its roof, and the local college is the Nascar Technical Institute (courses include ADTN142: Chassis Applications and ADTC107: Brakes). "People want to see where the cars are built," says Trisha Fuller, who runs Race Shop Tours. "So we do 23 teams in a seven-hour tour." Fans mingle with pit crews and drivers at the shops—and on the streets. "I bump into Michael Waltrip and Jeff Gordon all the time," says Fuller. "And I see Jimmy Spencer at Home Depot." Cutting her off at the register, no doubt.

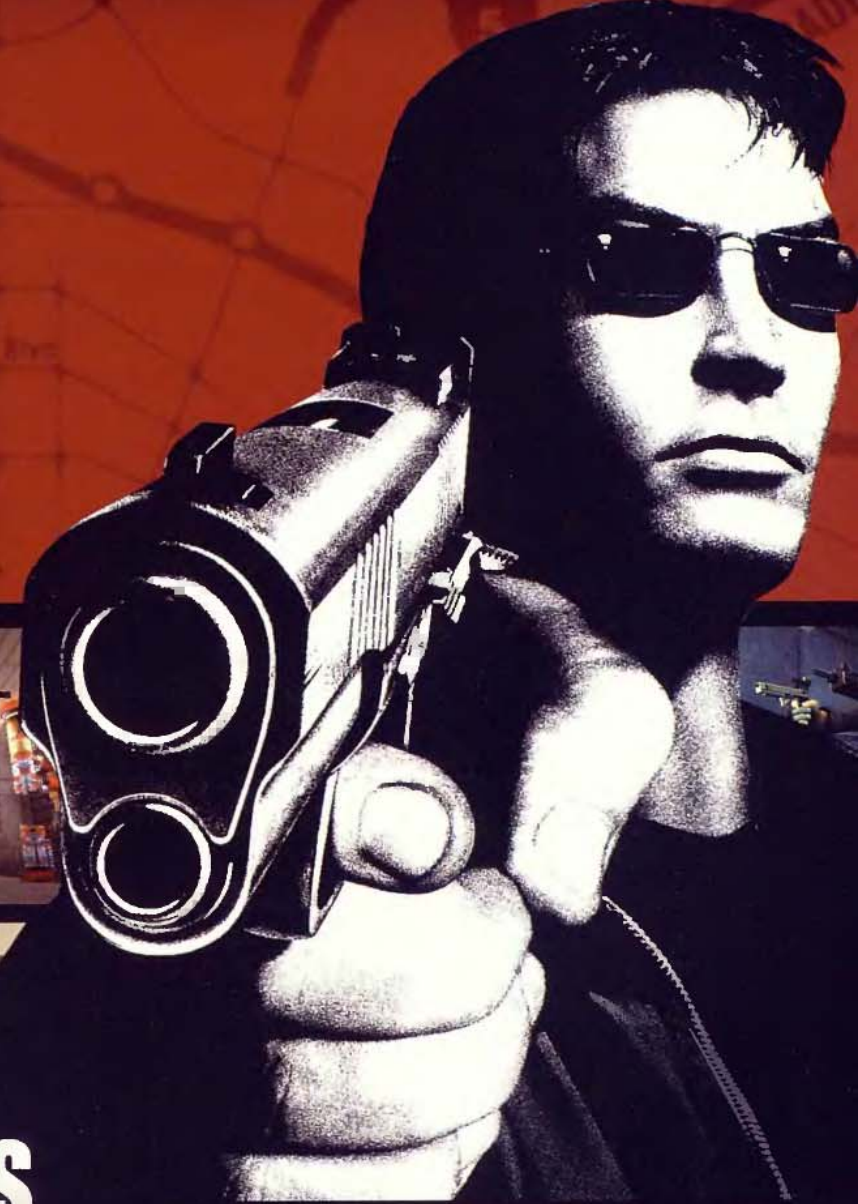


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PlayStation 2



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*Nintendo GameCube game contains fewer songs.

eureka!

FORBIDDEN INVENTIONS

FROM THE BANNED TO THE ILLEGAL, FIVE NEW GIZMOS YOU'VE JUST GOT TO HAVE—BUT CAN'T YET



Knee Defender: Maddened by coach-class crunch, six-foot-three D.C. lawyer Ira Goldman developed a pair of wedges that prevents the seat of the jackass passenger in front of you from reclining. Northwest, Delta and Virgin Atlantic have banned the device. Other airlines suggest that passengers resolve their spatial conflicts by talking. Yeah, right. (kneedefender.com)

Photoblocker: Got the need to speed, Bandit? This spray for your license plate appears clear to human eyes but reflects light from flashbulbs with a vengeance—speed-trap cameras may get a great shot of your car, but the license plate will show up as a white smudge. Of course, defacing plates is a no-no, and officials say using Photoblocker counts as defacement. (phantomplate.com)



Cell phone jammers: When President Bush visited London, Secret Service agents allegedly packed jammers—which can create a no-call bubble for up to 40 feet—to stop terrorists from detonating bombs remotely. Better uses include preventing mobile yappers from ruining your romantic dinner at Red Lobster. Illegal? In the U.S., but not in the U.K. (globalgadgetuk.com)

Whizzinator: If you have to take a drug test and your piss is too toxic for the cranberry juice cure, you can try this strap-on dong that dispenses warm, untainted urine into the vial of your choice (good for prisoners, whose tests may require a witness). The equipment may not be illegal, but most states have policies against fraudulent drug tests. (thewhizzinator.com)



Mobile infrared transmitters: Some ambulances, police cruisers and fire engines carry MIRTs—gizmos that can flip stoplights from red to green at a distance of 1,500 feet—to race through intersections. Prove you're a cop or mortician and you too can own one. But you're not supposed to—many states are working on MIRT-regulating legislation. (themirt.com)

crowd teasers

WE WILL SHOCK YOU!

Put away the “We’re #1” foam fingers—odds are your team isn’t number one. Instead, use the Big Shocker to warn opponents they’ll be getting more than they bargained for. It’s cheekily modeled after a popular (and fun!) sex trick in which you stimulate your girl’s front bits with your index and middle fingers while your pinkie surreptitiously fiddles at her rear. Whether you hear her shrieks of surprise or the roar of the crowd, the proof’s in the probing: Noaring beats a come-from-behind win.



employee of the month



EASY DOZE IT

OHIO EXCAVATOR BECKY SEABECK MAKES THE EARTH MOVE

PLAYBOY: Tell us about your job.

BECKY: I’m an office administrator for an Ohio excavating company. I spend about half my time in the office. The other half I’m at the sites, getting parts for the bulldozers, picking up permits or dropping off blueprints.

PLAYBOY: Do the guys at the sites whistle?

BECKY: They tease me about my G-string sticking out of my jeans. I think they like it, though.

PLAYBOY: What’s your favorite machinery?

BECKY: Definitely the bulldozer, because it weighs the most—42,000 pounds. There’s something about a big piece of equipment that turns me on, I guess.

PLAYBOY: Ever act on that?

BECKY: The guys say they know how to handle heavy equipment. But I can handle it better.

PLAYBOY: Is that a double entendre?

BECKY: I’ve gotten dirty on bulldozers once or twice.



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.

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R A W D A T A

SIGNIFICA, INSIGNIFICA, STATS AND FACTS



Market Penetration

The U.S. pornographic film industry releases **211** new hard-core titles each week—one every **48 minutes**.

Ozone Diet

A gas-powered Weedwacker produces about as much ozone pollution as a car traveling **70 mph**. A chain saw produces as much as a car going **200 mph**.

Foreign Legions

Nearly **11%** of illegal immigrants apprehended crossing the Laredo, Texas border in 2003 were not Mexicans—twice the percentage of non-Mexican alien encounters in 2002.

Hot Wheels

According to an Institute for Highway Safety survey, the most stolen car is the Cadillac Escalade, with **10** theft claims filed for every **1,000** cars.



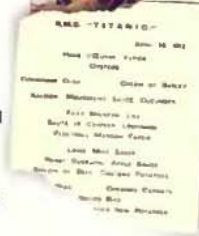
Frying Nemo

22 lbs. 4 oz.—Weight of the largest bass caught on record, way back in 1932. Today the Big Bass Record Club offers a bounty of **\$8 million** to the fisherman who breaks the record.

Price Check

Bottom Feeders \$49,500

Price paid at an auction for a dinner menu from the *Titanic*, believed to have been left at the dock by the ship's second officer.



Bridget Jones, Liar

94% of British women admit to lying: **55%** have lied to flatter their man, **50%** fake orgasms, and **17%** have cheated on their long-term partner. And if that weren't enough of a kick in the knickers, **53%** wouldn't tell their partner that a baby from an affair wasn't his.



Grim Reapers

According to a Forbes.com list, the dead celebrities who earned the most money in 2003:



The Bottom Five

Least Valuable Currency

Principal units of foreign currency worth the least American dough (as a point of comparison, the Kuwaiti dinar is the most valuable denomination, snagging a cool \$3.33 per U.S. dollar at the end of 2003):

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 210. Vietnamese dong | 1/15,326 U.S. dollar |
| 211. Mozambique metical | 1/23,678 U.S. dollar |
| 212. Ecuadorean sucre | 1/25,000 U.S. dollar |
| 213. Romanian leu | 1/33,055 U.S. dollar |
| 214. Turkish lira | 1/1,225,590 U.S. dollar |



Afghani Stash

Net worth of opium exported by Afghanistan in 2002:

\$1.2 billion

Approximate amount of international aid received by Afghanistan in 2002:

\$1.2 billion

Afghanistan supplies more than **75%** of the world's opium and gets more than half its gross domestic product from its sale.

**YOU'RE NOT GETTING A BONUS.
THEN AGAIN, YOU'RE NOT GETTING TRADED FOR CANDY BARS AND SMOKES.**

AFTER 8 HOURS, LIFE ON THE OUTSIDE LOOKS PRETTY GOOD.
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"Mmm, chamomile and mescal—very nice."

movie of the month

[THE LADYKILLERS]

Tom Hanks and the Coen brothers try to kill a senior citizen—for laughs

Mississippi was the setting of the Coen brothers' biggest movie, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, so it's not too surprising that the auteurs returned to its fertile soil for their remake of *The Ladykillers*, the 1955 British comedy about a gang's attempts to snuff their snoopy landlady while plotting a heist. What is a shock is seeing Hanks, as the gang's leader, costumed like Colonel Sanders and drawing through buck teeth. "Well, Hanks isn't speaking to us anymore," says Joel Coen. "Actually, though he's probably the biggest star we've ever worked with, it felt comfortable and comparable to people we've worked with for years." If you don't think the Coens would delve into the details of a choreographed caper, you're right. "In the original, the crooks held up an armored car, but that happened in five minutes," says Ethan Coen, "and in ours they hold up a casino, but that's not dwelled on either." Which leaves room for Coen-esque touches such as a gospel choirmaster with a James Brown do and an Asian criminal mastermind known as the General. So with a trouble-free production and megastar Hanks, are the Coens counting on an *O Brother*-style hit? Deadpans Joel, "Nope, I've never felt that." Hmm, maybe Hanks should plot the publicity, too. (March 26) —*Stephen Rebell*

"Well, Hanks isn't speaking to us anymore," says Joel.

now showing

BUZZ

Jersey Girl

(Ben Affleck, Jennifer Lopez, Liv Tyler) Good news, Bennifer lovers: They're back. Better news, Bennifer haters: J. Lo dies, early. Foulmouthed filmmaker Kevin Smith's stab at "family friendly" has Affleck doing the single-parent thing with their daughter, a tyke obsessed with the musical *Sweeney Todd*.

Our call: Ever wondered what *Chasing Amy* crossed with *Love Story* might be like? Neither have we. But just as in real life, we can be persuaded to go to *Jersey* for a laugh.



Scooby-Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed

(Sarah Michelle Gellar, Matthew Lillard, Freddie Prinze Jr.) The second flick based on the Saturday-morning cartoon sends those real live meddling kids—and their pixelated pooch—on a mission to unmask the baddie who's letting every creature they've ever faced run rampant.

Our call: You want mysterious? How about the first movie becoming a smash? No one loved it, though, so we're predicting a *Charlie's Angels*-style letdown for an equally uninspired sequel.



Hellboy

(Ron Perlman, Selma Blair, Doug Jones, John Hurt) Not a Michael Jackson bio but a big-screen spin on the cult graphic novel, which teams three freaks—a do-gooder spawn of Satan (Perlman, under thick red latex), a fire starter (Blair) and a mysterious amphibian (Jones)—to combat an evil genius.

Our call: *Blade II* director Guillermo del Toro's dream project promises geek nirvana, so there will be hell to pay if this is more *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* than *X-Men*.



Walking Tall

(Dwayne "the Rock" Johnson, Johnny Knoxville, Ashley Scott) "Inspired" by the tale of lawman Buford Pusser—already chronicled in 1970s drive-in classics—this remake features an ex-soldier who decides to clean up his drug-and-hooker-infested hometown. Eyebrow arching and bone crunching ensue.

Our call: Walk, don't run. The original was *High Noon* for red-neck vigilantes and gritty good fun for all. But with this flick's coat of high gloss, expect less big stick, more big shtick.



follywood

[ZOMBIE 101]

Five simple rules for dealing with the reanimated dead

Given the resurrection of the zombie genre, including the new *Dawn of the Dead* remake, it's high time to review lessons learned from movies starring the not quite deceased.

1. AIM FOR THE HEAD Don't waste ammo blowing off zombie limbs—it only pisses them off. But as the farmhouse inhabitants in *Night of the Living Dead* (1968) figure out, a bullet between the eyes forcefully reminds the walking dead that the whole walking thing is inappropriate. **Extra credit:** If you have a flamethrower handy, total immolation does the trick too.

2. IF YOUR BEST FRIEND GETS BITTEN—WASTE HIM! Sure, your buddy covered for you that time at the office. But if you think he's going to be sentimental after he joins the ranks of the living dead, you, like the mall shoppers in the original *Dawn of the Dead* (1978), are not paying attention. **Extra credit:** Recently turned zombies possess better motor skills, so it's easier for them to get the jump on you.

3. STICK TO OPEN GROUND When graveyards start spilling their inhabitants, your first instinct is to bolt the doors and turn on *SportsCenter*. Once one zombie climbs your porch, however, like Jehovah's Witnesses, more and more keep coming. They're dead—they've got nothing better to do. **Extra credit:** The undead don't drive, so the getaway taxi in *28 Days Later* (2003) was a swell idea. But we recommend a zombie-squashing SUV.

4. USE YOUR BRAIN BEFORE THEY DO Dying gives even former Mensa members a serious IQ down-

grade. Zombie vocabulary is limited to plaintive grunts, and the undead are so preoccupied with gnawing human flesh that a preschooler could mind-fuck them. **Extra credit:** Zombie see, zombie can't do. Dozens watch the commandos in *Resident Evil* (2002) climb to safety on ceiling pipes but can't figure out how the heck they do it.



5. DON'T BE TEMPTED BY THE HOT ZOMBIE CHICK Even if you suspect that a zombette has postmortem potential, resist the urge. Witness the guy who resurrects his girlfriend in *Return of the Living Dead 3* (1993), leading to this romantic interlude: "Julie, are you eating him? You should stop it. I liked you when you were...the way you were before." **Extra credit:** The hungry stare? The licking of the lips? She only wants you for your brain.

art house



Twentynine Palms

Few movies have better captured the intensity of a whacked-out relationship. A photographer and his girlfriend (Russian babe Katia Golubeva) motor around the desert, fighting and fucking, and then fighting and fucking some more, until fate knocks them on their asses. You may wonder what it all means, but you've never seen anything quite like it. —Andrew Johnston

SCORE CARD

Capsule close-ups of current films
by Leonard Maltin

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT Can Ashton Kutcher cut it as a dramatic actor? It's hard to judge from this film about a guy who time-travels to fix things that went wrong in his youth. It's too long, too self-serious...and too bad, because the premise is intriguing. ♫

INTERMISSION Colin Farrell plays a street hood in this vivid, funny look at working-class Dubliners whose lives collide while they search for love, vent their anger and engage in crimes that can't pay. Colm Meaney and Shirley Henderson star. ♫

MIRACLE Kurt Russell plays hockey coach Herb Brooks, who knew that to beat the USSR in the 1980 Olympics, America didn't need all-stars—it needed a team that breathed as one. Although the ending is no surprise, the film is irresistible. ♫

OFF THE MAP Joan Allen and Sam Elliott play bohemians who live in the New Mexico boonies with their precocious daughter. All is calm until an IRS investigator turns up. Campbell Scott directs this deft adaptation of Joan Ackermann's play. ♫

PRISONER OF PARADISE This documentary traces the career of Kurt Geron, a German director who wound up making a Nazi propaganda film inside a concentration camp. This was an Oscar nominee last year, finally coming to theaters now. ♫

THE RECKONING Paul Bettany plays a disgraced 14th century priest who hooks up with a troupe of actors. When they arrive at a town beset by a terrible crime, their play takes on added relevance. An uneven but intriguing period piece. ♫

SHAOLIN SOCCER Hong Kong filmmaker Stephen Chow headlines this action comedy—a huge hit in the Far East—about a ragtag soccer team that soars once it adopts martial arts techniques. There's more flubber than kung fu in this likable, silly film. It may work best with a crowd. ♫

WIN A DATE WITH TAD HAMILTON! Kate Bosworth (*Blue Crush*) plays a West Virginia girl who wins a date with a Hollywood heartthrob, little realizing the effect on the hometown boy who has always been in love with her. An attractive cast bolsters this slight but cute comedy. ♫

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

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Daytime Tel. #: (_____) _____ Date of Birth: _____

E-Mail: _____

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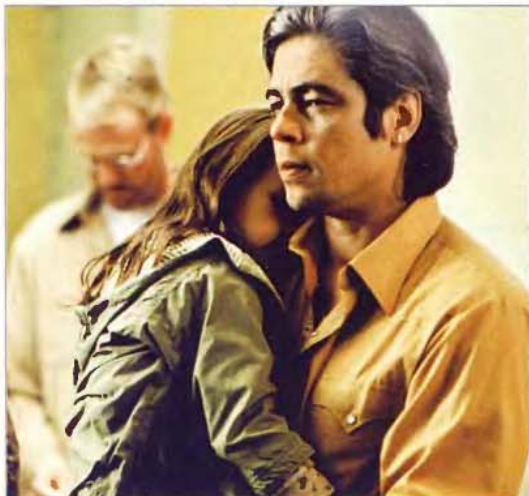
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All entries become the property of the Sponsor and will not be acknowledged or returned. For online entries, you must be the registered subscriber of the email account from which online entry is made. Sweepstakes begins 4/1/04 and ends 6/30/04. **PRIZE:** (1) Grand Prize: a four-day, three-night trip for four to Los Angeles, California in the Fall of 2004. Exact dates of the trip are to be determined at the sole discretion of the Sponsor and will be final. (2) Grand Prize winner and winner's travel companions cannot travel on the exact dates specified by the Sponsor; the prize will be forfeited and an alternate winner will be selected. Trip includes round trip coach airfare from major airport nearest winner's residence to Los Angeles; three nights hotel accommodations (double occupancy) in Los Angeles; admission for four to a party at the Playboy Mansion; VIP admission to nightclub at Sponsor's choosing in Los Angeles; and \$1,000 in spending money. A/V \$7,500. All taxes and any expenses not expressly specified and described herein in connection with the above prize are the sole responsibility of the winner and winner's travel companions. **SELECTION OF WINNER.** Winner will be selected in a random drawing conducted on or about 7/7/04 from all eligible entries received. Drawing will be conducted by an independent judging organization whose decisions are final in all matters relating to the sweepstakes. Grand Prize winner will be notified by mail or phone, and will be required to sign and return an affidavit of eligibility and liability/publicity release within seven days of notification if winner cannot be notified within five days after the closing, or if affidavit of eligibility and liability/publicity release is not received within seven days of notification, as in the event of non-compliance with these official rules, the prize will be forfeited, and an alternate winner will be selected at random from the remaining eligible entries. Each travel companion must complete a liability/publicity release. Grand Prize winner and travel companions must be able to travel to Los Angeles, California on the dates specified by the Sponsor. In the event of non-compliance with each of these requirements, Grand Prize will be forfeited and an alternate winner will be selected. Dates of winings depend on the number of eligible entries received. **GENERAL.** All federal, state and local laws apply. By participating, entrants agree to: (a) these rules and the decisions of the judges which shall be final in all respects in connection with this sweepstakes; and (b) release Sponsor, its employees, agents, parents, subsidiaries, affiliates, advertising and promotion agencies from any and all liability, including without limitation, property damage, personal injury and/or death, resulting from their participation in the sweepstakes or their acceptance, use or misuse of a prize. All federal, state and local taxes on the prize are the sole responsibility of the prize winner. Prize is not redeemable for cash and is not transferable. Sponsor reserves the right to substitute a similar prize of equal or greater value at the Sponsor's sole discretion. Except where prohibited, acceptance of a prize constitutes winner's and travel companions' consent to use of their name, image, likeness, voice, and biographical data for advertising and promotional purposes without additional compensation. **WINNER LIST.** For the name of the prize winner, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Rock the Mansion Winner List, P.O. Box 1368, Maryland Heights, MD, 63043. Requests must be postmarked by 7/7/04 and received by 7/14/04.

dvd of the month

[21 GRAMS]

Don't let the lightweight title fool you. This is heavy stuff

Sean Penn, Naomi Watts and Benicio Del Toro act themselves to shreds in *21 Grams*, portraying three people brought together by a tragic accident. It's harrowing, but it's a good harrowing. Del Toro, an ex-con turned born-again Christian, plows into and kills Watts's family, sending the reformed party girl spiraling back into cocaine abuse. It so happens that cardiac patient Penn gets her husband's donated heart—and a guilt complex to go with it—which sets more drama in motion. Director Alejandro González Iñárritu (*Amores Perros*) tells the story *Memento*-style, bouncing around in time as Penn seeks out his ticker's widow, beds her and goes gunning for Del Toro. If *Memento*'s narrative device drove you nuts, this may not be your cup of tea, though it feels less gimmicky here. **Extras:** The title refers to the weight a human body reportedly loses passing from life to death; it could also describe the bonus material—a lone making-of feature.



★★★ —Gregory P. Fagan

THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS (2003) We now know that the first *Matrix* movie was “the One” and its follow-ups merely watchable but false prophets of a new sci-fi religion. In this final installment of the trilogy, all the theosophical mumbo jumbo and balletic bullet spraying come down to another knock-down-drag-out between Neo (Keanu Reeves) and Agent Smith (Hugo Weaving). Fans who expected more have a right to carp, but there are things here to recommend: massive CGI battles against tenta-

cles, Carrie-Anne Moss in latex, even Jesus and the Wizard of Oz, sort of. **Extras:** Half a dozen featurettes demystify the effects, but the writer-director Wachowski brothers must be saving their holy commentary—and an explanation of the ending—for a special edition.



★★ —G.F.

THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE (2003) Why remake the splatterific 1974 classic, loosely based on real serial killer Ed Gein? Because just as teenagers in horror flicks have never needed a reason to poke around in spooky old houses, young moviegoers don't require originality to seek out the latest slice-and-dice jolt. The retooled Leatherface carves up a high body count with his trusty implement, though star Jessica Biel's most persistent enemy seems to be the T-shirt-shrinking rain. Both thrills are surprisingly visceral. **Extras:** The basic version is bare-bones, but the collector's edition delivers deleted scenes, a Gein documentary and a metal Leatherface plaque. ★★★



—Robert B. DeSalvo

THE CAT IN THE HAT (2003) You'd think critics were hot-wired to Dr. Seuss's crypt the way they tore into this kid-lit adaptation featuring Mike Myers as the titular tabby from hell who “helps” two kids trash the house while Mom is away. Yes, there's something positively un-Seussian about the hep cat pointing to a flaming toilet and joking, “That really burns my ass.” But if you're 10, or if you're chaperoning a roomful of 10-year-olds, the line *kills*. Maybe the frenetic pace and garish sets would've gone down easier without the even more garish merchandising blitz. **Extras:** This kitty is littered—the collection of featurettes, deleted scenes and outtakes runs longer than the 82-minute flick. ★★★½ —G.F.



sleaze frame

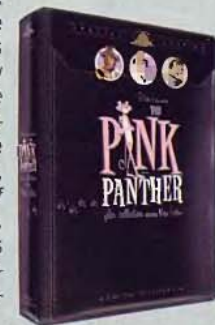


Just in case the recent transformation of **Charlize Theron** into a hulking, splotchy serial killer in the critically acclaimed film *Monster* is a bit too convincing, we offer this reassuring flashback. In the *Pulp Fiction*-ish crime tale *2 Days in the Valley* (1996), a creamy, lithe Charlize is no less wicked and every bit the man killer as her assassin boyfriend, James Spader, spices up their foreplay with a game of snip the lingerie. So while we certainly congratulate Charlize on her latest acting triumph, it's nice to know we'll always have the Valley.

the library

THE PINK PANTHER COLLECTION

You've been pink'd! The crime-fighting comedy of bumbling Inspector Clouseau isn't for everyone, but if you admire the way Peter Sellers made slapstick seem sublimely sophisticated, you'll covet this deluxe set. The six discs contain five films, though it's felonious that they include *Trail of the Pink Panther*, a cut-and-paste job done after Sellers died, and not *Return of the Pink Panther*. Nice bonus features make up for it, including six sly Panther cartoons.



cd of the month

[VINES * WINNING DAYS]

Are the garage rockers growing or just hanging around?



At the end of the Vines' first (and possibly last) gig on the *Late Show*, frontman Craig Nicholls hurled his body into a drum kit and left David Letterman stammering, "Is he all right?" Like anything with the Vines, the spectacle was remarkable and contrived: a bit of *The Kids Are Alright* and a dash of Nirvana, delivered with no apologies. On their second album, the Australian garage rockers continue to pluck cues and chords from the playbooks of their heroes—and occasionally one-up them. "Rainfall" jangles like a hit from Oasis's better days, while "Animal Machine" screams Nirvana, from the slippery guitar riff to the bombastic chorus. But the group's versatility may be its own worst enemy: As *Winning Days* powers on, we can't help wondering if this is a multitalented band or just a tribute to the past 10 years of alternative rock. (Capitol) **★★½** —Jason Buhrmester

ANDREUS • Street Troubadour

Most neo-soul is neither neo nor soul, relying too much on the gentle sounds of Stevie Wonder and Donny Hathaway. Andreus has a great idea: Revive the socially conscious funk of Curtis Mayfield. Not brilliant commercially, perhaps—Andreus had to go to Europe to catch a break—but amid the wah-wah guitar and piano are songs of real talent. Sometimes even the derivative can show inspiration. (Lightyear) **★★★** —Leopold Froehlich



ALANIS MORISSETTE • So-Called Chaos

It's been nearly a decade since Canada's then-mermaid-tressed chanteuse wailed in "You Oughta Know" about going down on her ex in a theater, and though she's still intent on questioning the world, these days she does it over whirling dance loops and midtempo guitars. Unfortunately, as she's mellowed she's lost her edge, culminating here in the saccharine love song "Knees of My Bees." Could we interest you in another movie date, Alanis? (Maverick) **★★** —Alison Prato



ZERO 7 • When It Falls

Go ahead—lump Zero 7 in with the host of young bands content to mimic Air's gentle keyboard sounds, slow head-bobbing beats and hushed atmospherics. Zero 7 floats above the crowd. Although *When It Falls* offers the female-friendly, by-the-fireplace seductiveness of Sade, potential cheesiness is offset with hip, cinematic downbeats reminiscent of early Massive Attack or Morcheeba. And that makes Zero a hero. (Quango/Palm) **★★★** —Tim Mohr



GHOSTFACE KILLAH

Pretty Toney

While it seems that most of Wu-Tang Clan has gone underground, the Killah is hanging out on a stoop and keeping the home fires burning. Vintage grooves from groups like the Delfonics and the Moments provide tracks for trading rhymes with Missy Elliott and Trife. But the hardcore cuts prove that even when you take the man out of the Wu, you can't take the Wu out of the man. (Def Jam) **★★★½** —J.B.



phoning it in

[NAME OVER]

Solid proof that not all rock stars are cool

Since the rest of this issue kisses music's big ass, we're taking a moment to ridicule moronic band monikers. And you thought Limp Bizkit was bad.

30 Odd Foot of Grunts—Russell Crowe should stick with what he does best: stinkin'-drunk bar brawling.

Something Corporate—Lost "hip" use of irony after the band signed with a major label. May we suggest Something Better?

Pretty Girls Make Graves—Note to aspiring musicians: A nonsensical name doesn't make you artsy and deep.

Death Cab for Cutie—Still not artsy, still not deep.

Crazy Town—Is that near Trying Too Hardville?

Eve 6—Eves one to five were taken.



Evanescence: A band or your mom's favorite feminine hygiene product?

!!!—Pronounced *chik chik chik* but leaves us wondering, What the fuck?

Spoon—We can't wait for the triple bill with Knife and Fork.

...And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead—Or just AWYKUBTTOD for short.

O-Town—Do you really want to brag about being from Orlando?

A.R.E. Weapons—Nobody C.A.R.E.S. about electroclash.

Bowling for Soup—Must stem from a you-had-to-be-there moment (and we're glad we weren't) involving frat boys and keg stands.

Disturbing Tha Peace—Too cool to look in the dictionary.

Goo Goo Dolls—So wrong we don't know where to begin—and don't get us started on the "music."

Atomic Kitten—Atomic Pussy's uncool sister.

Hoobastank—Put down the bong. Now.

50 Cent—His name's not horrible, but you know what is? White guys like Carson Daly saying "Fiddy."

game of the month

[DRIVER 3]

Hang on—it's going to be a bumpy, bullet-riddled ride

Want to jack cars, engage in high-speed chases and gun down foes, all with the long lead foot of the law on your side? Jump behind the wheel of *Driver 3* (Atari, PS2, Xbox), the good guy to *Grand Theft Auto's* notorious bad boy. You'll go undercover as hero Tanner to take down a gang of car thieves in a deep story that seems inspired by Guy Ritchie's gangster flicks. Your investigation jump-starts reckless car chases through more than 150 miles of highways and city streets in detailed re-creations of Miami, Nice and Istanbul. Slam into any of the 30,000 buildings and your car crumbles realistically. Once it's trashed, ditch the wreck and fire at criminals on foot before snagging another ride from a fleet of 50 vehicles, from mopeds to 18-wheelers. Impressed with a particular two-wheel turn or gut-dropping jump? A film-director function lets you create your own cinematic sequences. Just don't show them in your driver-safety course. **★★★★½** —Peter Suci



FIGHT NIGHT 2004 (EA Sports, PS2, Xbox) The pugilists in most boxing games handle like battleships: Two heavyweights park across from each other and trade blows. *Fight Night* adds a bit of bob and weave through a control system that allows you to swivel your fighter at the hips. The roster of 32 current and legendary boxers (including Muhammad Ali, Joe Frazier and Roy Jones Jr.) provides plenty of action. Now if they'd just add a "Punch Don King" mode. **★★★★** —Jason Buhrmester



CY GIRLS (Konami, PS2) This double-your-covert-pleasure thriller boasts two hot spy heroines, each with her own unique adventure, in a curious dual-disc set. Weapons master Ice and ninja counterpart Aska flit between real and cyber worlds, employing spunky acrobatics and skintight outfits against enemies as they attempt to take down a futuristic evil syndicate. It's sort of like *Charlie's Angels* meets *The Matrix*—with all the derivative plot lines that implies. **★★** —Scott Steinberg



RALLISPORT CHALLENGE 2 (Microsoft, Xbox) Rally racing is like Nascar, except any yahoo with a souped-up Escort can hit the track. That reckless attitude translates perfectly into video game form. This must-have sequel includes more than 40 cars, 90 courses from Australia to the frozen North and, for the first time, online play. Amazing graphics provide plenty of scenery to chew up as you race over mountains, across deserts and through the mud. **★★★★** —John Gaudiosi



UNREAL TOURNAMENT 2004 (Atari, PC) If *Madden* can do it, why not *Unreal*? The latest strategy for shooter games is to release a new version every year with minor updates. This one does offer some substantial additions—45 new maps, redesigned play modes and a variety of vehicles for land, space and air. Less memorable refinements include a meager selection of bonus weapons and a slick new interface. Is it worth the \$40? You bought *Madden*, didn't you? **★★½** —S.S.



sex pixels

[SIMS GET SEXY]

Virtual selves—now less virtuous!

The original *Sims* game let you create a character and lead a virtual life, complete with PG-13 flirting. But what's a people simulator without folks getting their freak on? Here are five ways *The Sims 2* is turning up the heat.

MORE FOREPLAY: Woo potential conquests with "serenades" or "tender kisses" before accessing the Holy Grail of in-game options: the "feel up" command.

SKIN FLICKS: Look out, Paris Hilton, the Sims will be all the rage in amateur porn. Video-capture allows virtual lovers to create "home movies" and distribute them online. Our masterpiece, *Debbie Does the Sims*, is coming soon.

NUDE RAIDER: Exhibitionists can strip their Sims bare. Privates are blurred, but the experience can still be traumatizing, because this time Sims know they're naked.

NAUGHTY IS NICE: Every Sim has a match. New deviant actions such as trash talking and fighting ensure that bad boys and party girls will be drawn together. Count on seeing sparks—and fists—fly.

10-NIGHT STANDS: Sims now have memories, which means they'll be amenable to past lovers. Just remember: Former flings won't appreciate catching you mounting their roommate. —S.S.



wired

Toshiba VM4050 (\$330) You won't use camcorder-equipped cell phones to film *Lawrence of Arabia*, but they're still handy for zapping 15-second video clips (with audio) to your friends to let them know what a wild time you're having in Cannes. The VM4050 includes a video light for dark clubs and a zoom for taking close-up stills of the action. Review your work on the 2.2-inch screen—the biggest and brightest we've seen.



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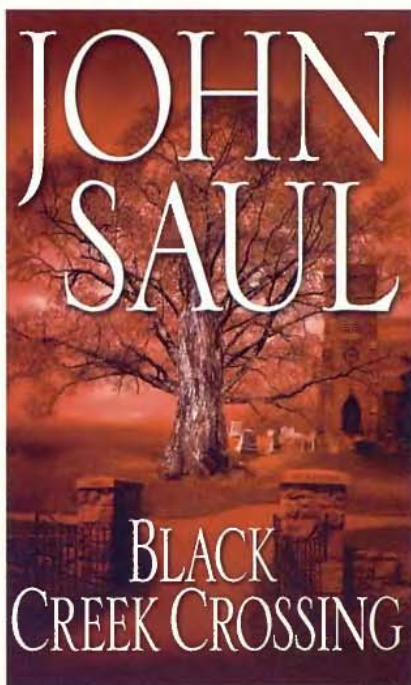
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book of the month

[**BLACK CREEK CROSSING * JOHN SAUL**]

A haunted-house tale gets a bewitching twist

Modern horror thrillers will probably never be included in university canons, but that doesn't mean a hair-raiser isn't worth your time. Saul, who has been penning supernatural best-sellers in Stephen King's shadow since the 1970s, sets his latest tale inside a horror staple—the haunted house. A God-fearing woman, her alcoholic husband and their obese teenage daughter, Angel, move into a home that was the site of a (cue spooky music) familial homicide. Angel has problems: She has visions of the previous tenants, her new classmates ostracize her, a voice inside her father's head encourages him to bed her, and God won't answer Mom's prayers. Fortunately Angel has two friends at her ample backside—a black cat and Seth, another outcast, whom everyone calls Beth. Just when you think you've read it all before in *Carrie*, *Pet Sematary* and *The Shining*, the plot bends toward something we'd title *Revenge of the Witchcraft Nerds*. Even professors like a good scare, don't they? (Ballantine) **★★★** —Patty Lambert



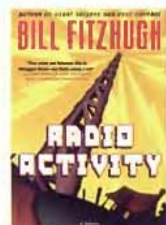
HOW TO HAVE A XXX SEX LIFE: VIVID'S GUIDE TO PASSION AND PLEASURE

They say to write what you know, so Vivid Video's most popular porn stars—Jenna Jameson, Sunrise Adams and a boudoir full of others—have penned this book on modern golf. Just kidding. In chapters such as "Knock on Wood," "Lip Service" and "Shag Tag," these purveyors of the "happiness business" dispense very firsthand advice about everything from money shots to making your own video (all while they plug Vivid products, of course). The self-styled supermodels of porn also wax poetic on waxing: "The cleaner you are, the more desirable you are." Will Paris Hilton be next on the how-to bandwagon? (ReganBooks) **★★** —Alison Prato



RADIO ACTIVITY • Bill Fitzhugh

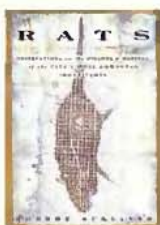
Ever hummed along to your car radio out in the sticks and wondered what life is like for a small-town DJ? In Fitzhugh's satire-mystery, it's full of more intrigue than requests for "Stairway to Heaven." Itinerant jock Rick Shannon's mission in life is to banish that Led Zep classic-rock staple at his new gig in Mississippi—until he becomes interested in the disappearance of his predecessor, Captain Jack. The tape of an incriminating phone conversation sends Rick on an investigation of good ol' boys, beauty queens, blackmail and, eventually, a body in the woods. The plot is somewhat predictable, but the sly depiction of seedy backwater shenanigans is worth a spin. (William Morrow) **★★½** —Jessica Riddle



RATS • Robert Sullivan

Of all God's three-letter creations—dog, man, cat, ass, ant—the most successful species has been the rat. As we learn in this vermin-fixated book, *Rattus norvegicus* destroys a third of the world's food each year. When rats aren't eating or sleeping, they're having sex: A dominant (and lucky) male may mate with up to 20 females in six hours. Rats can crawl up pipes into a toilet bowl and gnaw their way through concrete.

Sullivan's fascination with the species takes us from the back alleys of Manhattan to Milwaukee (the mecca of American rat control), and while his tendency to veer between hard data and personal musings is disconcerting, he beguiles us with remarkable tales about an inexhaustible topic. (Bloomsbury) **★★½** —Leopold Froehlich

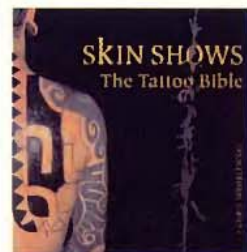


made you look



SKIN SHOWS: THE TATTOO BIBLE

Chris Wroblewski
Every Tommy Lee and Harry has a tat these days, but it wasn't always so. *Skin Shows* employs 600 color images to trace the tattoo's Tahitian origins, its appropriation by drunken sailors and its eventual mainstream ubiquity with poseurs of all stripes. Wroblewski dedicates his opus to pioneers who will continue to keep the spirit alive long after you've had that *South Park* tattoo lasered off your butt. (Collins & Brown) **★★½** —Jason Buhmester



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THE BOOB TUBE TEST

Do you know your PBTV?

What's the only decent excuse for being a couch potato? Watching excessive amounts of Playboy TV. Take our pop quiz and find out if you've been paying attention in class or need even more homework.

1. What is the longest-running show in Playboy TV history?

- a. *Night Calls*
- b. *World of Playboy*
- c. *Naughty Amateur Home Videos*

2. On *Lex in the City*, which rapper divulged, "I have a dirty mind. My music expresses my alter ego, not my day-to-day life. Growing up I really admired the player-pimp thing. Players like to chill with a lot of ladies. Pimps like to get the money. My thing was to keep some comedy in there and make it sexual."

- a. Too Short
- b. Will Smith
- c. 50 Cent

3. What is the reality show *7 Lives Xposed* about?

- a. Seven strangers picked to work at a local nudist colony
- b. The debauched happenings of seven good-looking sexhibitionists who live together
- c. Hef and his six girlfriends

4. Which is *not* a real quote from *Totally Busted* star Steve-O?

- a. "Some pain, like butt piercing, is over

and done with quickly. Pain is all apples and oranges, man. You can't prioritize it. If it's not painful, it's not footage. Everything hurts."

b. "I have a roommate from hell. We paid a bum \$17 to trim off his pubic hair so we could pack up a big bong hit full of it. We sprinkled weed on top. My roommate took three milky bong hits with bum hair."

c. "What should Siegfried have done to save Roy's life? Started making out with one of the other tigers to distract that ass tiger Montecore. Then Roy could have crawled away. Stupid Siegfried."

5. In addition to being an award-winning porn star, what might Playboy TV host Aurora Snow be found doing in her spare time?

- a. Managing her sex-toy shop
- b. Attending college
- c. Grooming show poodles

6. Which topic was *not* covered on *Sexcetera*?

- a. Erotic fire dancing
- b. Barnyard bondage
- c. Vampire-sex role playing

7. Which Playboy TV host has the biggest breasts?

- a. Julia Ann
- b. Lauren Hays
- c. Devinn Lane



8. Which of the following did Will Ferrell sing to *Weekend Flash* news reporter Kitt Pomodoro?

- a. "I love myself; I want you to love me, Kitt. When I feel down, I want you above me. When I think about you, I touch myself. I touch myself. I honestly do."

b. "Only for a moment and the moment's gone. You and me, Kitt, in a pool playing Marco Polo. All we are is dust in the wind."

c. "Kitt was a fast machine. She kept her motor clean. She was the best damn woman that I've ever seen!"

9. Which *Naughty Amateur Home Videos* theme show is not real?

- a. Balloon Popping
- b. Crisco Disco Wrestling
- c. Midgets and Little People

10. Which sexually provocative host has been gracing the couch—and helping viewers live out their wildest fantasies—on *Night Calls* since day one?

- a. Tera Patrick
- b. Mary Carey
- c. Juli Ashton

PIN THE HOST ON THE SHOW LOGO



A.



B.

C. *private calls*

C.



D.



E.



1. AURORA SNOW



2. DEANNA BROOKS



3. JULI ASHTON



4. DEVINN LANE



5. JESSICA JAYMES

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Jamie Ireland is a freelance writer in the areas of sex, fitness, romance, and travel.

Hot Spot

the inside story on

Great Sex!

by Jamie Ireland

Learning "The Ropes"...

This month I got a letter from a reader in Texas about a "little secret" that has made her sex life with her husband absolutely explosive. (Those Texans know their stuff, let me tell you.)

Tina writes:

Dear Jamie,

Last month my husband returned from a business trip in Europe, and he was hotter and hornier than ever before, with more passion than he has had for years. It was incredible. He flat wore me out! And the best part of all—he was having multiple orgasms. I know what you're thinking... men don't have multiples, but trust me he was, and his newfound pow! pow! power! stimulated me into the most intense orgasms I've ever had. So, before we knew it, we were both basking in the glow of the best sex of our lives!

We tried tantric stuff in the past, and the results were so-so. But this was something new and exciting, completely out of the ordinary. I asked my husband what had created such a dramatic change in our lovemaking and he told me he'd finally learned "the ropes."

On the last night of his business trip my husband spent an evening dining out with a Swedish nutritionist and his wife of 20 years. The couple was obviously still quite enamored with each other, so my husband asked their secret. The nutritionist told him their sex life was more passionate than ever. Then he pulled a small bottle from his



satchel and gave it to my husband. The bottle contained a natural supplement that the nutritionist told my husband would teach him "the ropes" of good sex.

My husband takes the supplement every day. The supply from the nutritionist is about to run out and we desperately want to know how we can find more. Do you know anything about "the ropes," and can you tell us how we can find it in the States?

Sincerely,

Tina C., Ft. Worth, Texas

Tina, you and the rest of our readers are in luck, because it just so happens I do know about "the ropes" and the supplement your husband's Swedish friend likely shared.

The physical contractions and fluid release during male orgasm can be multiplied and intensified by a product called Ogöplex Pure Extract™. It's a daily supplement specially formulated to trigger better orgasmic experiences in men. The best part, from a woman's perspective, is that the motion and experience a man can achieve with

Ogöplex Pure Extract can help stimulate our own orgasms, bringing a whole new meaning to the term simultaneous climax!

The term used by the Swedish nutritionist is actually fairly common slang for the effect your husband experienced. The enhanced contractions and heightened orgasmic release are often referred to as ropes because of the rope-like effect of release during climax. In other words, as some people have said, "it just keeps coming and coming and coming."

As far as finding it in the States, I know of just one importer—Böland Naturals. If you are interested, you can contact them at 1-866-ogoplex or ogoplex.com. Ogöplex is all-natural and safe to take. All the people I've spoken with have said taking the once-daily tablet has led to the roping effect Tina described in her letter.

Aren't you glad you asked?

Jamie Ireland

Jamie Ireland

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Nature Calls

What guy hasn't fantasized about hunting in the jungle or the ocean depths, armed with a camera, mingling with the earth's most exotic beasts, waiting to snap the photograph of a lifetime? Whether you're a pro or a novice lensman, New Jersey-based Fotatreks (fotatreks.com) offers 57 expeditions for travelers with the photography jones, from the Chilean desert to the ice fields of Antarctica. Next month *National Geographic* photographer and author of *Successful Underwater Photography* Brian Skerry leads a Fotatreks snorkeling trip to Western Australia to commune with whale sharks, the largest fish known to man. "It's like *Battlestar Galactica* coming at you out of the deep blue," says Skerry, who captured this shot off Ningaloo Reef. (Yes, the photo is real. See the snorkler at the top? That could be you.) The 10-day jaunt costs \$4,975, including accommodations, photo instruction and safety tips. "It's best not to grab a fin and go for a ride," Skerry counsels. "We may never see you again."



HOW TO MAKE A STUFFED LOBSTER

- SAUTÉE ONE CUP SHRIMP WITH SALT AND PEPPER.
- MINCE AND TOSS WITH 1/2 CUP BREAD CRUMBS AND ONE CUP RITZ CRACKERS. POUR IN A DASH OF WHITE WINE AND LEMON JUICE AND MAKE A MUSH.
- CUT LIVE LOBSTER OPEN FROM HEAD TO TAIL AND STUFF.
- WRAP IN FOIL WITH A TEASPOON OF BUTTER AND BAKE AT 375°F FOR ABOUT 30 MINUTES.

London Calling

Sure, the mere freak factor of driving one of these London Taxis—newly available to consumers in the States through the company London Taxis North America (ltna.com)—will eventually wear off. By that time you'll have fallen for all the wild add-ons: power outlets for laptops in the passenger and driver compartments, a passenger-driver intercom system, a luggage compartment where the front passenger seat would normally be, and room for five adults. With a 2.4-liter turbo diesel Ford engine, this sucker is known to pile up 500,000 miles or more (not bad for the \$40,000 base cost). Says our test driver, "They ride more like trucks than cars, but no vehicle compares when you wanna da danuts. The turn radius is designed for making U-turns on narrow 17th century roads." And don't worry—the steering wheel's on the right (as in left) side.



MANTRACK



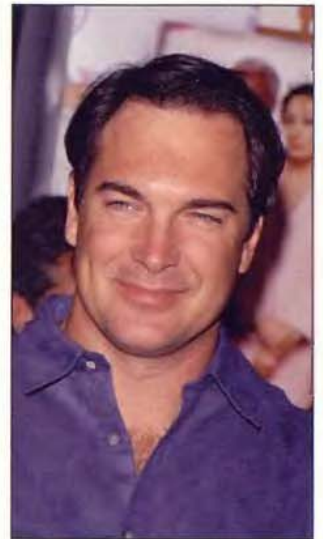
Speak Easy

Electronic translators are hardly the stuff of seduction. Nobody ever closed a deal by typing in the phrase "You so pretty" and praffering it like a limp rase. But if any gadget could talk a beautiful waman's pants off far you, this is definitely the one. The conveniently packet-size

Ectaco X5 translator (ectaca.com) has a dynamite application: speech-to-speech. Just talk into the mike in English and the translator repeats your words, accent correct, in the tangle of your pretty young prey. You can purchase a Spanish (\$400), Russian (\$450) or Palish (\$450) translator. (Note to the company: French? Italian? *Che cazzo?*) The X5 also features a million-word dictionary, a daily planner, an alarm clack, a text translator (far reading menus and bail bond notices) and a calculator (ta help with currency exchanges). It even translates slang, so when the stunning Adriana of Ibiza asks you about your pinga, you'll know to begin undressing.

Clothesline: Patrick Warburton

The 39-year-old Jersey bay formerly known as Puddy an Seinfeld—who has two new flicks set to come aut later this year, *First Time Caller* and *Happily N'Ever After*—says he likes ta spend mast of his spare time in jeans and a T-shirt. "Mast of my T-shirts have sexy girls an the frant of them. That's about as daring as I get, given that I don't have any tattaas ar piercings anywhere an my body. Every now and then it feels gaad to put an a tailored suit. I'm not a designer-suit junkie ar anything, but I do have a couple of Gucci suits and a Huga Bass tuxedo that I gat fram film shoots where they let me keep the wardrobe. I have around 50 baseball caps fram the days when I used to participate in a lot of celebrity golf tournaments. I try ta find ones without golf emblems an the frant. I'm a 15-handicap player, and I don't want to create the image that I'm a better golfer than I am."



The Sea Monster

Imagine straddling Kawasaki's street-screaming Ninja ZX-12R motorcycle and riding it right across the water.

Jesus couldn't even pull off that miracle. New this spring: Kawasaki's Jet Ski STX-15F (kawasaki.com, \$9,800), madeled after the classic Ninja sport bike, comes complete with a 1,498cc four-stroke engine. The 160-horsepower wave shredder can haul three adults at speeds fast enough to scare the bikini taps right off the mast adventuraus of beach beauties. (You never know when that may come in handy.) The one-piece fiberglass body has an apen rear deck far getting in and out of the water ar hauling a large caoler. Pack plenty of cold drinks: With its 16.4-gallan fuel tank, you'll still be cruising when the sun goes down.



The Perfect Time...

- **To do business at your bank:** Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, from 10 A.M. to noon or from three to five P.M. If you can do business online or by phone, all the better. But some tasks involve actual humon contact (a heist, for example). The worst times are Monday momings and Friday afternoons. Also avoid the day after a three-day holiday weekend. Don't even consider the third day of the month—it's payday for Social Security collectors.

- **To purchase an extended warranty:** Almost never. According to Consumer Reports, most big-ticket items are so reliable, you're unlikely ever to file a claim. Manufacturers make about a 70 percent profit on extended warranties but only about 10 percent on the products themselves. When you do collect, the warranty fees tend to be about the same as the repair costs. An exception: laptop computers. In the cose of laptops, buy the extended warranty from the maker (not the retailer) to cover the hardware and to extend tech support.





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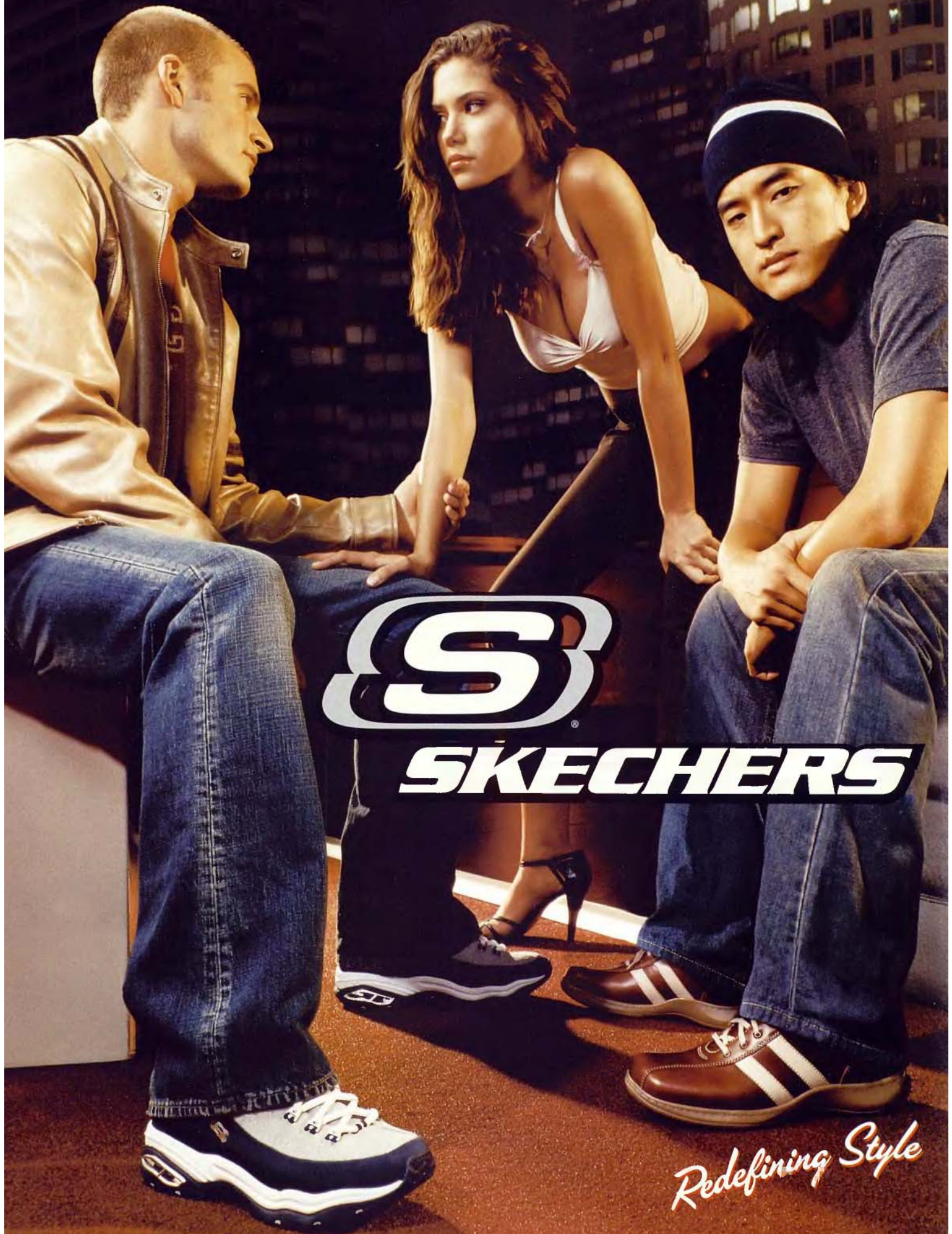
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SKECHERS

Redefining Style

The Playboy Advisor

I drive a lot for my job, which is stressful. A friend suggested I touch myself to relieve the tension. I tried it, but it got a little dangerous, because as I rubbed my clit through my panties I stiffened my steering arm and wanted to close my eyes. During one trip I was eating an apple when I got an idea. I put it on the seat between my legs and started moving my hips in a circular motion. I got so turned on I couldn't concentrate. I pulled into a rest stop and rode the apple to an incredible orgasm. When I told my friend about it, he asked if I then finished the apple. Yes, I did. It was warmer and softer but still good. What do you think? —C.T., Chicago, Illinois

We've always liked apple with cherry.

This advice comes too late for the guy whose fiancée disinvited his friends to the wedding because they were present when he "touched a whore" at his bachelor party (December). But for all the other young men who are involved with controlling women: Get out now. Most men in their 20s don't have the common sense, foresight or balls to end a relationship like that. Their marriage ends in five to 10 years after much misery. That's because as the woman gets stronger-willed and more dominant, she grows frustrated by her pushover spouse. If your girlfriend has you whipped, it will be less painful to leave now than to wait until she divorces your sorry ass and takes the kids, the house and the money. Been there. Done that. Sorry now.—M.D., Kansas City, Missouri

This seems like a lesson that has to be learned the hard way. Guys who are whipped aren't able to take your advice.

In November a reader wrote because his fiancée had made him quit playing in his band and listening to his favorite music. I had a similar experience. I stupidly let my wife drive away my friends, dispose of my guitars, tell me what type of beer to drink and limit me to an allowance of \$10 a week. She had me convinced that if I made "just one more little sacrifice" she would be happy. After I'd given up everything enjoyable in my life, including sex, she began complaining that I used too much toilet paper, shampoo and deodorant. I came to my senses one night while lying awake worrying that she would find my secret stash of toiletries. We divorced, and I've never been happier.—K.C., Great Mills, Maryland

Welcome back. You sound like a good guy to have on a camping trip.

You were mistaken in January when you told the guy who broke off his engagement that he shouldn't expect his ex to



return the ring. Many courts have ruled that the ring is not a gift but part of a contract to marry. If the contract is broken by either party, the man gets the ring back. If the couple marries but then gets divorced, the ring belongs to the woman.—M.C., Las Vegas, Nevada

We're aware of the court decisions, but we make our own judgments.

What exactly is vermouth? I know you can't make a martini without it, but what's the story behind it?—T.G., Indianapolis, Indiana

Vermouth is a wine flavored with bitter herbs and other botanicals. So it's similar to gin, which is why it works so well in a martini. Our resident liquor historian, A.J. Baime (author of Big Shots: The Men Behind the Booze), says it's widely believed that vermouth was invented by Hippocrates. "A key ingredient was wormwood, which was believed to kill intestinal worms," Baime says. Because the highly toxic elixir also tended to kill the patient, it fell out of favor as an ingredient. In 1813 Frenchman Joseph Noilly created the first dry vermouth; his family later founded Noilly Prat. The other top producer is Martini & Rossi, founded in Turin, Italy. Today the company makes its original bittersweet red (produced with white wine and a dash of caramel and used in manhattans), extra dry (martini), white (vanilla flavor) and rose (cinnamon and cloves).

I fantasize about fucking Jenny McCarthy. I told my wife about this, and she agreed to have sex with me while saying things like "You like the feeling of Jenny's lips on your cock?" and "Come on, fuck Jenny McCarthy!" The problem now is that I can't get turned on unless I'm looking

at a photo of Jenny or my wife is pretending to be her. What should I do?—J.W., Baltimore, Maryland

You'd better do something quick or your wife will be a fantasy too. It's not unusual to imagine being with other people while having sex with your partner, but it's a bad sign when it's the same person all the time, every time. (It's known as allogynia, or the inability to come without fantasizing about a more desirable lover.) We would suggest aversion therapy, but we don't know of any photos in which Jenny looks bad. The next time you have sex—if there is a next time—banish her photo and use "baby" and "honey" when encouraging your wife so you don't slip up. Concentrate on the sensations and think about Jenny all you want, but keep it to yourself. Long term, you may need professional help, especially if your fetish is masking a larger problem in the relationship.

You shouldn't have blown off the toe sucker who asked in December if nail polish contains harmful chemicals. Most brands contain phthalates, a family of industrial chemicals commonly used in cosmetics to make them more flexible and durable. In animal studies phthalates have been found to wreak havoc on the reproductive, endocrine and immune systems. For men, an overload of phthalates may lead to atrophied testicles, low sperm count, overdeveloped breasts, immune deficiency and testicular cancer. One phthalate in particular tends to leech onto the skin every time the polish comes into contact with water or, presumably, saliva. Practice safe sucks by asking your partner to eschew polish or use phthalate-free ones such as those by Urban Decay or products in L'Oréal's Jet Set line.—D.R., Salt Lake City, Utah

This is one reason we stick with cumilinus. The cosmetics industry insists its products are safe, though. And you'd have to suck a ridiculous number of toes to duplicate the level of phthalate exposure in animal testing.

I'm 20 and my girlfriend is 19. I plan on marrying her, but she refuses even to talk about the possibility of engaging in a threesome. I don't want to die without having had this experience. What should I do?—B.N., Houston, Texas

You're too young to get married, for reasons beyond this. Even if your girlfriend were to agree, threesomes can be complicated, especially with someone you love. For example, it could go like this...

My wife met a woman at a bar who invited her back to her apartment. My wife asked if I could come, then whispered to me to take Viagra. Once we got to her apartment the woman suggested we all take a bath. When I asked, "Where do you

want me?" she let me slip in behind her. My wife said nothing. We all caressed one another until I was rock hard. When the woman went into the bedroom, I asked my wife where this was going. She said, "Whatever happens, happens." We played with every toy the woman owned, but I didn't have sex with her because I sensed my wife wasn't into it. The next day my wife was upset because she said I enjoyed myself too much. I don't think this is fair. I view it as something we tried that didn't work out. What's your take?—A.T., Fort Worth, Texas

We're with you. Good thing you didn't fuck the host. It's always difficult to know how a spouse will react during or after a threesome—it's not something most couples discuss until after the fact.

A reader wrote in January to ask about burn-in on plasma TV screens. You said one culprit is the horizontal bars that appear on the top and bottom of the screen when you watch 4:3 aspect TV programming on a 16:9 screen. Didn't you mean to say vertical bars on the sides?—R.S., McConnelsville, Ohio

Yes, we did. We've been watching too much foreign porn. We also should have noted that most people will be happier upgrading to a 4:3 HDTV than going wide.

My girlfriend's left hand is more sexually aggressive than her right, which is gentle and sensitive. Is this a medical condition?—M.W., London, U.K.

It's called left-handedness, and it brings to mind one of our favorite poems, by David Zaslhoff: "Masturbation taught me/My left hand is different from my right hand/My right hand is the boss and gives orders/It wants the job done fast/My left hand is more romantic/It wants me to enjoy every stroke/My left hand would light candles if the right hand would let it/My right hand is using me/My left hand is in love with me/My left hand must be gay."

My fraternity brothers and I have scheduled a toga party with a hot sorority. We can't decide whether to shave our chests. If we don't, the women may be turned off. If we do, we may get teased for being unmasculine. What should we do?—S.W., Buffalo, New York

It depends—do you want to look like a fraternity of gladiators or bathhouse servants? The real Romans wore togas over tunics (which resembled T-shirts with no sleeves). Try that. In the later years of the empire, the only women who wore togas were prostitutes. Should be a fun party.

Please advise your readers of a potential hazard with dildos made of borosilicate glass (October). I learned the hard way that kitchenware made from this material can explode if it has even a hairline crack.—V.E., Los Angeles, California

That's unlikely to happen with a dildo unless you expose it to extreme changes in temperature, which is not recommended or

practical. While toy companies advertise that the products retain heat and cold, most people find that room temperature works best. (The glass will feel cool because of higher body heat.) Lately the number of sites selling inexpensive glass toys has risen, in part because of a crackdown on bong shops, which has led to a glut of unemployed glass-bong craftsmen. John Sanchez of the Original Glass Dildo Company suggests that anyone considering a glass dildo keep it simple. While most guys order 12-inchers with all the trimmings because they think that's what their partners want, most women buy clear, smooth eight-inchers. Sanchez suggests going to 10 so you have a few inches to hold on to.

My 11-year-old son asked me what a blow job is. I wasn't sure how to respond. A blow job is not an act of reproduction that falls under my definition of the birds and the bees. How far should a parent go during "the talk" when describing sex acts? I'm not sure I want to get into the hydraulics. I also don't want my son to be educating his friends.—K.M., Susanville, California

From what we've read, some 11-year-olds not only know what a blow job is, they've experienced it. They think it's not sex, apparently. Make sure your son understands otherwise. Give him a clinical definition, emphasizing the adult nature of the encounter. "It's when a woman touches a man's privates with her mouth" might suffice—for now. Most important, encourage him to ask you any questions he wants about sex. This should be an ongoing discussion, not a talk. Better he learn from you than a bunch of 13-year-olds. And better his friends get good information too. Next up: lesbians.

I subscribe to PLAYBOY because I thought it might encourage me to lose weight. My question is: Could a man ever be happy with a woman like me who has a pretty face but a size-16 body? I would like an honest answer, even if it hurts my feelings and leaves me more bitter than I already am.—J.S., Oakley, California

Most men aren't attracted to overweight women, so odds are they'll never know if they could be happy with you as a size 16. We'd like an honest answer to this: Are you attracted to strangers with potbellies and double chins or those who are slim and fit?

According to my husband, DVD-Audio is the musical technology of the future. We purchased a disc, and the clarity blew us away. But the clerk didn't know much, and the selection was minuscule. What gives?—J.G., Saratoga, Florida

It's early, so only a few hundred albums are available in the format. DVD-A is battling with Super Audio CD, or SACD, for audiophile cars. Both formats offer better sound than standard CDs, as well as breathtaking 5.1 Surround. Neither lets you make copies or rip MP3s, which pleases the industry. SACD offers more selection—about 1,000 albums—and the discs can be played

on standard CD players if you're desperate. DVD-A has the potential to include extras such as video, photos and text. It works in most DVD players but not in CD players or computer drives. Players that handle both formats will arrive soon. Which will survive? Hard to say. Maybe they'll merge.

My girlfriend's labia hang down almost an inch. When I discussed it with the guys at work, they all said it's because she's a slut. "Look at the porn stars," they said. I don't want to ask my girlfriend about this, but the guys have put this idea in my head, and I need reassurance.—J.A., Pullman, Washington

Sexual activity has nothing to do with the size of a woman's labia, nor does it affect her breasts, lips, eyes, nose, teeth, feet, buttocks, legs, fingers or toes. When you have a good thing going, it's always wise to share the particulars of your girlfriend's genitals on a need-to-know basis, which is to say—never. You're putting a lot of trust in these guys to keep their mouths shut.

My father scolded me the other day for coasting to a stop in neutral and starting up in second gear. He claims these practices are bad for the transmission. I say they're harmless. Who's right?—M.P., Bethesda, Maryland

Brake pads are much less expensive to replace than a transmission, which is why it's smart to use them, rather than downshift, to slow down. There are exceptions, such as when you're slowing on a long decline, which could cause your brakes to overheat; when you're on ice or gravel and need to maintain control; or when you're at a light but may need to accelerate quickly, such as for an emergency vehicle or because some joker is coming up too fast behind you. As for starting from second gear, that's not smart if you're at a complete stop. But if you're rolling, it can save gas and wear on first gear.

I often travel to Europe, where it doesn't seem to be a problem to mention to women that I'm well hung. But here in the U.S. I can get the strangest looks. I believe in being up-front about this because so many women have told me they enjoy my ample size. If women can wear low-cut blouses and short skirts to advertise their goods, why can't I mention my endowment?—M.S., Prescott, Arizona

You don't have anything more interesting to talk about?

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 in these pages each month. Write the Playboy Advisor, PLAYBOY, 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611, or send e-mail by visiting our website at playboyadvisor.com.





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THE PLAYBOY FORUM

THE BUSH DYNASTY

OUR FOUNDING FATHERS WORRIED ABOUT ARISTOCRATIC RULE. GUESS WHAT HAPPENED

BY KEVIN PHILLIPS

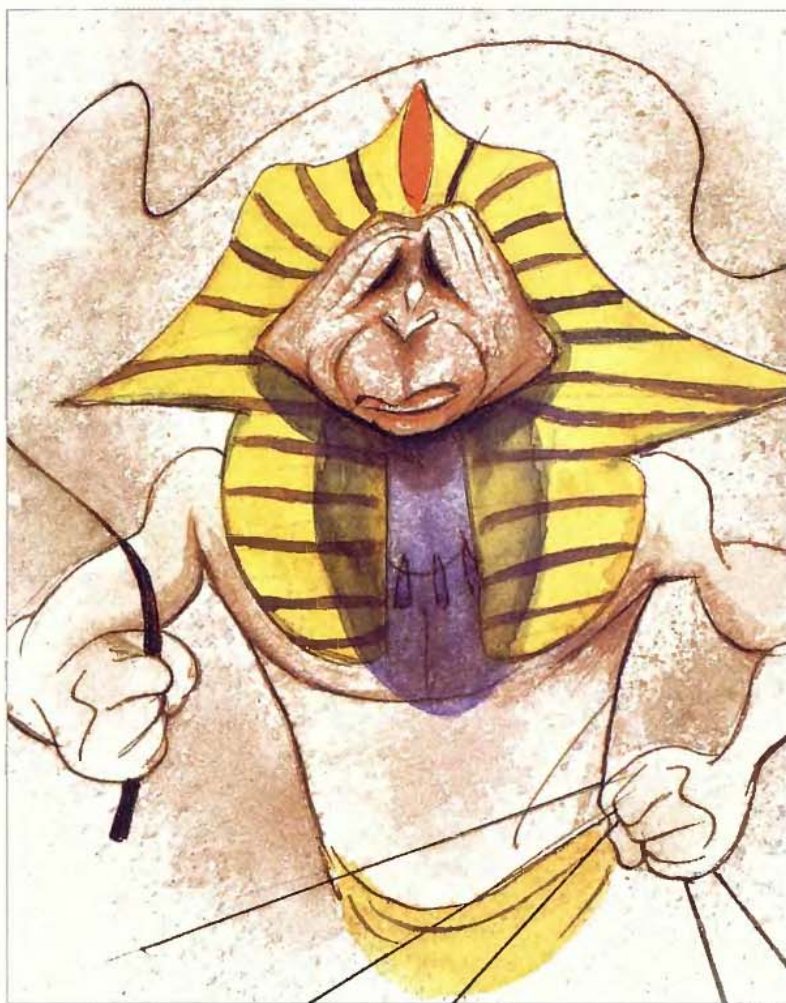
As the 2004 presidential primaries march past, it's clear that our electoral process is corrupt. In fact, the corruption is deeper and more troubling than we've acknowledged publicly, having spread into war making and war profiteering, unpatriotic trespasses that should be central to the debates this year.

Now that the early primaries have become more decisive of the election, big spending has become even more important. And the more cash rules, the greater the public suffers. The votes and opinions of ordinary Americans no longer matter much.

Part of the problem is that American politics has gone dynastic. Led by the Bushes, powerful families with ties to wealth are taking over. On track to raise \$200 million this year from fat cats, lobbyists and favor seekers, President George W. Bush plans to spend \$170 million during the Republican primaries, despite having no intraparty opposition. Much of the cash will be spent on TV ads. In 2000 he won the White House—or at least the Supreme Court ruled he'd been elected—largely by opting out of the pre-convention public-financing system. That allowed him to raise a record \$101 million from individuals and spend far more than the previously applicable ceilings allowed.

He was able to do this because his name was not Jones or Smith but Bush. His father had already established powerful money-raising machinery during his years of running for vice president and president. The son inherited the name, the bankroll and the presidency.

In his early bids for office in Texas, George W. used his father's fund-raisers and his mother's famous Christmas card list. By the 2000 presidential race, W had added a new donor



group of Texans he'd favored during five years as governor. Florida, where his brother Jeb is governor, produced another huge flock of check writers. In return, the Bush donor network knows what it can expect from family officeholders: support for the petroleum industry, war making and big defense outlays, and economic favoritism toward the wealthiest one percent.

The American trend toward dynastic politics is bipartisan. In California, the new Republican governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, through his wife, Maria Shriver, tapped Kennedy family influence. Democratic senator John Kerry was a member of the secretive Skull and Bones at Yale, as were both Bush presidents. Kerry's wife, Teresa Heinz, inherited her half-billion-dollar fortune from her first husband, the late Pennsylvania senator John Heinz III, who was also a member of Skull and Bones. Hillary Clinton won her New York Senate seat in 2000 with \$40 million that was substantially produced by her presidential husband's fund-raising apparatus. She is widely expected to run for president in 2008 in hopes of restoring the Clinton dynasty to the White House.

This phenomenon of rich-family office holding has pernicious antidemocratic implications. A new politics of family, inheritance, class and cronyism has been legitimized. Optimists will cite similarities with the Gilded Age of the late 19th century—the era of Rockefeller, Morgan and the robber barons. These kinds of abuses, they'll say, were attacked and eliminated by Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressives of the early 20th century, and we can do that again in this new century.

I'm not so sanguine. Since the war in Vietnam, Americans

BROTHER, WHERE ART THOU?

NEIL BUSH IS ONE LUCKY GUY

By Matt Taibbi and Matt Bivens

have developed two issue streams that are frequently at odds. The first is defined by economic frustration and job loss, as well as by complaints about corporations, corruption and politics that are dominated by money. The second set of issues, generally voiced by conservatives, taps voter concern about patriotism, defense and terrorism, along with the cultural politics that embraces such religious fundamentalists and bluenoses as Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell.

Since Reagan's presidency, flag waving, war making, crony capitalism and pandering to religious fundamentalists have prevailed over the politics of economic frustration and anticorruption. In the past few years, though, a new Achilles' heel has emerged. Under the Bush dynasty, flag waving, war making, crony capitalism and pandering to religious fundamentalists have become inseparable from corruption. That gives reform forces a whole new moral and patriotic impetus.

I don't know of any president before the Bushes whose family was as heavily tied to the military-industrial complex and war profits over multiple generations.

Four generations of Walkers and Bushes have been involved with petroleum ventures in the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf, and members of two of those generations—the 41st and the 43rd presidents—have taken this nation into oil-linked wars with Iraq. What few Americans know or remember is that before George H.W. Bush finally mobilized against Saddam Hussein in 1990 because of botched American diplomacy, he had spent six years as vice president and president building up Iraq as a strategic counterweight to Iran. Indeed, U.S. assistance to Iraq was channeled through rogue banks and improper loans and became a Bush-injuring scandal: the Iraqgate ruckus of 1991–92.

Today's home-front profiteering and crony capitalism in connection with the war in Iraq and the aftermath of September 11 are indictments in and of themselves. The issues reach from the greedy home-security lobbying of former Bush aides to the Middle East investment links of two Bush presidents and the profits of Halliburton, the Houston-based corporation that was formerly run by Vice President Dick Cheney. With a little bit of luck, the themes of corruption and sober patriotism may finally be about to join hands.

Kevin Phillips is the author of American Dynasty: Aristocracy, Fortune and the Politics of Deceit in the House of Bush.

Ken Leonard, president of the educational-software company Ignite, wasn't sure where his business partner was. When PLAYBOY contacted Leonard with questions about the company he runs with Neil Bush (President Bush's brother is CEO and chairman of the one-person board), he didn't know his boss was in Almaty, Kazakhstan, meeting with Kazakh president Nursultan Nazarbayev to discuss plans for remaking that country's educational system. "Is this a joke?" Leonard asked.

We assured him it wasn't. Of course, one can forgive Leonard's skepticism. Ignite, after all, is a barely tested

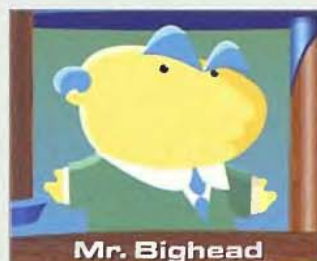
American company that boasts a single product—a software package of songs, cartoons and lectures about American history. Targeted for eighth graders, it features cartoon teachers such as Mr. Bighead, rap songs about the Constitution and other "21st century tools for 21st century students." The company is so 21st century that its graphics are too sophisticated for all but the best-equipped schools. This is why, Leonard says, Ignite targets schools with broadband capability, advanced processors—and, we might add, the jact to pay \$10,000 per school per year.

Leonard at first didn't believe that Bush was meeting with Central Asian autocrats to discuss Mr. Bighead. "I don't keep Mr. Bush's schedule," he said. "As you might expect, we have no plans to sell our U.S.-aligned social studies curriculum in Kazakhstan." We read him a quote from Bush, taken that day from the Interfax-Kazakhstan news agency: "The Kazakh president and authorities advocate and support the new ideas in education reforms that I have come to Kazakhstan to talk about."

Neil Bush's life is like a biblical parable of accidental success. In the wake of his divorce from his wife, Sharon, during which numerous revelations about his business practices (and his sexual ones; see "Marginalia," opposite page) came

to light, the public has been treated to a tale of a man walking face-first into improbable good fortune. These revelations uncover a theme: generous compensation for vague contributions on Bush's part. In Thailand he was paid \$642,000 to introduce executives of a Thai firm, the CP Group, to a company called Kopin. In China, Grace Semiconductor, co-founded by

Jiang Mianheng (son of former Chinese president Jiang Zemin), will pay him \$2 million in shares over five years for business advice. In the divorce depositions, Bush admits he doesn't know a lot about semiconductors but says his value lies in his business



knowledge. When pressed, he cites his MBA from Tulane University.

Ignite has an eclectic group of supporters. Although it's a small company still trying to break into the domestic market, 80 percent of its investors are foreign, including Hamza El Khouli, an associate of Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak; former Iranian ambassador to the U.S. Hushang Ansary; and Winston Wong, the Taiwanese co-founder of Grace Semiconductor.

Why would investors all over the world want to get in on the ground floor with a man whose role in the collapse of Silverado Savings & Loan reportedly caused him to be banned from the banking business? A possible answer presents itself in Kazakhstan. Bush arrived in Almaty as the Nazarbayev government was facing a U.S. Department of Justice investigation into practices by American oil majors in Kazakhstan. At issue are the largest formally alleged bribes since the passage of the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act: \$78 million that the Justice Department says Mobil (now ExxonMobil) and other oil companies paid to top Kazakh officials. Swiss legal documents indicate that President Nazarbayev controlled at least one of the bank accounts in which the money was stashed. The *Financial Times* reports that his government



even approached Vice President Dick Cheney's old company Halliburton for help in shutting down the case. The Kazakh government apparently failed to see the difference between Halliburton and the U.S. government. Bush denied he was in Kazakhstan for any reason other than to help Kazakh children. "I am not here as a politician, though I come from a political family," he told reporters. "My mission is not to represent the U.S. government. My goal is to discuss education and to talk about how we will educate children."

A lot of people involved with Ignite are motivated by a love for children. In his divorce deposition, Bush explains how El Khouli, the Mubarak associate, came to be interested in Ignite:

Q: Do you know how he chose to invest in this particular company?

A: He cares about kids.

Q: Because he cares about kids?

A: Yeah. He wants to help lighten—you know, breathe life into learning for kids.

A lobbyist for Kazakhstan's democratic opposition, however, questioned the idea that both Bush and Nazarbayev were primarily interested in talking about education technology. "Neil Bush can say what

he wants about not being a representative of the U.S. government, about being a private citizen," the lobbyist said. "But Kazakhstan is a very family-oriented society, so this is seen as a vote of confidence in the Nazarbayev family by the Bush family."

Another reason Bush may have decided to try Ignite's hand in Kazakhstan (and also in the United Arab Emirates): Things don't look so good in the U.S. His divorce again focused attention on how the third Bush son does business. Of interest is a breakthrough deal struck last spring to sell Ignite software to 23 schools in the Houston Independent School District.



Neil Bush (center) with Hamza El Khouli (second from right) in Egypt.

Prior to last June, Bush had tried to sell the Ignite software package—one eighth-grade social studies program—to the district for \$10,000 a pop. This was too expensive for the HISD, so the district agreed to buy \$230,000 worth of Ignite software for 23 schools on the condition that Bush raise \$115,000—half the purchase price—via tax-deductible donations to the district's tax-exempt corporation. Bush arranged for corporations and individuals in Texas to pay the \$115,000 to the HISD foundation. Among the donors was Ansary, the former Iranian ambassador. As

MARGINALIA



IN THE BOOK SEXUAL RIGHTS IN AMERICA, published

last year, scholars recount the blackmail of Alexander Hamilton, who was married (and secretary of the Treasury) at the time: "According to Hamilton's own account, during the summer of 1791 an attractive young lady presented herself at his home in Philadelphia. Maria Reynolds told Hamilton a sad tale of physical abuse and abandonment by her husband. She asked Hamilton for a small loan. According to Hamilton, when he delivered the money, 'some conversation ensued by which it was quickly apparent that other than pecuniary consolation would be acceptable.' Hamilton devoured the bait, repeatedly, over the next several months, until Mr. Reynolds appeared and demanded restitution for Hamilton's 'in-sult.' Four days later Hamilton received a letter from Mr. Reynolds. 'God knows I love the woman and wish every blessing may attend her,' he wrote. 'But I don't think I can be reconciled to live with her. Give me the sum of \$1,000 and I will leave town.'



Although one might expect Hamilton to put an end to the affair, he continued to pay the couple for the privilege, in amounts ranging from \$40 to \$400. Eventually Mr. Reynolds was arrested on an unrelated matter. He told authorities he had evidence, including receipts, that proved Hamilton had defrauded the government. Although Congress exonerated him, Hamilton felt the need to publish a 95-page confessional. He concluded with the hope that 'bare perusal of the letters from Reynolds and his wife is sufficient to convince my greatest enemy that there is nothing worse in the affair than an irregular and indelicate amour.'" The matter passed.

FROM A DEPOSITION by Neil Bush during proceedings that ended his 23-year marriage. Bush is being questioned by his wife's attorney:

Q: How did you answer when asked to state the names of all persons other than your spouse with whom you've had sexual intercourse since the date of marriage?

A: I had sexual intercourse with perhaps three or four women at different times. I have a pretty clear recollection that there was one time in Thailand and in Hong Kong.

Q: Were these prostitutes?

A: I don't—I don't know.

Q: Did you pay them for that sex?

A: No, I did not.

Q: How did it come about? Did they shake you down, chase you down?

A: I wouldn't characterize it that way.

Q: Well, what do you remember about them?

A: Just having sex.

Q: You don't remember where you met them?

A: I don't remember where you met them?

(continued on page 57)

5 WAYS TO FIX

...THE AIRLINES

BY RICHARD BRANSON

1. Make them as friendly as America

It's odd that U.S. airlines so rarely think about the consumer. America is a friendly place, but when you're in the air above America, you're in another world. It's not the fault of the people on the planes; it's their bosses who show little imagination. The time you spend in the air should rejuvenate you. That's why we created a cabin with bars, manicurists, massages and beds.

2. Stop recycling planes

Many airlines operate under the myth that it's cheaper to refurbish an older plane than it is to replace it. New jets are more efficient and require less maintenance, which cuts costs. They're also quieter and better for the environment. The most successful airlines rely on jets less than three years old. Newer planes are more pleasant to board—they have a new-plane smell. And they're safer, which contributes to the reputation of the carrier.

3. Remember that small is beautiful

Proudly claiming you are the biggest airline in the world also means you're

the worst airline. When you become that big, your overhead takes over. American carriers such as Southwest and JetBlue have both the most smiles on board and the newest planes. The big carriers would benefit from breaking themselves into smaller companies.

4. Let the dinosaurs die

The first bailout of the industry after September 11 was necessary because of an exceptional event; the second was a mistake. If an oak is reaching the end of its life, let it die so new trees have room to grow. Several large, inefficient airlines are filling slots at U.S. airports that could be better used by upstarts.

5. Allow foreign carriers to compete

I can start a cinema or mobile phone company in the U.S., but I can't set up an airline. Consumers would benefit if foreign carriers could compete head-to-head on domestic routes. We could expand by partnering with a U.S. airline, but I'd rather control my own destiny.

Branson is chairman of Virgin Atlantic Airways, which he founded in 1984.



an investor in Ignite, he was making tax-deductible donations to help sell his own product. In a deposition related to his boss's divorce, Ken Leonard admitted that no competitive bidding for the contract took place.

Arnold Kleinstein of Worldview Software, a competing educational-software firm, says he'd have difficulty eliciting donations to help sell his own products. "I've never heard of anything like that," he says. "We certainly couldn't do that."

Bush's divorce testimony also covers his business history, as in this exchange with Sharon Bush's attorney:

Q: You haven't done well over the past 20 years, have you?

A: No, I think I've done pretty well.

Q: How much did you get out of Silverado?

A: Nothing.

Q: How much did you get out of the deal you and Jeb tried to put together on the South American oil?

A: There was no such deal.

Q: What have you done in the last 10 years businesswise that you think has been profitable for you?

A: I've successfully managed to pay bills for our family. We live in a nice home. Our kids have a good lifestyle. My wife has gotten used to comforts that have been provided not exclusively by me but largely by me.

Other parts of the depositions highlight the duties Bush performs in various salaried positions. He explains what he did to earn \$60,000 a year from Crest Investment Corporation—a company that has also invested in Ignite:

Q: What do you do for Crest?

A: I'm the co-chairman.

Q: What product does Crest put out in the market?

A: It's a financial-investment entity.

Q: And what did you do for Crest in 2002?

A: Provided miscellaneous consulting services.

Q: Such as?

A: Answering phone calls when Jamal Daniel, the other co-chairman, called and asked for advice.

In 2002, in the United Arab Emirates, Bush opened up to 200 government and educational officials who had heard his Ignite pitch: "The point of learning is not just memo-

rizing stuff that will later be forgotten because it's useless in everyday life," he said. "Learning is about experiencing and solving problems."

Bush's take on solving problems is unusual: He gets himself into them, and other people solve them. In the Silverado case, which cost taxpayers more than \$1 billion, he was fined

\$50,000. And a former congressman turned bank lobbyist raised the money to pay his legal bills. After Silverado, Bush started Apex Energy, a methane-gas-prospecting company. He invested \$3,000; companies run by his father's friend Louis Marx put in \$2.3 million. For the next two years, Neil Bush paid himself more than \$300,000 out of that money before Apex went broke. Marx's investments (and losses) were insured by the Small Business Administration.

Maybe the next Ignite course should be on living life with other people's money in a consequence-free environment. For that, at least, no one can say Neil Bush isn't qualified.

Neil Bush gets into problems, and others solve them.



READER RESPONSE



I grew up reading *PLAYBOY* but never realized until I read your 50th anniversary issue how much the magazine had influenced my views on sex, drugs and politics. Not only did Hugh Hefner shape America's sexual revolution, he shaped me, as well.

Tim Habert
Ellicott City, Maryland

Congratulations on your 50th, and thank you for helping to make our society more open, honest and free.

Ramona Ripston
American Civil Liberties Union
Los Angeles, California

I had the good fortune to serve as chief counsel for Larry Hicks, the innocent man whom the Playboy Foundation helped save from death row, during his appeals and second trial. I will forever be thankful for the support of the Foundation, attorney Burt Joseph and *The Playboy Forum*.

Nile Stanton
Hania, Greece

Hugh Hefner and the Foundation were at the genesis of the first serious-minded efforts to reform marijuana laws. The many grants for education and litigation the Foundation provided to

our organization helped pave the way for the 100 million citizens in 12 states who now face only fines for possession of small amounts of marijuana.

Allen St. Pierre
Norml Foundation
Washington, D.C.

Even *PLAYBOY*'s editors must remain vigilant when it comes to the pervasiveness of the majority religion. When you refer to the Bible, for example, it would be more accurate to call it the Christian Bible.

Roger Hogan
Lakewood, Colorado

It is with sadness that I write to say that I will not be renewing my subscription. I hadn't realized until reading the January issue that your support of individual liberties is limited to sex, censorship and drug use and not to gun ownership. You fail to understand that our freedoms are linked, and they are more often eroded through incremental approaches than through sweeping bans. Attacking the lawful possession of guns as a means to stop violent crime is only a little different from attacking an erect penis as a means to stop

rape. *PLAYBOY* has been accused of everything from undermining the morals of society to promoting the abuse of women. I would have thought this would make



you more sensitive to the lure of blaming inanimate objects for the sickness that resides in some humans. It is not a weapon—or a magazine—that should be blamed for evil.

Brent deMolive
Waco, Texas

It is difficult to reconcile the ideas expressed in the *Playboy Philosophy* and your stance on gun control. On one page Hugh Hefner

writes, "American democracy is based not simply on the will of the majority but on the protection of the will of the minority. And the smallest minority in society is the individual." Yet two pages earlier you acknowledge *PLAYBOY*'s long history of disregard for the individual rights guaranteed by the Second Amendment. Your comparison of gun control to driver's licenses is apples and oranges: A driver's license is a privilege, not a constitutional right. I hope you return to your original ideals and distinguish yourselves from the other liberal media sheep.

Anthony Racz Jr.
Littleton, Colorado

When it comes to your opinions on gun control, maybe you should stick to the dames, booze and gadgets.

C. Wronski
Chicago, Illinois

So how are we doing otherwise? Our support for limited gun control has never been any great secret, but we have always given space to readers who disagree with our stance.

E-mail: forum@playboy.com. Or write: 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019.

NEWSFRONT

Going Greek

ATHENS—As the summer Olympics approach, Greek authorities have begun enforcing a 1999 law that requires brothels to be situated at least 200 meters from churches, schools and charities. That makes it illegal for brothels to operate just about anywhere in the city, and last year authorities shut down at least 15. A number of the country's 7,000 licensed prostitutes took to the streets to protest the law, which also bars married men from hiring prostitutes and limits the number of hookers in each brothel to three. "We demand our right to work and our dignity," said one protester. Another declared, "We are entitled to our place in society." Lawmakers proposed cutting the 200-meter limit by half, giving the women easier access to central hotels, but the Greek Orthodox Church objected.



Thirty-Three Years for TV Theft

BAYBORO, NORTH CAROLINA—Junior Allen may be the only man in America to serve more than three decades in prison for stealing a TV. In 1970 he sneaked into an unlocked home and stole a \$140 set. Allen has since been denied parole 25 times. The parole board, which calls the 63-year-old a danger to society, cites his 47 disciplinary write-ups for such jailhouse infractions as fighting, gambling and disobeying orders. Allen's 26th parole hearing is scheduled for March 26.

Cop Busts Pop

QUEENS VILLAGE, NEW YORK—A father and his son were walking home from a birthday party when the nine-year-old accidentally let go of his Winnie-the-Pooh balloon. It hit the sidewalk and popped. A police officer called the father over and issued him a summons for "unreasonable noise." The man said he would contest the ticket. "You'd make more noise closing the door of a police car," he said.

Buying the Mexican Vote

MEXICO CITY—As part of its antiterrorism efforts, the U.S. government wanted to know more about insurgent Mexicans. An Atlanta company, ChoicePoint, provided a database that included the addresses, passport numbers and phone numbers of 65 million Mexicans. ChoicePoint had purchased the data from a Mexico-based firm contracted by the Mexican government to keep election records. Authorities in Mexico placed three employees of the Mexican company under house arrest and threatened to charge them with treason.

The Gun Channel

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Campaign-finance laws prohibit television and radio stations from airing political ads from corporate-funded groups such as the National Rifle Association during the months before an election. So the NRA is contemplating buying its own station. The group says it would argue that its broadcasts are news programs, which are exempted from the regulations. "We're as legitimate a media outlet as Disney, Viacom or Time Warner," said one NRA official. "Why should they have an exclusive right to relay information to the public?" The NRA is already one of the nation's largest magazine publishers.

Measure of a Dog

GRESHAM, OREGON—A mother and daughter who ran a pet-sitting service lost their charge, a German shepherd named Fremont, when the dog bolted through an open gate. Two months later, acting on a tip, the owner found his animal wandering a few miles away. The next day he sued the women for the \$20,000 he says he spent on posters, newspaper ads, cell phone calls, a telephone hotline and an animal tracker; \$30,000 in lost income; \$10,000 for "the temporary loss of the special value of Fremont based on his qualities, characteristics and pedigree"; and \$100,000 for emotional distress.



MARGINALIA

(continued from page 55)

- A: No.
 Q: Do you remember—
 A: My recollection is they came to my room.
 Q: Just knocked on the door, you opened the door and—
 A: There they—there she was, yeah.
 Q: Do you know the name of that hotel? I may go to Thailand sometime.
 A: No.
 Q: What time period was this?
 A: It was more than five years ago but probably less than 10 years ago.
 Q: Okay. You went to the door and opened it up and there's a woman standing there. Right?
 A: I can't remember specifically, but yes, that's vaguely how it happened.
 Q: Did she have clothes on?
 A: Yes.
 Q: Did she speak English?
 A: Yes.
 Q: Did you know she was coming?
 A: Honestly, I can't recall.
 Q: Mr. Bush, you have to admit that it's a pretty remarkable thing for a man just to go to a hotel room door and open it and have a woman standing there and have sex with her.
 A: It was very unusual.
 Q: How did you know whether to invite her in or tell her to go away?
 A: You know, whatever happened, happened.
 Q: Well, you obviously invited her in.
 A: Yes.
 Q: I mean, she—she didn't threaten you with a weapon to get—
 A: No.
 Later:
 Q: How did you contract herpes?
 A: I had sexual intercourse with a woman before my marriage, while I was in business school.
 Q: Did she come and knock on your door?
 A: No, I knew that woman.

OUR PRIVACY POLICY IS THAT YOU HAVE NO PRIVACY

From the Ticketmaster.com website: "By purchasing a ticket or completing a registration form so that you are able to access a purchase page for a ticket to a concert, game or other event on the site, you consent to us sharing your personal information with the venues, promoters, artists, teams, leagues and other third parties associated with that concert, game or other event. We cannot offer you a separate opportunity to opt out." From a mailing to holders of Massachusetts Mutual insurance policies: "We may collect personal information about you from applications or other forms, interviews or by other means, consumer or other reporting agencies, medical or health care providers, government agencies, employers or others, your transactions with us, our affiliates or others, and our website. Generally, we are allowed to share your financial information with our affiliates to market products or services to you. You cannot limit these disclosures."

WHITE MAN'S BURDEN

WHO WILL BE THE FIRST NONWHITE OR FEMALE U.S. PRESIDENT?

The White House remains one of the few bastions of Caucasian (mostly Protestant) males. Eventually, though, that cordon will be broken. We asked the *Chicago Tribune's*

Clarence Page and *Crossfire's* James Carville and Tucker Carlson to help us predict who will be the first politician to cross the color/gender line into the Oval Office. Our odds:

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON*Democratic Senator, New York*

Assets: She's earned a reputation as a tough legislator. Even critics seem starstruck in her presence, and her husband may be the best fund-raiser and political advisor in the world.

Liabilities: Although Clinton has worked to soften her image, many see her more as shrew than shrewd. She and her husband are so despised in some circles, they'll always face take-no-prisoners opposition.

Punditry: "To overcome her negatives she'd have to tell us something about herself we didn't know. We already know everything. I don't see her getting elected."—*Carlson*
"The odds are no worse than 50-50."—*Carville*

6 to 5**COLIN POWELL***Secretary of State*

Assets: Powell has the résumé for the job—retired four-star general, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—and his centrist views make him a crossover candidate.

Liabilities: He's seen as too liberal for hard-line conservatives and too conservative for hard-line liberals.

Punditry: "The right wing hates him. He'd have a much better chance as a Democrat."—*Carville* "He could get elected, but it would be hard for a guy who has been chairman of the Joint Chiefs and secretary of state to sit outside the Pilgrim Diner in Manchester and take shitty questions from reporters from small-town newspapers."—*Carlson*

15 to 1**BILL RICHARDSON***Democratic Governor, New Mexico*

Assets: The former congressman, whose mother is Mexican, earned the nickname 007 for negotiating the release of Americans in North Korea and Iraq. He has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize four times.

Liabilities: He needs to upgrade his wardrobe, lose weight and spend more than \$9 on a haircut.

Punditry: "Popular and a damn good guy. His avenue would probably be that someone would pick him for vice president. Once you are there, you are in the hunt."—*Carville*
"Smart, smooth, one of the most charming people in politics. The guy is Waspier than Bill Buckley."—*Carlson*

20 to 1**HAROLD FORD JR.***Democratic Congressman, Tennessee*

Assets: First elected at the age of 26, Ford is a young (33), ambitious member of a Southern political dynasty. On a national scale, his good looks and cautious political views could help broaden his base beyond minority Democrats.

Liabilities: His naked ambition and rightist approach may be negatives. When he vied for Democratic minority leader in 2002, some powerful blacks dismissed him as "another Clarence Thomas"—that is, an Uncle Tom.

Punditry: "He's very savvy politically. A real comer who's going to be around a long time."—*Carville* "He'd be a lot more rich and famous if he were a Republican."—*Page*

75 to 1**CONDOLLEEZZA RICE***National Security Advisor*

Assets: She has experience in defense issues. Her name has been bandied about as a replacement for VP should Dick Cheney leave office, which would put her one pretzel away.

Liabilities: She has little domestic-policy experience. She's a great Sunday-morning talk-show guest, but her smarts (and Chevron ties) may not play well in Peoria.

Punditry: "An attractive candidate. She has the right background in foreign policy and national defense. She certainly passes the qualifications threshold."—*Carville*
"It's hard to go from never being elected to anything to being elected president."—*Carlson*

100 to 1**JESSE JACKSON JR.***Democratic Congressman, Illinois*

Assets: He has a reputation as a bold, progressive thinker. His most audacious ideas entail amending the Constitution to guarantee all Americans a job, a home and health care.

Liabilities: The nation would have to swing hard to the left for him to be taken seriously.

Punditry: "He's more of a traditional urban politician. My sense is he'd have to expand beyond that."—*Carville*
"Young enough to be a force down the road. He has his father's positives—bright, charismatic speaker, charming family—and almost none of his negatives, except for their mutual failure to be born white."—*Page*

250 to 1**GARY LOCKE***Democratic Governor, Washington*

Assets: The Chinese American moderate has been called a Republican in a Democrat's clothing. His wife is a former television reporter, and he is close to Bill Gates, who could help bankroll an ambitious campaign.

Liabilities: He will not seek a third term, which effectively kills his momentum. He also may not have the gregariousness necessary to campaign on a national level.

Punditry: "He'd be an attractive vice presidential candidate."—*Carville* "The great Asian American hope. But he needs to make more of a national name for himself, especially in terms of national security."—*Page*

250 to 1**GEORGE P. BUSH***Clerk for a Federal Judge*

Assets: He has been called a cross between Ricky Martin and John F. Kennedy Jr. (Bush's mother is Mexican; his father, Jeb, is governor of Florida.) He served as youth chairman at the 2000 Republican Convention, George W. Bush, the 43rd president, has nicknamed his nephew "45" (Jeb is "44").

Liabilities: He's never held elected office and expresses distaste for the media scrutiny that would come with running.

Punditry: "A bright young man who wouldn't be on this list if his name were George P. Schwartz."—*Page* "I see him making pop records. It's hard to see more Bushes getting elected. Not that I'm opposed."—*Carlson*

500 to 1



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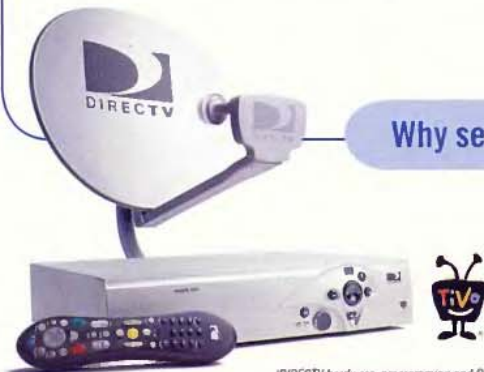
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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW:

50 CENT

A candid conversation with the thug turned hip-hop superstar about getting shot, Eminem and why his feud with rap rivals could turn deadly

All it took was nine bullets to make 50 Cent a legend.

On May 24, 2000 up-and-coming rapper 50 Cent was sitting in a car outside his grandmother's house in the Queens, New York neighborhood of Southside Jamaica when a gunman drove up and fired repeatedly. Initially the attempted murder wasn't good for 50's career: His label, Columbia, dropped him immediately. But the former drug dealer and boxer refused to abandon his music, putting out four albums' worth of "street mix" CDs, sold for cheap on street corners.

In a genre that prizes authenticity, nothing says "keepin' it real" like nine bullet holes. Eminem, the world's biggest rapper, heard 50's street mixes and signed him to a deal with Interscope, the industry's hottest label, in 2002. "There's a mystique about him," Eminem declared.

50 Cent, who is now 27, always had plenty of mystique. Born Curtis Jackson III (he was named after his grandfather), he never met his father and was often left alone by his mother, Sabrina, a low-level drug dealer in Queens. When Jackson was eight, his mother was killed at home by someone who drugged her drink and turned on a gas oven, leaving her to die. The murder didn't deter her

criminal-minded son, who was first arrested for dealing in high school and then in 1994 was busted for possession of heroin, 10 ounces of crack and a starter pistol and sentenced to three to nine years.

Jackson loved rap, though, and saw it as his route to legit riches. Naming himself after a well-known New York street thug, he began working with Jam Master Jay, Run-DMC's legendary DJ. On an audacious 1999 single, "How to Rob," 50 threatened rap heavyweights with burglary, creating an image of himself as ruthless, fearless and calmly remorseless. When Jam Master Jay was murdered in 2002, police questioned 50, hoping he might know who'd killed his mentor.

In its first two weeks of release in February 2003, 50's debut, *Get Rich or Die Tryin'*, sold a remarkable 1.6 million copies. With sales of 6.5 million in the U.S., it was the top-selling CD of the year. Although 50 Cent's appeal began with his illegal exploits and contentious behavior—including feuds with rapper Ja Rule, his Murder Inc. label chief Irv Gotti and jailed drug dealer Kenneth "Supreme" McGriff, whom the government suspects of having funded Murder Inc. to launder drug money—it spread through

the bravado of his witty rhymes and magnetic hooks, which turned gangsta stories into pop smashes, including "In Da Club" and "P.I.M.P." His album "seems to consist of nothing but hits," *The New York Times* wrote. "But it's a grim party: The casual jokes about death are his way of reminding us of the price he might have to pay for his success—and for our entertainment."

PLAYBOY sent Rob Tannenbaum to meet with 50 at the Interscope offices in Manhattan. Tannenbaum arrived unarmed.

PLAYBOY: Are you wearing a bulletproof vest right now?

50 CENT: Nah. I took it off as I came into the building.

PLAYBOY: So you figure we're not a lethal threat, huh?

50 CENT: Yeah. Plus, I don't like to make everybody uncomfortable. Because I'm from the bottom, I have a different class of people who envy me. They have nothing to lose, so the situations can be a little extreme. That's the reason I wear it—just preparing for the worst. Biggie and Tupac got shot, but if they wore the vest, it would have prevented them from dying.

PLAYBOY: When you wear the vest, can



"You get comfortable shooting. The first time, you're scared to death, as scared as the guy you're shooting at. Then it grows easier for you. After a while the idea of shooting someone doesn't bother you."



"I ain't into faggots. I don't like gay people around me, because I'm not comfortable with what their thoughts are. I'm not prejudiced. I just don't go with gay people and kick it—we don't have that much in common."



PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRENNAN CAVANAUGH

"It makes law enforcement afraid, the influence I've got. In my neighborhood you can get somebody killed for \$5,000—if I showed you my bank account, you'd know I could really create Vietnam there at \$5,000 a body."

you tell it makes people uncomfortable?
50 CENT: Absolutely. The majority of people who acquire the finances I have at this point, they come from something totally different. Even if they're not intimidated by me, they're intimidated by what they believe could happen while I'm there. When I was on Columbia Records I didn't want them to be intimidated by my past, so I didn't tell them who I was.

PLAYBOY: You didn't tell them you were a drug dealer.

50 CENT: But when I got shot, they became afraid of me because I responded the way that environment conditions you to respond: Get shot, get up, and if your fingers and toes still move, then you move forward. Getting shot is not a big deal where I'm from. Once they say "He's gonna make it," it's all right. When somebody goes to jail, a new face takes his place to hustle on that strip. It doesn't change. Because getting shot didn't mean as much to me, that made Columbia even more afraid of me.

PLAYBOY: But sitting here right now, you seem calm and friendly. A lot of gangstas glare and shout like they might kill someone any minute.

50 CENT: That's a shield. If you put me in a situation where I feel like I have no choice but to do something to you, it's gonna be done. It makes even law enforcement afraid, the influence I've got. In my neighborhood you can get somebody killed for \$5,000—if I showed you my bank account, you'd know I could really create Vietnam there at \$5,000 a body. *[laughs]* That's what makes them pay so much attention to us.

PLAYBOY: You've toured the U.S. Has all that travel changed you?

50 CENT: Your outlook changes a little bit, but all across the country I've been subjected to the same things I've been subjected to in my neighborhood. I walk through a metal detector, and even though it doesn't go off, they still want to wand me. I'm 50 Cent. I got an aura around me that's negative, and I don't think it's gonna leave. But I'm all right with it. Everything happens for a reason. Being shot in the face, I lost a tooth. *[opens his mouth to show a missing tooth]* Gums, too. And my voice changed. There's a little hiss when I speak, because there's more air in my mouth. And this is the voice that sells millions of records. *[laughs]* I was a felon; now I'm a superstar. I went from nothing to a hell of a lot. I just bought Mike Tyson's old house in Connecticut—18 bedrooms. It's the biggest residential home on the East Coast.

PLAYBOY: You could say that getting shot was the best thing that ever happened to you.

50 CENT: Yeah, I'd still be on Columbia Records. Wow! They didn't understand what I was doing like Eminem and Dr. Dre did. Lyrics that Columbia might have asked me to change, Dre was like, "That's hot."

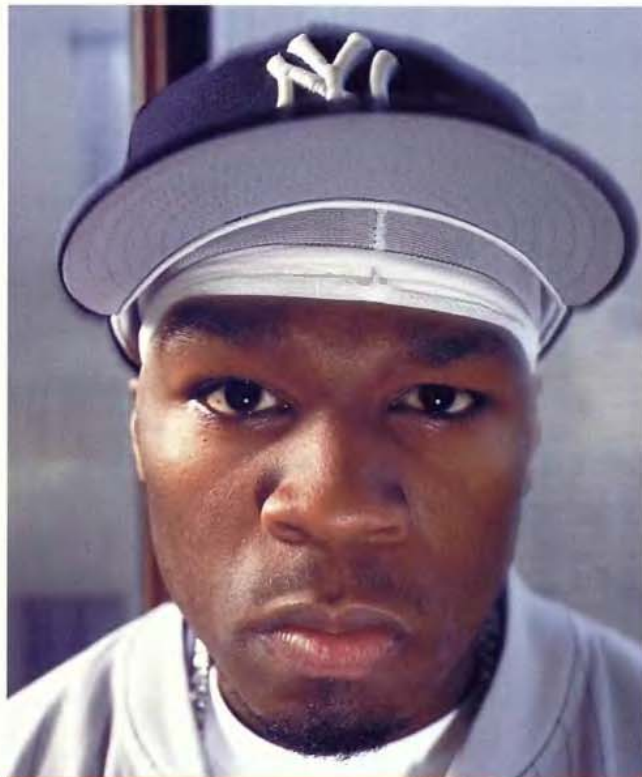
PLAYBOY: So getting shot made Columbia drop you, gave you a distinctive style and made you a legend.

50 CENT: Yeah, it made me special.

PLAYBOY: We saw four very large guys with you in the hallway. Who are they?

50 CENT: Security guards. Two of them are armed.

PLAYBOY: You're a convicted felon, so if



My mom used to like women. I think she had a girlfriend when I was eight. She was really manly.

you were ever caught with a gun, you'd go back to jail.

50 CENT: Right. When Jam Master Jay got killed, they tied my name to that situation immediately. "Do you think somebody would kill him to send 50 a message?" A few years ago they thought I killed two girls. The guy who actually killed them had a Suzuki motorcycle, the same stock colors as mine. They chased me on my bike. I got away, but they got a perception of me in that precinct. They feel like I know exactly who tried to kill me, but they have no information on that from me.

PLAYBOY: Since your jail term, have you carried a gun?

50 CENT: Yeah. Since my jail term I've

been shot nine times. I'd rather get caught with a gun than get caught without one.

PLAYBOY: Your life was like this even when you were young. Tell us about your mom.

50 CENT: My moms was real aggressive. My mom used to like women. I think she had a girlfriend when I was eight years old. She was really manly, really tough, and she had to be—she was hustling. I spent a lot of time with my grandmother even before my mother passed.

PLAYBOY: She was murdered.

50 CENT: She was dead for days before they found her. When they found her, her body was fucked-up. Someone put something in her drink and turned the

gas on. But in my neighborhood, if you had both parents, you were spoiled—"You got a mother *and* a father? Oh shit!"

PLAYBOY: Did your grandmother tell you how your mom died?

50 CENT: I got what happened later. My grandmother was uncomfortable even saying that my mother liked girls.

PLAYBOY: She didn't like the word *lesbian*?

50 CENT: Well, not lesbian. I don't know what you call it—bisexual? I'm here, so it had to be bi. *[laughs]* But I think that's why I don't pass judgment on people. I ain't into faggots. I don't like gay people around me, because I'm not comfortable with what their thoughts are. I'm not prejudiced. I just don't go with gay people and kick it—we don't have that much in common. I'd rather hang out with a straight dude. But women who like women, that's cool. I could actually get into that, having a woman who likes women too. We might have more in common.

PLAYBOY: You use the word *faggot* in your songs, too. Can you refer to gay men as faggots and also say that you're not prejudiced?

50 CENT: It's okay to write that I'm prejudiced. This is as honest as I could possibly be with you. When people become celebrities, they change the way they speak. But my conversation with you is exactly the way I would have a conversation on the street. We refer to gay people as faggots, as homos. It could be disrespectful, but that's the facts.

PLAYBOY: What was the enduring impact of losing your mother so young?

50 CENT: I never knew my father, so I used losing her as an excuse. Every time something was wrong I'd think, If my mother was here, it wouldn't be like that. When I got shot, my son was in the house—so he heard me get shot. I'm sure it altered him. The average

kid doesn't go through that.

PLAYBOY: You once said, "Emotionally I'm like 13."

50 CENT: My most comfortable feeling is anger. If my feelings are hurt or if things don't go my way, I get angry. People get killed around us, and instead of crying we get mad. I had four or five friends get killed in 2003, and I didn't cry. If I'd stayed in the hood, I'd have been one of those five.

PLAYBOY: Did you ever meet your dad?

50 CENT: No. I don't even want to meet him. I already missed the part where your father would be helpful. I'm a grown-assed man.

PLAYBOY: What did your mom tell you about him?

50 CENT: She told me I was born through immaculate conception: "You don't have a father. You were born through immaculate conception, like Jesus." It made me feel good not to have a father.

PLAYBOY: Describe the area of Queens where you grew up.

50 CENT: You could be in that neighborhood and not get in trouble, but trouble's there for you to get into. When you put people on top of people, it's that crabs-in-a-barrel theory. Rats in a box. Eventually they starve and start eating each other. Somebody's gonna take what you've got—unless you become the biggest problem. If you're not the biggest problem, you're in danger. When you're the biggest problem, there's nothing to fear, because everybody else is occupied with staying out of that zone. So the object is to be the biggest fucking problem in the neighborhood.

PLAYBOY: When you started dealing, at 12, where did you get the drugs?

50 CENT: I was uncomfortable asking my grandparents for certain things. They raised their kids at a time when Pro-Keds cost \$10. When I was a kid the new Jordans were more than \$100. The people I met while I was with my mother, they had jewelry and nice cars. They gave me three and a half grams—an eight ball. That's the truth. The same money I would've paid for those Jordans. Sometimes when you ask for fish, people give you a pole.

PLAYBOY: Why would they give cocaine to a 12-year-old?

50 CENT: Because I was Sabrina's little boy. No mother, no father—they didn't see grandparents in my life.

PLAYBOY: Did you sell it? Cut it? Cook it?

50 CENT: I didn't know what to do with it. Kids from my neighborhood helped me the first couple of times. Then I did it myself because I was eager. I could hustle only after school. I told my grandparents I was in an after-school program.

PLAYBOY: And in a way, you were.

50 CENT: I was in a special program. [laughs] Once you get one person comfortable dealing with you, that turns into two, three, four people. As I got into junior high school I started hustling often.

FIVE WHO HATE 50

What's a rapper without enemies? A look at 50 Cent's hit list



JA RULE

Bad blood: Back in 1999 a friend of 50 Cent's relieved Ja Rule of his jewelry, and things have only escalated since. Ja and 50 Cent have gotten in each other's faces at least twice—one incident resulted in an associate of Ja's stabbing 50 (who insists it was just a nick). But the two rappers trade most of their jabs in interviews and on albums. **Enemy firepower:** fists, knives, thugs, complicit journalists, lyric sheets.



NYPD

Bad blood: In 1994 then-19-year-old 50 Cent was arrested for selling crack to an undercover narc, beginning a long relationship with the NYPD. After Jam Master Jay was murdered in 2002, New York cops wondered if his death was related to the rapper's rivalry with Murder Inc. 50 claims the NYPD is harassing him because "they would prefer to lock me up than see me do well." **Enemy firepower:** badges, search warrants, SWAT teams.



LIL' KIM

Bad blood: 50 mocked Lil' Kim for getting a nose job in the song "Love Me." The two later recorded a duet, "Magic Stick," but then 50 pissed Kim off again by refusing to appear in the video. After 50 rapped about their beef on a radio show, someone fired shots at him. The *New York Daily News* theorized that Lil' Kim's boyfriend, Damion Hardy, was involved. **Enemy firepower:** a filthy mouth, a protective boyfriend.



KENNETH McGRIFF

Bad blood: The drug-gang kingpin once controlled the streets where 50 grew up, and the IRS claims he is also the true owner of Murder Inc. The feds believe McGriff engineered the attempt on 50's life because of his feud with Ja Rule. McGriff is currently serving 37 months in prison on a parole violation. **Enemy firepower:** bulldog lawyers, loyal subjects, a reputation for keeping people in line.



VIVICA A. FOX

Bad blood: During his acceptance speech at a 2003 awards show, 50 thanked the sexy actress for wearing a revealing dress. Soon afterward they were spotted canoodling on both coasts. Depending on whom you want to believe, either she grew jealous of other women lavishing attention on him, or he resented being used by her management to promote her career. **Enemy firepower:** 50's phone number, breasts that never quit. —PATTY LAMBERTI



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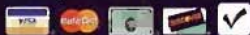
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PLAYBOY: Selling what?

50 CENT: Crack. A little heroin. My aunts and uncles would have a party, and like weed today, so many people used cocaine, it wasn't looked at like a drug. They would say, "Go get some cocaine." They didn't know I already had it.

PLAYBOY: You did buy-one-get-one-free promotions.

50 CENT: And I only called it "buy one, get one free" because they were calling it "two for \$5" on the next block. I was trying to make it different. I was marketing! Fiends want something free, so use the word *free*. It's better than "two for \$5."

PLAYBOY: Did it work?

50 CENT: Hell yes, it worked. And I made the pieces bigger. Some guys made small pieces and figured they would make a huge profit. But it takes them longer to sell the pieces. I made the pieces huge, and they started coming from down the block. All the pieces would sell the same day, and I'd accumulate more money.

PLAYBOY: You were arrested for bringing drugs to school.

50 CENT: After I got caught I had to tell my grandma. She asked me if the charges were true, and I don't lie to my grandma. As crazy as it sounds, I felt like I got caught because I was hiding it from her. I told her I did it, and I told her I was going to keep doing it. She was upset. She was hurt. She said, "Don't call here when you get in trouble."

PLAYBOY: That seems pretty heavy for a teenager.

50 CENT: Older dudes in our neighborhood were way worse. They were robbing banks; they would kidnap each other. They tried to rob me one night in front of my grandmother's house. I was 19 and had bought a 400 SE Mercedes-Benz. I got to the front door, and the sliding door of a cargo van opened. They had a shotgun. I jumped over the porch and ran for a gun in the backyard. *Pow!* I got away from them, though. There's a strong possibility they would've killed me.

PLAYBOY: Did you ever use the gun you hid in your grandmother's yard?

50 CENT: The first time I ever shot somebody, I was in junior high school. I was coming out of a project building—I ain't gonna tell you where. I was going to see this girl. I had my uncle's jewelry on, and two kids decided to rob me. This kid was like, "Yo, c'mere, let me holler at you." As I turned around they all started pouring out of the lobby. It had to be 15 people stepping to me to rob me. I had a little .380 six-shot pistol, and I didn't even look. I just spun around bangin'. *Pop-pop-pop-pop-pop!* Shot and just kept runnin'.

PLAYBOY: Did you hit anybody?

50 CENT: Yeah, I hit one of 'em. And that encouraged the next situation. After that, you get comfortable shooting. The first time, you're scared to death, as scared as the guy you're shooting at.

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Then it grows easier for you. Everybody has a conscience. You say to yourself, Man, he was gonna do something to me. Then it's like, I don't give a fuck, whatever. After a while the idea of shooting someone doesn't bother you.

PLAYBOY: How many other times have you shot someone?

50 CENT: I don't even wanna talk about shooting people. But I'll tell you, there were a couple of other situations where there were exchanges back and forth.

PLAYBOY: Did you get caught?

50 CENT: Ninety percent of the time the police ain't that good. The only way they know is if they catch you on the scene. They've got people who are supposed to understand criminal thinking, but how do you understand a criminal's thinking when the person who did it didn't think?

PLAYBOY: A few years ago, in the song "50 Shot Ya," you hinted that you had killed two people. Have you ever killed anyone?

50 CENT: Nah. No.

PLAYBOY: Are you telling the truth?

50 CENT: Honestly, I wouldn't say if I had. Because the case doesn't go away, no matter what year it was. If they get wind, you're going away forever.

PLAYBOY: You say everybody has a conscience. Does your conscience ever bother you?

50 CENT: Gangsta is something that happened to me. That's not the way my grandmother raised me to be. That's the way the hood made me. You see a kid who isn't doing well in school and you tell him, "Yo, if you do good for eight more years, you could have a car." Then he finds out he can get a car in six months by running in the streets, and it feels like the way to go.

PLAYBOY: Did hustling make you more popular with girls?

50 CENT: Hell yeah. In the hood, your success is on wheels. It's about your appearance. When you first start, everybody is hustling for clothes, a different pair of sneakers every day so you're fresh all the time.

PLAYBOY: How old were you when you lost your virginity?

50 CENT: Like 15. I ain't shy. *No* means "try again." *No* means she's in a relationship right now, but you try again when she's upset with him. A lot of pimps think like that too.

PLAYBOY: You boxed when you were a kid. What did you learn from that?

50 CENT: After you box a little bit, you're conscious of your opponent's actions. And you're less emotional because you fight every day. So the fight doesn't mean as much. You're not fighting angry. You're fighting to win the fight, even in the street. I don't have to seem upset to react. If you say something and I feel like you should be punched in the face for it, my actions might not show you that I'm going to hit you. I'll punch you, and then we'll start fighting.

PLAYBOY: When you were dealing, did

you also do drugs?

50 CENT: No. I stayed away. My homeys used to buy weed, bag it up and smoke the profits. These niggas were stupid. They smoked the whole shit.

PLAYBOY: "In Da Club" is about being drunk on champagne, and "High All the Time" is about love for weed. But you don't really like drugs or booze.

50 CENT: It doesn't bother me to be around people who smoke weed, but I don't do it. I've been drunk only twice in my life—from champagne. That shit sneaks up on you! Those two times are what kept me away from it. I grew up in a house where my uncles and aunts, they had problems. They'd get *drunk* drunk. One time my uncle got drunk, and these old-timers said, "I bet you can't move that block of ice from there to there." He took the bet, picked up the ice, moved it. But it was dry ice. Burned the skin off his fucking hands.

PLAYBOY: Do you believe drugs should be legalized?

50 CENT: Hell no, they shouldn't legalize drugs. That won't work here. Weed is the hustler's drug to sell. You can have five pounds before it's a felony. A one-pound bag is still just a misdemeanor. Let them change the laws for weed to the same laws for cocaine, and people won't smoke that shit no more.

PLAYBOY: At the height of your hustling, how much were you making?

50 CENT: Like \$5,000 a day. I had a crack house on 160th Street with buckets of acid, so if the cops came, you would just push everything off the table into the bucket and there'd be no evidence.

PLAYBOY: In July 1994 you got caught with heroin and crack. Here's a copy of the plea bargain you signed. What were you thinking when you signed it?

50 CENT: My lawyer said, "I'll get you out in six months." I said, "What? Give it here." I copped out right away, because they found a lot of shit in the house, and I thought the sentence would be a lot worse. I got arrested with 500 grams of cocaine.

PLAYBOY: Instead of going to prison, you were sentenced to a shock-incarceration facility. What's that?

50 CENT: It's boot camp, a lot of physical training starting at five in the morning. I had to accept a drill sergeant screaming in my face. You can not accept him screaming in your face and go do three to nine years in jail, or you can let them say what they gotta say and do six months. It's an easy decision. I was sentenced to three to nine years in jail. Because it was a nonviolent charge, I turned it into something a little easier.

PLAYBOY: Is that when you started rapping and first met up with your mentor, Jam Master Jay?

50 CENT: The whole time, I was like, Yo, I got to figure out something I can do. And I loved writing music. The whole object when I was hustling, when I was

(continued on page 139)

HE'S IN WAY OVER HIS HEAD



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CURSE OF THE DOUBLE EAGLE

NEVER BEFORE HAS A SINGLE GOLD PIECE INSPIRED SUCH FEVERISH DESIRE AMONG MEN—OR HELD SUCH DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES. A RARE LOOK AT THE WORLD'S MOST EXPENSIVE COIN

BY BRYAN CHRISTY

All eyes turn forward as David Redden, Sotheby's vice chairman and top auctioneer, mounts his pulpit. A silver-haired man with large ears and dark eyes, he adjusts his microphone and picks up his gavel. It is July 30, 2002. A congregation of millionaires sits in rows of padded chairs for an auction more than half a century in the making. There are no cheap seats tonight—it's standing room only for the relative unfortunates crowded in the back of the main Sotheby's salesroom. In the gallery's 12 private skyboxes, a few guests have drawn the curtains. Others sip wine in plain view.

Onstage, a pedestal holds a glinting circle of metal less than an inch and a half in diameter. It is the only item up for bid: a \$20 U.S. gold coin dated 1933—the legendary Saint-Gaudens double eagle (“Saint-Gaudens” after its designer, “double eagle” because \$10 coins are known as eagles).

Digital counters loom above the stage to track the bidding in dollars, euros and pounds. “This will not be a long sale,” Redden announces. “It will be a great moment.”

Redden's specialty is selling the rarest of the rare. He has taken 130 crates of bones and sold them as the most complete *Tyrannosaurus rex* in history. He has flogged Soviet space suits and capsules. He has even auctioned off the deed to a lunar rover that will most likely never return to earth. Most of all, though, he traffics in stories.

The key to selling rarities is provenance: Who owned it and how badly do you want your name added to the list? An object's story is what gives it value.

Tonight's coin has a provenance as great as any coin in American history: Nearly 70 years ago it was stolen from the U.S. Mint. According to the auction catalog, “no 1933 double eagle could, or can, be legitimately



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PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD IZUI

owned by any individual—until this one. Until now.” Apart from two 1933 double eagles on display at the Smithsonian, Redden’s coin is believed to be the only one of its type, for decades rumored to exist only in the back rooms of the most devout collectors. Tonight the U.S. Mint is a Sotheby’s client. Together they have spread the word of the coin’s dark, illegitimate passage through the vaults of wealthy and unscrupulous men—a history of personal betrayals, lost fortunes and intrigue. Only fleeting reference is made to more recent crimes—how it was smuggled into the country, how the British coin dealer who will walk away with half the money tonight was once led from the Waldorf-Astoria hotel in handcuffs—and the auction catalog contains just one mention of the wiretaps and the undercover sting that brought the coin to light.

Redden and his team have spent months turning the coin into a star, emphasizing its singularity and mystery. Matt Lauer wears white gloves to hold it on the *Today* show. *The New York Times* gives a photograph of the coin the entire upper fold of its Metropolitan section. During its public-relations tour, the double eagle travels by armored car, airplane, train and limousine convoy, protected alternately by the U.S. Secret Service, U.S. Mint police, Federal Reserve Bank security, New York City police, the California Highway Patrol, the U.S. Army and corporate security teams.

dled an ounce of gold, and this one, shining in the spotlight, seems especially ethereal. Experts call it the most remarkable coin ever produced in America—the *Mona Lisa* of coins, the Holy Grail. Up



A rarity revealed: This 1933 double eagle inspired passion, desperation and greed in top collectors.

close, however, the coin seems fairly unremarkable. On the face, a zaftig Lady Liberty, thick-limbed and masculine, strides forward. She holds a freedom torch in her right hand, an olive branch in her left. The tip of her nose is a bit worn, and one leg is scratched and pitted.

all who have come in contact with her.

As it turns out, Redden is about to drop the hammer on what may be the biggest coin scam in history. The object on display this evening may or may not be the coin Redden and company have led everyone to believe it is. And in an irony consistent with the coin’s history, a felon will sell the government’s stolen coin: The government’s auctioneer, Sotheby’s principal owner Alfred Taubman, will report to federal prison the morning after the sale because of a price-fixing scandal. All of which only enhances the true account of the 1933 double eagle, the one that never made its way into the papers. It’s an astonishing tale of deception and double-dealing, proving that money changes everything—even the law.

Nine minutes after he began, Redden slams down his gavel on the winning bid of \$6.6 million. The buyer is anonymous. Including 15 percent in buyer’s fees and \$20 tagged on to mark the face value of the coin, Redden has just shattered the world record for a coin sold at public auction: \$7,590,020.

Someone now owns a very odd story.

THE BAIT

On December 8, 1995, an unseasonably warm day in Amarillo, Texas, agent Dave Freriks of the U.S. Secret Service pulled up to the Santa Fe Restaurant & Bar. Shortly before lunchtime, Freriks, all six feet and 230 pounds of him, lifted himself out of his car and walked up to a white Cadillac DeVille idling in the parking lot. A farm boy who left the family spread in 1957 for a career in criminal justice, Freriks headed the two-agent Lubbock office, 100 miles to the south, and dealt mostly with counterfeiting, tax dodges by the Texas militia and computer crimes. His sole brush with the big time came after John Hinckley shot President Ronald Reagan: Within hours Freriks had gathered Hinckley’s academic records from Texas Tech.

The driver of the Cadillac got out and presented his ID to the agent. Freriks groaned inwardly at the manu-

COIN DEALING IS A SCREW-THE-WIDOW PROFESSION. FOR A DEALER, THE BIG MONEY COMES WHEN A WIDOW OR GRANDKIDS WANT TO GET RID OF THOSE DUSTY TRAYS THEY FOUND IN A SAFE-DEPOSIT BOX.

It is given its own room at Fort Knox.

By the night of the Sotheby’s auction, any collector wealthy enough to buy his dreams wants the 1933 double eagle. Now Redden will stoke that passion in \$100,000 increments. He starts at \$2.5 million. Bids flow in from the floor.

“Two million eight on the right,” Redden says.

Most Americans have never han-

Though her hair still snakes in the wind, she doesn’t glimmer as much as an untouched coin in a collector’s vault. She is a woman of secrets, a woman with the power to turn men to crime.

Like the Maltese Falcon, she represents all things to the men who have handled her in the past six years: wealth, power, fame—often all three. And like that mythical object, she has corrupted



Con man or jack-of-all-trades? Texan Jack Moore sparked the historic Secret Service sting.



For agent Dave Freriks, the double eagle was a chance to cap a long career with a big bust.

factured drama of the move. The man was Jack Moore, a retired truck driver and an occasional source for an FBI agent Freriks knew. In the preceding days, Moore had been in contact with Freriks about a story involving a stolen coin. Currency-related crimes were a case for the Secret Service, not the FBI, so Freriks made the drive.

Moore, a short man with a Texas-size belly, looked to be in his late 50s. He led Freriks inside the restaurant, reflexively saying hello to strangers. They took a table in the back corner and

ordered chicken fajitas. Within an hour Freriks's ears were tired. Moore called him "friend" within minutes and clearly relished being in the company of an agent. He said he grew up poor. Said he was a retired truck driver for Groendyke Transport. Said he was a former Las Vegas limo driver—for a debt collector. Oh, and a gun dealer.

More to the point, though, Moore's sideline was coins—didn't collect them himself but loved to deal them. His crowning achievement was collecting for his former boss, John Groendyke. It

happened by chance: One day he noticed a strange and beautiful gold coin on Groendyke's desk—a 1908 Saint-Gaudens double eagle. Groendyke, an Oklahoma trucking magnate, had bought it to commemorate his father's birth year.

Groendyke was a coin dealer's dream—a man with deep resources and scant coin knowledge. Moore decided to give him an impromptu lesson in numismatics. You can't do better than a Saint-Gaudens double eagle, Moore told him, praising the coin. With excitement he pointed out its lifelike Lady

MONEY NOBODY WANTED

Some coins become precious objects, but others just can't buy a break

HALF-CENT PIECE

Minted: 1793–1857

The half cent never gained popularity, even though it was one of the first coins the U.S. Mint issued. In many years none were made at all, according to Ken Bressett, editor of the *Guide Book of United States Coins*, a.k.a. the Red Book. "You'd think it would be needed—the lowest denomination available," says Bressett. "But it was shunned." And laughed at. Hence its nickname, the ha' penny.



THREE-CENT PIECE

Minted: 1851–1889

The three-cent piece was the \$2 bill of coins. According to Nancy Green of the American Numismatic Association, it was issued because stamps cast three cents at the time. "It was long-lived," she says, "but it became unpopular because it was just so odd." Also odd is that versions in two different metals overlapped: A silver coin was produced from 1851 to 1873, and a nickel one from 1865 to 1889.



20-CENT PIECE

Minted: 1875–1878

The dollar has its origins in the silver tolar, an Austrian currency, while original New World coins were Spanish reals, based on a system that divided money into eighths. (That's why the phrase *two bits* refers to a quarter dollar—it's two eighths.) So where did that leave the 20-cent piece? Odd coin out. An unusual denomination in any system, it was derided. Outside of the liquor industry, fifths are useless.



SUSAN B. ANTHONY DOLLAR

Minted: 1979–1981 and 1999

The least popular coin in the modern era, the Susan B. suffered from a design flaw—it was hard to distinguish from the quarter. Just 857 million were released in two decades (typically a few billion of a given coin are minted each year). The final 41 million were made in 1999 before the current gold dollar was unveiled in 2000, and then it was good-bye, silver dolly.



ZINC PENNY

Minted: 1982–present

When the penny switched from mostly copper to copper-plated zinc, production costs dropped to .81 cents, making it the cheapest coin the Mint manufactures. That doesn't stop people from hating it—or the Mint from stamping more. "We make more pennies than anything else," says Michael White of the U.S. Mint—nearly 7 billion in 2003 alone. In other words, they'll keep making 'em as fast as we can throw them out.





An expensive piece of paper: With this document, the U.S. Mint and Sotheby's legitimized the sale of a stolen coin.

Liberty and the delicate rays of sunlight surrounding her. The double eagle was the biggest American coin, he explained, the most valuable by sheer weight and the most beautiful. Commissioned by Teddy Roosevelt and designed by America's greatest sculptor, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, the double eagle entered circulation in 1907 and ended with the 1932 run, after Franklin D. Roosevelt ended the gold-coin program. Groendyke was thrilled and saw the shining gold piece in his fingers in a new light. Bitten by the collecting bug, he hired Moore and a partner to assemble a complete set of the \$20 gold coins. Under Moore's guidance, Groendyke collected 53 unique examples in three years. Moore put the collection's value at nearly \$2 million.

Freriks caught himself before he was completely sucked in. Here he was, meeting with a fast-talking guy in the middle of nowhere, listening to him ramble on about obscure coins as if they were buried treasure. What was the crime, he asked, and—more important—how was Moore involved?

The other day, Moore told him, a coin dealer in Missouri named Jay Parrino had offered him a 1933 double eagle. Freriks didn't have the faintest idea what Moore was getting at. Didn't he just say the last double eagle was minted in 1932? Moore explained that 1933 coins were made, but they were all supposedly melted down at FDR's order. Moore took out a book he had brought with him, R.S. Yeoman's *A Guide Book of United States Coins*—the Red Book to coin dealers. He leaned across the table. "See there, where it says 'none

placed in circulation?'" he asked. "That means it's illegal." Freriks understood. Even 60 years after the fact, owning the 1933 double eagle would be equal to possessing stolen government property—a particularly valuable piece of government property.

When lunch ended, Moore gave Freriks photocopies of his Red Book and articles about the coin and Parrino from



Sotheby's auctioneer David Redden directs the bidding.

The Numismatist and *Coin World*. And to make sure he had Freriks hooked, he dropped his bomb. Parrino, Moore claimed, was a mobster.

THE TARGET

Back in Lubbock, Freriks sent word to Washington and asked for files related to the 1933 double eagle. Then he dug into the material from Moore and made inquiries about Jay Parrino.

Parrino was elusive. By Freriks's account, he seemed to have appeared out of nowhere in the late 1980s to become one of the leading figures in coin collecting. He took out full-page ads in enthusiast magazines, boasting millions of dollars in rare coins. Clearly he was a

superstar in this strange world. He once outbid Dennis Rodman for an 1885 silver trade dollar (\$907,500). He owned one of only seven Brasher doubloons, an American Revolution-era coin made famous by Raymond Chandler's novel *The High Window*. He signed autographs for strangers at coin shows. He was 49, he was aggressive, and he had a seemingly endless supply of money and unknown big clients. He was Italian American and under investigation by the IRS. Freriks's interest was piqued.

When information on the 1933 double eagle arrived from Washington, Freriks spent days poring over it in his bulletproof office. The coin had once been a major case for the Secret Service. According to U.S. Mint records, 445,500 double eagles were made in 1933, and all but two sent to the Smithsonian were melted down into gold bars by 1938. Or so the official story went. Then, to the astonishment of the Secret Service, a genuine 1933 double eagle popped up at a coin auction in New York in 1944. Apparently a Philadelphia Mint employee had stolen a small but undetermined number of coins, and when he and his fence were questioned, they yielded little. In the years after 1944 the Secret Service aggressively pursued stolen 1933 coins, tracking down dealers who had contact with the man who had fenced the coins. One after another they turned over their coins and then their friends—no one wanted to lose his coin and make another's that much more valuable. Agents discovered that the giants of American numismatics—wealthy, politically connected men—had a sweet tooth for the 1933 coin. The prices they paid suggested the men knew something was wrong in the rare coin's past, yet they bought it anyway.

Freriks was not surprised. Rich people always seemed to need the one thing they couldn't have. On paper the coin men were genteel even when they sued to keep their coins (and lost).

By the end of 1952 the Secret Service had confiscated and melted down nine coins. A 10th coin had left the country after a Texas coin dealer sold it to King Farouk of Egypt. In 1954, after Farouk was overthrown, Sotheby's tried to sell his coin for the new Egyptian government. The U.S. State Department protested, and the coin was removed from auction. That was the last official sighting of one of the stolen coins. If a 1933 coin had escaped the U.S. government's dragnet, it would be rare indeed.

(continued on page 78)



"Please remove your dress and panties for the examination, but leave on the shoes and fishnet stockings."



We've always thrilled to the sight of beautiful girls moving to the music on the dance floor. Lately, however, we've been noticing more and more women who lay down the grooves themselves. The club DJ booth, long a bastion of male spinners, has suddenly become a much hotter place. Female DJs are taking over the turntables, turning up the volume and making heads bob with more than just their beats. So what happened when we put out a call for the sexiest she-jays in the land? Let's just say we're glad they take requests. Whether they specialize in techno, tribal, house, hip-hop, retro or electro, these girls all rock—and think it's fine if sex appeal is part of what's raising the temperature on the dance floor. One mix minx, DJ Tuesdae, even spins topless. "Most likely I'll die young and go to hell and party with metal bands for eternity," she says. While we catch our breath, we can't help but wonder if the uninhibited dance-floor antics ever spill into the booth. DJ Snezana volunteers this tidbit: "When I was spinning in Tokyo, a young model from the U.S.—she's famous now—got body-painted in my booth and simulated an orgasm to a song. Wicked!" No matter if you prefer your music on low or loud, our vinyl-loving vixens will make your head spin.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAT

Female DJs crank up
the volume—and take
off their clothes



DJ Tatiana

This beauty of the booth spins house tunes in L.A. that "move your soul and grab your insides," she says. "I need an edge that is spiraling, and I'll deejay until I'm deaf. My intensity is scary, so you've got to be able to take it. Grab it and claim it, boy! I am a goddess."



DJ Tuesdae

"I'm a press whore," asserts this Hollywood scenester. "Everything I've achieved has been the result of my fierce ambition and grand delusions. Come get lost in my rock and roll. Love the pole and the hole. Let the good times roll!"



DJ Keri

This Atlanta turntable temptress and singer has some naughty road stories: "In Aruba these dancers were pouring beer down their asses, and guys were standing between their legs, drinking it. Gross but cool."



DJ Aphrodita

Don't doubt this New York City-based deity's skills. "There is nothing I cannot play," she says. "It's just a matter of how I mix it in. I'm having a good time. I'd love to work with Dr. Dre, so if you're reading this, Dre, holla at me!"



DJ Snezana

Snezana was born in Yugoslavia, went to school in Australia, married a tiger handler she met in Tokyo and now spins in Miami. "I'm a rock chick at heart," she says, "but I love house, electro-clash and hip-hop."





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DJ Diamond

This gem grew up in Hawaii and developed a clothing line before moving to Manchester, U.K. and discovering techno. "San Diego is my home base," she says. "I've put out four CDs and have one coming out in early 2004 with my DJ partner, Tatiana. I see myself doing this for the rest of my life—I'll be the granny DJ."

DJ Ines

"I started deejaying at my fourth birthday party," says Ines Pardo, who lives in Los Angeles. "Back then I would close the door to my room and dance for hours." Before she became a mix master, Ines studied modern dance and traveled the world as a model. "Now I help organize fashion shows with kids in my hometown."





DOUBLE EAGLE (continued from page 70)

"I can get my guy to wire \$1.5 million if somebody hands me a briefcase with some cash in it."

Agent Freriks was fired up. After a time, so were his bosses in D.C. This wasn't just about a coin; this was about stolen government property. If Parrino were caught with the double eagle, he could go to jail. At a minimum he'd lose the coin—and a lot of money. With six months to retirement, Freriks decided to launch the biggest case of his career. If he handled it right, he would solve a multimillion-dollar mystery. That, he thought, would be historically cool.

Moore, meanwhile, was bent on placing himself at the center of the case. He laced his facts about the coin with stories about Parrino and organized crime. He said Parrino was rumored to be connected to money launderers and Las Vegas underworld figures. When Freriks said he doubted Moore was in it just to rid the coin business of a "black mark," Moore switched gears. He told Freriks that Parrino had once cheated him on a \$5,000 commission. Freriks's doubts ebbed: Revenge is a more typical motive for an informant.

Moore became Secret Service Confidential Informant 324-15.

In an auction, as the saying goes, all you need is two people who want something. In a con, all you need is one. U.S. Secret Service agent Dave Freriks wanted Jay Parrino. And Jack Moore knew it.

THE SETUP

Moore had dealt with Parrino more than a dozen times. Parrino—short, with smoothed hair and a rumbling voice—was the best dealer he knew for truly unique American coins. His prices were high. He was wily, too. At one point Moore and his former boss Groendyke hired Parrino to buy an unusual coin anonymously in Chicago. According to Moore, Parrino reported that the coin wasn't up to their standards. Then he bought it for himself, had it regraded and sold it to the two men at a \$76,000 markup. Parrino claims he never went to Chicago for Moore and Groendyke. "Everything that comes out of Moore's mouth is a lie," he says.

Freriks obtained legal authority for Moore to record his telephone conversations with Parrino. Sitting on the edge of his bed, using his granddaughter's tape recorder and a suction-cup microphone, Moore talked to Parrino about the weather, his Christmas plans and money. Moore loved taping his calls. In fact, beginning on December

13, 1995 and continuing long past the close of the sting operation, Moore recorded his conversations with Freriks, too.

MOORE: It's immaterial to you or the people you represent what I make off of him, isn't it?

FRERIKS: That's correct. We don't care what your cut is.

MOORE: All right. In other words, if I say, "When we make this deal and we see the coin and the wire transfer is coming down, you hand me a briefcase with a hundred grand in it." You don't care, do you?

FRERIKS: Right.

MOORE: Okay.

FRERIKS: You mean that's gonna be your cut from him?

MOORE: He does people like that all the time.

FRERIKS: [Surprised] So he's gonna be handing you a hundred thousand just for setting this thing up?

MOORE: Maybe. Who knows? I mean, it's immaterial to you, isn't it?

FRERIKS: Well, it's immaterial to me, but whether or not you get to keep it is something else.

Moore was in it for the money. "I mean, here's my position," he told Freriks on December 18, 1995. "If you want me to help you with a longtime deal to get this guy for all the other stuff he's done and everything, I'll work with a different kind of deal...but if this is just a onetime deal, I want to make something out of it."

It was typical informant bullshit—every coin dealer has a little larceny in his heart, he thought. Freriks kept his eye on the target. He instructed Moore to offer Parrino \$750,000. Moore had other ideas. It was ridiculous to lowball a price the government would never pay. When Parrino suggested \$1.5 million, Moore responded, "We would like to pay less," but he didn't fuss.

Moore and Parrino were now partners, middlemen in the transaction, with Moore representing an unknown Texas buyer, Parrino the invisible European seller. "What's the most money we can give to these guys?" Parrino asked Moore on December 18 as large snowflakes fell outside both men's homes. There were four inches in Amarillo and one in Independence, Missouri.

Coin dealing is a screw-the-widow profession. For average dealers, the big money comes when a widow or grandkids want to get rid of those dusty trays

they found in the safe-deposit box or in the bottom of a dresser drawer. "They'll rob you to death," says one coin dealer. Knowing their colleagues will take advantage of their family, many collectors who are on death's door will sell off their coins. And that's only one of a dealer's many fears. "Most big-money dealers make their money off one player," says another dealer. "They guard their player and do anything to find yours." At coin shows, customers at a busy display case will pick up five coins and return four. Thieves may hear of a sale and follow a dealer home. For years one of the country's leading numismatists, Columbia University's Dr. William Sheldon (father of today's one-to-70 coin-grading system) swapped his coins with the collections he was researching. Passion is a weakness. One of the juiciest prospects in the coin world is a collector on the verge of achieving a complete set. Even though Moore told Parrino his buyer was not who he might be thinking, Moore's reputation as Groendyke's dealer helped lure Parrino into his trap.

On December 19, 1995 Freriks authorized Moore to up his offer by \$250,000, to \$1 million. Moore was already past that figure. A day earlier he had told Parrino, "I can get my guy to wire a million and a half if somebody—and I don't care who—hands me a briefcase with some cash in it..."

"I got you," Parrino replied.

Throughout the operation Moore—not Freriks—made the key strategic decisions. Moore set the price and the location and even suggested that he wear a body wire for meetings. He continued to tape his phone calls at home but warned that his tape recorder crapped out occasionally. Freriks suspected Moore might have another reason for his inconsistent recordings, but he did not press his informant.

Moore played Parrino and Freriks similarly: Parrino wanted money; Freriks wanted an arrest. Moore, of course, wanted both.

By mid-January the deal appeared set, and Freriks promised Moore a \$5,000 reward. On January 18, 1996 he told Moore, "Don't offer any more money." The next day Moore called Freriks, upset. "Parrino's saying he won't take care of me until the whole thing is over! I can't do this for \$5,000," he whined. "You people do not have any idea what kind of bullshit is gonna happen once this happens—if it happens..."

Freriks typed an e-mail to headquarters regarding Moore's commission: "324-15 was advised at length that any monies received without the knowledge of this service would be

(continued on page 153)



"Don't worry about me. I've always been able to do two things at once."

YEAR IN MUSIC | 2004

YOU ROCKED THE VOTE AND WE LISTENED.
A DRUMROLL, PLEASE...

It has been the kind of year that makes music fans turn up the volume and industry execs pull out their ponytails. The pop jukebox has become increasingly fragmented, and hip-hop, punk-pop, Southern rock, electroclash, camp metal, R&B and whatever the hell you call OutKast all got their numbers punched. The music industry has responded to these dizzying developments by throwing up its hands in a collective "What the fuck?" Amid megamergers and layoffs, labels blamed their sales slump on—who else?—their customers, siccing lawyers on 12-year-olds in an effort to curb downloading.

Through it all, it has been an interesting time to be a music fan. Thousands of you voted in our annual poll, telling us exactly what dominated your iPods. Even if the garage-rock revolution we were promised didn't materialize, the White Stripes created their first masterpiece, *Elephant*—your favorite rock record. Coldplay penned your favorite song, "Clocks," and singer Chris Martin was rewarded with the opportunity to impregnate Gwyneth Paltrow. And whoever thought they'd live to see teen pop go legit? Justin Timberlake sent you into gleeful, if somewhat shamed, paroxysms by morphing into Michael Jackson (a position made available by Jackson morphing into something as yet unclassified by science).

On the metal front, aside from Metallica's weak *St. Anger*, it's been out with the nu and in with the retooled old, namely the unabashed bombast of the Darkness. Neo-rednecks such as Kings of Leon satisfied those who miss the glory days of Skynyrd and the Allmans.

In hip-hop, Jay-Z "retired," the Neptunes continued their reign as überproducers, and 50 Cent proved that no marketing hook is as key as getting shot in da face.

It makes sense that amid such chaos OutKast would rule the universe. You voted *Speakerboxxx/The Love Below* hip-hop album of the year, but you could easily have voted it best funk album, best psychedelic jazz album or best rock-soul poetry slam. As such, it's a perfect microcosm of music now: a complete and utter mess. On the following pages, check out all our poll winners and visit with some other acts that are making the mess so entertaining.

TOP 5 FIVE

LIVE SHOWS OF ALL TIME

ROB THOMAS OF MATCHBOX TWENTY

- 1 **Willie Nelson > Tramps, New York City** "Willie played for three and a half hours. I met him for the first time that night, and by the time the show was finished, I was so drunk I could only keep saying 'I love you, man,' over and over."
- 2 **Billy Joel > Madison Square Garden, New York City** "Billy Joel is New York. The show was around Christmas. To see 'New York State of Mind' at the Garden was almost religious."
- 3 **Live > Hamburg, Germany** "Just as they played 'Lightning Crashes,' a storm broke and lightning flew across the sky over the stadium. We stood on the side of the stage, thinking, This is what an amazing live band sounds like."
- 4 **Old 97's > Mercury Lounge, New York City** "In a small club you get blown away by the energy of this great band. At the end of the night the crowd was as sweaty as the players."
- 5 **Dave Matthews Band > Hamburg, Germany** "I've seen this band in arenas, stadiums and clubs, but on this night, in a little circus tent, it was so, so good. It was my favorite part of my Germany trip—and that includes our set."



the innovators

What's cooler than being cool? Two ice-cold phenoms from Atlanta



In an era of sagging sales, Atlanta rap duo **OutKast** released *Speakerboxxx/The Love Below*—an unorthodox 39-track double CD—and scored two huge mainstream hits, "Hey Ya!" and "The Way You Move." Intelligent, provocative and always interesting, **OutKast** is on top of the world.

out a double CD, and it was well received. We're ready to give the people more. We're always working on music.

PLAYBOY: How can hip-hop break away from its clichés?

BIG BOI: You don't have to do the same types of things. Songs don't have to be complex. They just have to be honest and funky. You don't have to stay in the same frame of mind and do one particular kind of music. If you're in a grocery store and you have so many different ingredients, you need to know what to make. You go to each aisle and pick out something and then make whatever you want. It just depends on what you have a taste for. We need to stop making all that fast food—you know, "Give me a number one." We need slow cooking.

PLAYBOY: What don't Northerners understand about the South?

BIG BOI: They'll never understand the hospitality. If you're walking down the street in the South and you see someone—older, younger, black, white, whatever—you

speak to them, say, "Hey, how are you doing? Good evening." If you go up

North and speak to somebody on the street who you don't know, they look at you like, "Who the fuck you talking to?" They just keep on walking. I never understand that.

DRE: That's true, but people are that way up North because of their environment. You're surrounded

by people on top of people stacked on top of people. It's not going to be so polite. The South is about space. Front yards and backyards and trees. You can say hello.

backstage pass

OUTKAST
ALL ACCESS

3/27/03

PLAYBOY: With few exceptions, hip-hop careers are short. Are you worried about career longevity?

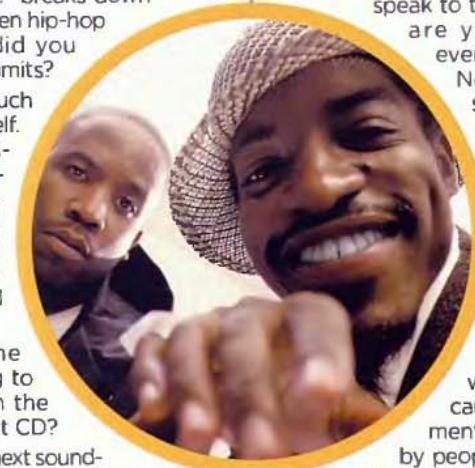
BIG BOI: I know I'll always be doing something creative with music, TV or art. For a minute, rhyming got boring to Dre, so he stepped into another arena, the melodic funk thing. Now he's back rhyming. It's all about inspiration.

PLAYBOY: "Hey Ya!" breaks down boundaries between hip-hop and rock. Dre, did you consciously push limits?

DRE: I'm pretty much just pushing myself. I've grown up listening to everything, so I think it's unfair to stick to doing just one thing. I keep moving around to find new inspiration.

PLAYBOY: Are the two of you going to work together in the studio on the next CD?

BIG BOI: Yeah, the next soundtrack album will be an OutKast album with us together. We have another album planned, and we'll release it maybe six months after the soundtrack. We put



2004 PLAYBOY MUSIC POLL WINNERS



BEST ROCK ALBUM THE WHITE STRIPES—ELEPHANT

Jack and Meg White had honed their shtick for years: their mid-century-modernist look, the back-to-basics singles, the are-they-or-aren't-they-brother-and-sister act. But they had yet to make a true rock masterpiece. And "Seven Nation Army" been the lone standout on *Elephant*, the record would still have marked the high point of their careers. Instead it's one chapter in a compelling collection that blows away everything the band has done before.



BEST HIP-HOP ALBUM OUTKAST—SPEAKERBOXXX/THE LOVE BELOW

In a hip-hop universe polluted by bling-bling, bitches and hos, this forward-thinking duo swooped in seemingly from the year 3004 and gave the genre an extreme makeover. We've loved over-the-top Andre and smooth-as-Courvoisier Big Boi since 1998's epic *Aquemini*, but on this double album they raise the bar on originality, even rediscovering the relevance of Polaroid pictures.



TOP 5 FIVE

SONGS FOR SEX

ALBERT HAMMOND JR. OF THE STROKES

- ① **The Cars** > "Don't Cha Stop" "Because the girl hasn't come yet."
- ② **Jeff Buckley** > "Hallelujah" "Because the girl isn't nasty."
- ③ **The Doors** > "Back Door Man" "This is the night you change your sheets."
- ④ **Frank Sinatra** > "Strangers in the Night" "This is the song you put on when you know you're going to give her crabs."
- ⑤ **The Beach Boys** > "Vegetables" "For double penetration without the second person."



TOP 5 FIVE

BLUES ALBUMS

LUCINDA WILLIAMS

- ① **Junior Kimbrough** > *Sad Days, Lonely Nights* "Hypnotic, stream-of-consciousness Mississippi Delta blues."
- ② **Jessie Mae Hemphill** > *She-Wolf* "She plays guitar, and her phrasing is very unconventional. The female equivalent of Junior Kimbrough."
- ③ **R.L. Burnside** > *Come On In* "Raw and nasty contemporary Delta blues."
- ④ **Robert Johnson** > *The Complete Recordings* "He was a poet of the blues: 'Squeeze my lemon till the juice run down my leg.' What a line."
- ⑤ **Muddy Waters** > *The Chess Box* "Raw, sexy, dirty. The blues is my religion."



the metal ironists

Hate 'em or headbang to 'em, the Darkness is setting throwback rock on fire

▶ If anyone can make power ballads and pasty dudes in spandex cool again, it's the Darkness, an over-the-top English quartet that has stormed the U.K.—and now the U.S.—with its straight-out-of-the-1980s heavy metal album *Permission to Land*. Are they being ironic with their big hair, high kicks and Rothesque showmanship, or have they just been living in a cave for the past 15 years? We get real—sort of—with front-man Justin Hawkins.

PLAYBOY: Is it very metal to like Neil Diamond?

HAWKINS: It takes balls to admit things like that. Most men would say Neil Young.

PLAYBOY: Why the catsuits?

HAWKINS: My mum was into the London rock scene. She was around Jimi Hendrix and the Stones, and she told me Brian Jones was the one the girls fancied. He wore a pink catsuit and would open it up on the dance floor. I've always associated that with rock. In the early days I wore ballet leotards, but they were too revealing. I wanted to be in a band only because I was looking at guys who were as ugly as me, but they could play guitar and sing, so women were falling at their feet.

PLAYBOY: Any unusual requests on your touring contract rider?

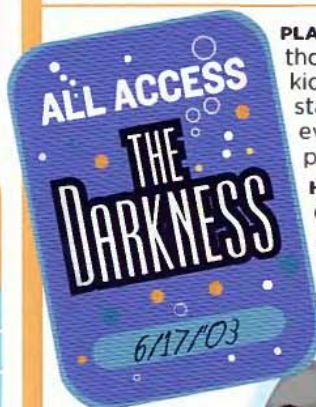
HAWKINS: No, we tried that, but nobody delivers. Van Halen's brown M&M's request is classic—we can't match that.

I will kick up a stink because I'm fussy about my wine.

If you ever give me a glass of chardonnay, you'll get sent out with a flea in your ear at the very least. I'm a pinot grigio guy.

PLAYBOY: We thought "Growing on Me" was a romantic song until someone told us it's about STDs. Is it?

HAWKINS: Every word in it could be interpreted as a song about genital warts, but I would never confirm or deny that.



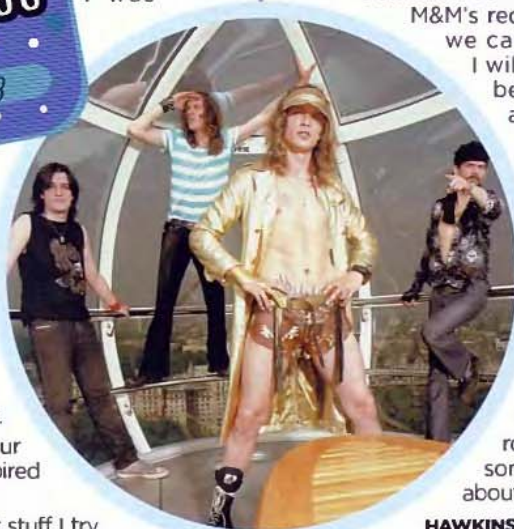
PLAYBOY: With all those jumps and kicks you do on-stage, have you ever split your pants?

HAWKINS: Yes, once on live TV. I was

in a costume made from the reflective material they use to make traffic cones. I did a split, and the ass came open and one of my balls popped out.

PLAYBOY: Are your stage moves inspired by anyone?

HAWKINS: It's just stuff I try out, and if it works, I keep doing it. I love Queen, Aerosmith and Whitesnake. I also like Neil Diamond.



2004 PLAYBOY MUSIC POLL WINNERS



BEST ELECTRONIC ALBUM
PEACHES—*FATHERFUCKER*

Her potty mouth and stripped electro beats were enough to propel Peaches to cult status with her debut album, *Teaches of Peaches*. The question was what the firecracker would do next. With *Fatherfucker* she became the first digipunk visionary of the iPod era, adding guitars, Joan Jett samples, morn complex electronic treatments—and Iggy Pop—to her sound and bringing more playfulness to her deliciously lascivious lyrics.



BEST COUNTRY ALBUM
JOHNNY CASH—*AMERICAN IV: THE MAN COMES AROUND*

If country music was built for Saturday nights and Sunday mornings, then no one walked that line better than the Man in Black. Cash could shoot a man in Reno just to watch him die and then go gospel and ask, "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" He was a rockabilly hero alongside Elvis, a folk troubadour with Dylan and an icon covering Soundgarden and Niaci Jack Nails on his last recordings.



KEYBOARD CONFSSIONAL

FOR ROCK STARS ABOUT TO SPILL THEIR GUTS ONLINE—WE SALUTE YOU!

Not long ago musicians could pour their tortured inner thoughts only into their songs. But now, thanks to the Internet, they can unburden themselves whenever the mood—or the medication—takes hold. As the trend builds steam, some of the writings are pure bigheaded drivel; others are fascinating glimpses into the minds of—hell, who are we kidding?—screwed-up celebrities. (Note to screwed-up celebrities: Keep writing; we'll keep reading.)

DEAR DIARIST > FRED DURST

Music's most gossiped about online confessional involved the Limp Bizkit himself—whose peculiar method of very public wooing borders on stalking—and good girl gone wild Britney Spears, who denied all rumors of their alleged tryst.

SPILL-APALOOZA > Here, the post that started it all: "Anybody out there who has a serious problem with my feelings for Britney should just chill and worry about your own feelings for a minute. [She] just happens to be a person I [wouldn't] have thought could make me feel this way. And believe that I have never felt this way, so there. I really like her, and that's about all I should say. She's a sweet, amazing girl, and I'm happy to know her right now. You are my family, and you know you can trust my judgment."

AFTERMATH > Brit dissed Durst on MTV, declaring, "He's not my type."



DEAR DIARIST > RYAN ADAMS

The roots-rock phenom graced his message board with a priceless post in which he contemplated quitting the business.

SPILL-APALOOZA > "Serious as a heart attack. I'm not trying to be dramatic about it. I'm just done. It feels really good. I've been thinking I should do this for a while, but I was afraid because I was attached to all the things that come with playing music. I think I was afraid of losing my identity if I stopped. But that's part of the bullshit that goes along with this that I want to get afraid of. It's all false. Let's face it. I'm not a platinum-selling artist. I'm not some major contender out there. This isn't front-page or even back-page news. It's just I quit."

AFTERMATH > Adams releases a full-length album and two EPs within the next year.



DEAR DIARIST > JESSICA SIMPSON

Everyone knows she can't do laundry to save her life, but on her website the *Newlyweds* star proves she does know how to get in a veiled slap at a fellow pop tart.

SPILL-APALOOZA > "I get so tickled at some of the posts that still compare Britney and I, and you guys always come to my rescue! I am very happy with my success. I do not want the success of Britney. I have exactly what



I want—a beautiful husband to share my life with, a beautiful family who loves and supports me, a beautiful career, of which I am very proud, and beautiful fans who love me just for being me! I am just Jessica, and for me that is enough!"

AFTERMATH > Britney gets married in a quickie Las Vegas ceremony in a possible attempt to be more like America's favorite hot housewife.

DEAR DIARIST > JACK WHITE

Rock's most unlikely couple? The White Stripes' Jack White and actress Renée Zellweger, who met on *Cold Mountain* and began an on-again, off-again fling. When Zellweger showed up at the premiere of *Down With Love* sans White, rumors of a breakup flew.

SPILL-APALOOZA > White's inscrutable explanation to fans, courtesy of his site: "Males are such despicable creatures."

AFTERMATH > Zellweger's even more cryptic response: "He's an enigma, and a lot of [the message board content] is—what would you call it?—missives."



DEAR DIARIST > MARIAH CAREY

In 2001 the unpredictable pop diva suffered a public breakdown by leaving a despondent "voice mail message" on her site, including complaints about her management and record label. Later, in seemingly better spirits but more self-important than ever, Mariah gave fans a pandering vocabulary lesson (a.k.a. Mariahisms).

SPILL-APALOOZA > "Lamb: A term of endearment—e.g., 'You're my lamb.' Chops: A derivative of 'lamb'—e.g., 'Hi, Chops!' This does not mean you cannot call a girl 'chops' or a boy 'lamb.' They're unisex."

AFTERMATH > Dictionary sales plummet, because really, who needs them anymore?

DEAR DIARIST > MICHAEL JACKSON

As recent charges of sexual molestation loomed, the Gloved One took to his personal website, mjnews.us, to proclaim his innocence.

SPILL-APALOOZA > "To my fans, friends and family. As you know, the charges directed at me are terribly serious. They are, however, predicated on a big lie. This will be shown in court, and we will be able to put this horrible time behind us. Because the charges are so serious, I hope you all will understand, on the advice of my attorneys, I will be limited in what I can say. No doubt, this will be frustrating for all of us."

AFTERMATH > Fans rally at Jackson's Neverland Ranch, chanting "Michael's innocent!" and carrying signs that read KEEP THE FAITH.



2004

PLAYBOY MUSIC POLL WINNERS



BEST JAZZ ALBUM GREG OSBY—*ST. LOUIS SHOES*

Starting with Duke Ellington's "East St. Louis Toodle-Oh" and ending with W.C. Handy's "St. Louis Blues," Osby drives a formidable quintet through a 21st century homage to his hometown. This isn't just a historical pastiche—it's an expression of his innovation. From his appearances with the Dead to his experimental trio gigs, Osby has defied boundaries. The alto saxophonist remains in the forefront: pushing, reshaping and challenging conventions.



BEST SOUNDTRACK *LOST IN TRANSLATION*

Sofia Coppola's use of *Air* to score *The Virgin Suicides* made her a must-hear director. With this film she became a must-see director and scored a coup by coaxing reclusive ex-My Bloody Valentine legend Kevin Shields into the studio to record songs for the film. She also threw in a Jesus and Mary Chain track and material from Death in Vegas, French indie popsters Phoenix and old friends *Air*. She's our kind of auteur.





the new rock royalty

Fill the goblets with white lightning: Kings of Leon are ready for their throne

Kings of Leon—three brothers and a cousin, all named Followill, all musically adept beyond their years—have been crowned by our readers as the Next Big Thing. Traveling to Southern churches with their evangelist father, they rocked congregation after congregation. Then they grew their hair long and cranked out an acclaimed major label debut, *Youth & Young Manhood*. We spoke to Jared Followill, 17, the band's youngest member.

PLAYBOY: With four relatives in one band, is there a lot of brawling?

FOLLOWILL: Definitely, but there's been only one big fistfight. Nathan and Caleb were bickering, and it turned into a cartoon—a big ball of dust you'd see arms and legs coming out of. There were hair balls on the floor at the end. When you have long hair, it's the easiest target.

PLAYBOY: Did traveling from church to church with your dad prepare you for the road?

FOLLOWILL: Not even close. It's better and worse. Worse because we never sleep—we're always hungover or drunk. But better because we have a really nice bus. With PlayStation.

PLAYBOY: How has rock stardom affected your girl situation?

FOLLOWILL: It has affected it in a very positive way. We're not into groupies, though. When I was younger I did what everybody else did. I fucking got a lot of girls, but then I became an individual. I grew my hair and listened to different music. But if you didn't have spiky hair and abs, the girls wouldn't talk to you. I vowed that when I was able, I was going to date only supermodels and be like, "Look who I'm going out with. You could never look like her." To get them back, you know?

PLAYBOY: Sure. Did you drop out of school?

FOLLOWILL: Yep. I finished half my senior year, and then we had to go record and start playing live.

PLAYBOY: Will you go back to high school?

FOLLOWILL: Oh my god, no way. I'll get my GED. I suppose.

PLAYBOY: Does your dad come to your shows?

FOLLOWILL: Yeah. He's not a preacher anymore. Now he's just a regular guy, and he fucking loves it.

PLAYBOY: Where's home for you now?

FOLLOWILL: In a small town near where we were born. All the band members live together in a big house on a lake. We're in big cities all the time, so we like to go home and not have to look cool. We smoke weed and go to Blockbuster. We rest. We party so much otherwise.

PLAYBOY: What's your take on the music industry?

FOLLOWILL: A bunch of rich losers. In the beginning you're so nervous that you do whatever they want you to do. But all that leads to is embarrassment. You've got to figure out what direction you want to go in and do it. If they say, "You can't," then be like, "Fuck you. Here's your money back." And that scares them really bad, so they let you do it.

PLAYBOY: Have you had to do that?

FOLLOWILL: We do it every day, man. We did it with our name. They wanted us to be the Followills, like the Osmonds or Hanson or some shit. We were like, "No way, man. We're Kings of Leon." Leon is our dad's and our grandpa's name. We wanted something that had to do with our past. Our friend was like, "What about Kings of Zion?" We were like, "What the fuck?" Caleb said, "How about Kings of Leon?"

PLAYBOY: Do you hang around with other young bands?

FOLLOWILL: Yeah, the Strokes are our best friends. Older musicians have been to our shows, which is hilarious. Bryan—not Ryan—Adams was backstage one night. I don't want to mention all the cool people we've met, because they'll think we're weird name-droppers. Well, actually, I don't care if Bryan Adams thinks I'm a name-dropper.

2004 PLAYBOY MUSIC POLL WINNERS



BEST REISSUE OR RARITY
PINK FLOYD—*DARK SIDE OF THE MOON*
30TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

When the original album debuted 31 years ago, its impact was as significant as that of *Pet Sounds* or *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*—and for many of the same reasons. In its use of technology and studio trickery, Pink Floyd took music to the next plateau. *Dark Side of the Moon* was so modern that even now, upon its anniversary reissue, it still sounds current. All this and great songs, too.



BEST SONG
COLDPLAY—"CLOCKS"

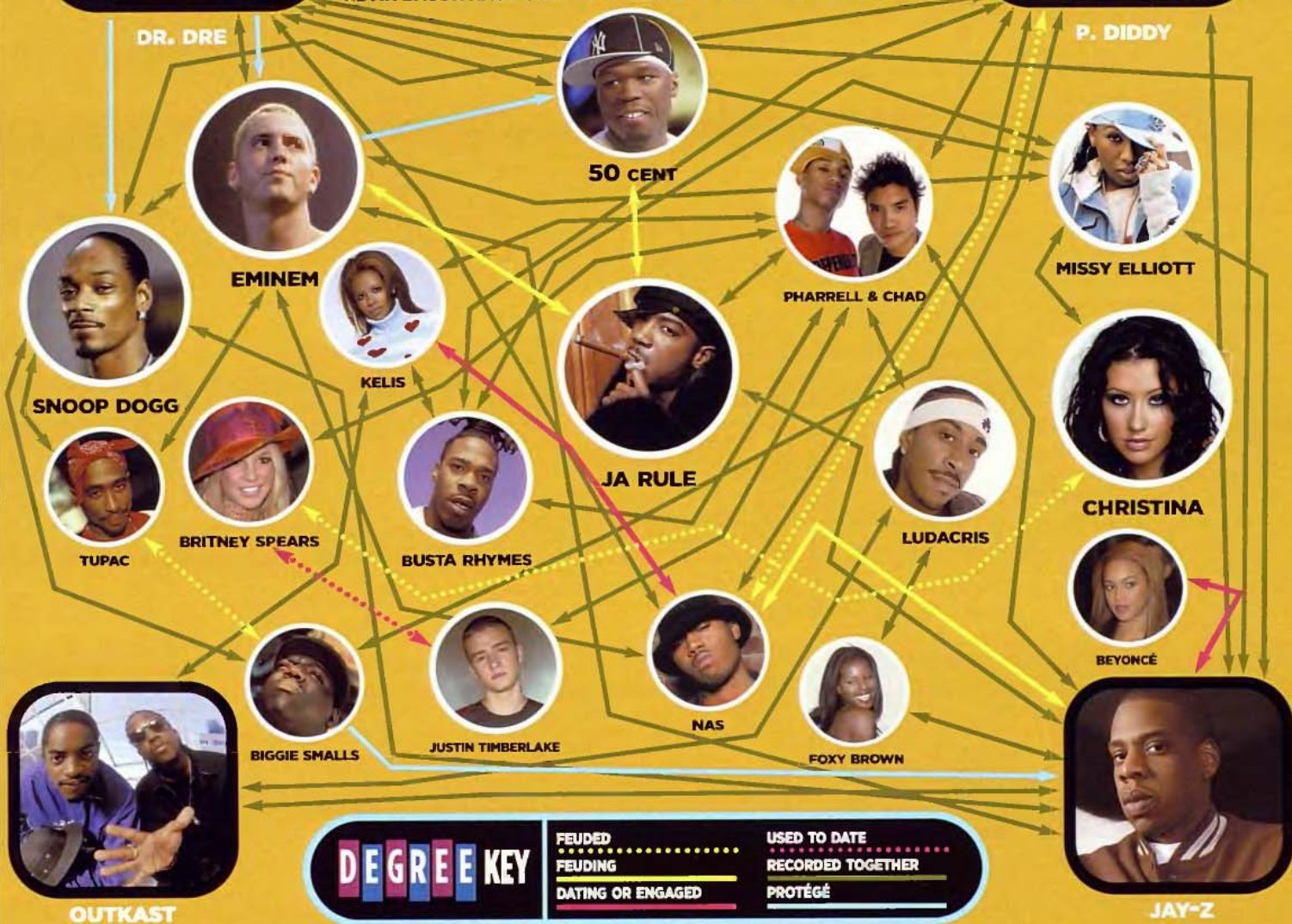
The cascade of keyboards that marks the opening bars of "Clocks" is unmistakable. By the time frontman Chris Martin reaches the understated catharsis of "ooo-ooh...aaaaah," Coldplay has surpassed the emotional impact of any song by the bands from which it learned its trade—including Echo & the Bunnymen, Travis and even (yes) Radiohead.



SIX DEGREES OF HIP-HOP



KEVIN BACON HAS NOTHIN' ON THE INCESTUOUS WORLD OF HIP-HOP



2004

PLAYBOY MUSIC POLL WINNERS



SONGS WE HATE TO ADMIT WE LIKE JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE—
"CRY ME A RIVER"

He's a recovering boy-band cheese ball who has dated L.A.'s creamiest chicks (Britney, Cameron). If this were high school, we'd shove his head in a toilet. But in the comfort of our very momly SUV, we may even turn up the volume when this song comes on. Turns out the kid can sing.



BEST LIVE SHOW RADIOHEAD

Radiohead can sound disjointed blowing out of your home speakers, but on-stage the band's soaring sound swoops over the audience, just as capable of carrying Thom Yorke's vision now as when the band employed the most gut-wrenching guitar work.



NEXT BIG THING KINGS OF LEON

Don't hate them because they're young (average age: 20) and lauded. The Followills were raised on the Stones, Neil Young and the Lord, and now they're leading the second coming of Southern rock. *Youth & Young Manhood* is proof that at the end of the day it's all about the six-string.



The Canadian hit men

Kinda cheesy, eh? But Nickelback is laughing all the way to the stage—and getting pelted by panties every night

How did Nickelback become the biggest Canadian arena-rock act since Rush's heyday? Hell if we know, but in addition to being a hit with millions of guys whose backseats are covered in empty beer cans, Nickelback is huge with the ladies—and the Grammy folks (*The Long Road* was up for Best Rock Album). We grilled frontman Chad Kroeger about life on tour.

PLAYBOY: What's it like backstage after a show?

KROEGER: A few of the boys are married now, so they clear out as fast as possible in case I have a party. We make sure that during the show our security guy goes out into the audience with about 50 ass passes....

PLAYBOY: Ass passes?

KROEGER: Yeah, for the beautiful young ladies. It's very Van Halen. Very Motley Crue. Ass passes are for people who want to party with the band. You have a room full of people who want to party, and once the room dies down you have a bus full of people.

PLAYBOY: Do you ever take people with you to the next destination?

KROEGER: I have taken hostages on a few occasions. *Hmmm...* this is tough. I don't want to sound like too much of an asshole. I very recently got down on one knee.

PLAYBOY: Then let's talk about your single days.

KROEGER: Let me tell a crazy statistic. Fastest sexual engagement after a show? Panama City Beach, six minutes.

PLAYBOY: Did you catch her name?

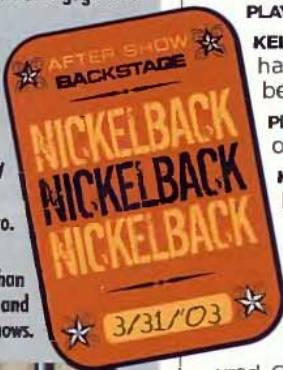
KROEGER: No.

PLAYBOY: What's the wildest thing that's been thrown onstage?

KROEGER: Sometimes we get vibrators. You pray to God they were chucked by women.

PLAYBOY: Your stage show is all about the pyro. What is it with rockers and fire?

KROEGER: We're actually carrying more pyro than Kiss did. Some things never get old: car chases and gunfights in movies and explosions during rock shows.



The hip-hop dairy queen

Got milk? Breakthrough artist Kelis does—and a whole lot more

Kelis's days as a rainbow-haired R&B wild child are over. She's got a sleek new look, a famous fiancé (Nas, who shows off his tattoo of her nude on the inside of her third CD, *Tasty*) and "Milkshake," an addictive Neptunes-produced ode to cleavage. This interview is the cherry on top.

PLAYBOY: Who's music's sexiest woman?

KELIS: I guess me. But I like men, so it's hard to pick. Tina Turner is sexy because she's older and still doing it.

PLAYBOY: Do other rock stars ever hit on you?

KELIS: Definitely. This is a flirtatious business. One day Liam from Oasis and I were at an awards show. He grabbed my ass, and my first instinct was to grab his balls. There are photos of it. Liam, you know, he's a little off. Men always think it's okay to grope. So I figured, Okay, I'm gonna get you, too.

PLAYBOY: *Tasty* has a duet with your fiancé, Nas, about doing the deed "In Public." Have you ever?

KELIS: The craziest place would probably be on an airplane. You have to do it quickly enough so no one notices you're both in that tiny-ass bathroom.

PLAYBOY: Do you ever dress up for him?

KELIS: I've got a maid outfit, an Indian outfit, a cop outfit. I'll get the handcuffs, the whistle, the glasses, the gun. I go all the way. It's one thing when you're casually having sex. It's another thing when you're engaged. You've got to keep it fun.

PLAYBOY: You've been tight with the Neptunes' Pharrell Williams and Chad Hugo for years. What do you think of their superstar producer status?

KELIS: It's gone to their heads a bit, so we don't deal with one another on a very personal level anymore. Chad is great—I have no issues with him—but Star Trak in general has gotten a little crazy.

PLAYBOY: Has Pharrell distanced himself from you?

KELIS: We've distanced ourselves from each other. We pretend to get along, but I know at the end of the day he doesn't really care about my project. Actually, Pharrell was mad one day and said he wished he'd given "Milkshake" to Britney Spears.



2004 PLAYBOY MUSIC POLL WINNERS

BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT METALLICA—ST. ANGER

It seems like just yesterday we were swigging out of our parents' liquor cabinet and pumping our fists to *Master of Puppets*. But has Metallica, our 200-miles-per-hour thrash god, become a parody of itself? An overwhelming number of readers wrote in that the band's long-awaited first CD of the 21st century lacked the bone-crunching riffs and musical mayhem of previous efforts. Of course, it still blows the nu-metal brats away, but this time, Metallica, you've St. Angered us.



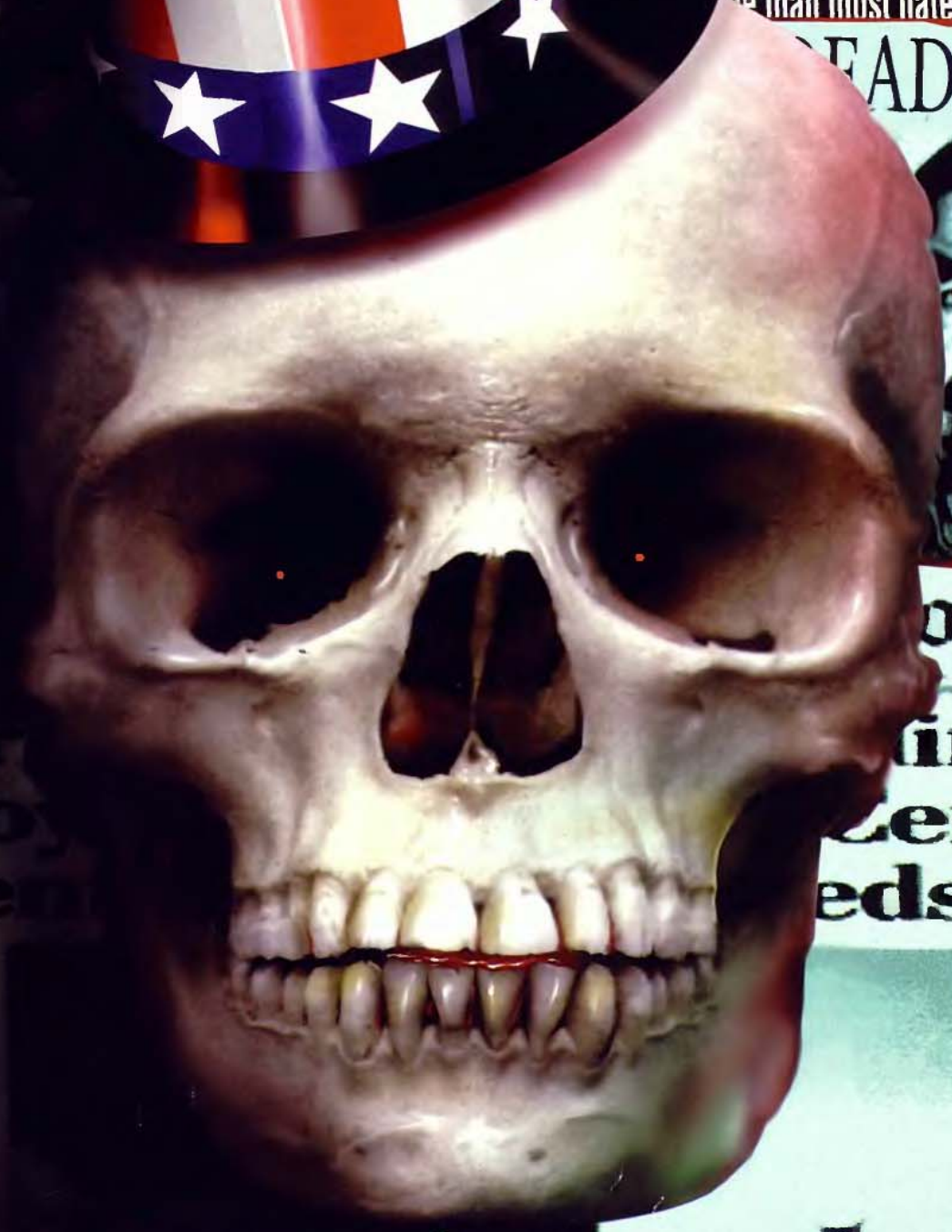
HALL OF FAME LED ZEPPELIN

It was more than a rock band. It made music so epic it could have soundtracked alternative worlds—Middle-earth, for instance, where Zep's druidic fascinations would fit right in. While Plant belted out his banshee wail, Page tapped into the Platonic form of the riff, and the rhythm section laid down a backbeat from the sludge of life and death. From "Dazed and Confused" to "Fool in the Rain," Zep defined a decade and continues to inspire fans, musicians and our readers.



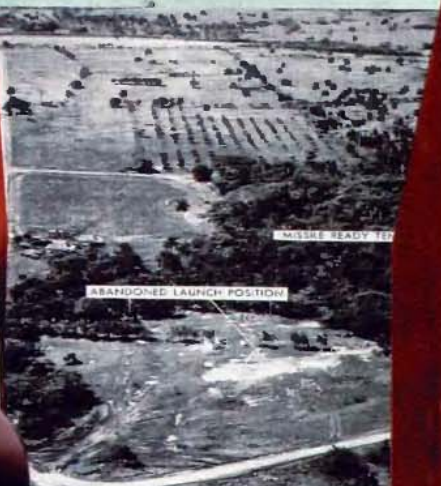


"What a coincidence! I'm a classically trained cocksucker."



The Cuban missile crisis

Power
behind
inquiry



the man most hated in the
DEAD OR



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Revolution

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BY E.L. DOCTOROW

WHY DOES THE WORLD SEEM SO SCARY? HERE'S ONE REASON: OUR GOVERNMENT WANTS US TO BE AFRAID. VERY AFRAID

In 1954 the U.S. and the Soviet Union were in a deadly armaments race, testing and installing ever more powerful nuclear weapons to be dropped from aircraft, launched in ICBMs and shot from submarines. This was our Cold War, the result, it would seem, of the incompatibility on the same earth of a democratic republic and a communist dictatorship. But how inevitable was this conflict?

Here I invoke the plaintive figure of a forgotten American patriot named Henry Stimson. Despite the fact that he was a Republican, having served as secretary of state in the 1930s under Herbert Hoover, he was appointed secretary of war by Franklin Roosevelt and went on to direct the largest wartime mobilization in American history. Stimson worked nobly through the four-year conflict with Germany and Japan. But when Harry Truman succeeded Roosevelt and dropped the second atom bomb on Japan, and another test

bomb on the Bikini atoll after the war was over, and after we showed disdain for the nuclear-challenged Soviet Union, it became apparent to Stimson that a dangerous foreign policy was in the making based on America's sole possession of atomic weapons. Knowing that this scientific monopoly could not last, Stimson wrote a memo to Truman, proposing that we share the secrets of atomic-bomb manufacture with the Soviets.

"The chief lesson I have learned in a long life," said Stimson, "is that the only way you can make a man trustworthy is to trust him, and the surest way to make him untrustworthy is to distrust him. Unless the Soviets are invited into the partnership on the basis of cooperation and trust, we are going to maintain the Anglo-Saxon bloc over against the Soviet in the possession of this weapon. Such a condition will almost certainly stimulate a feverish activity on the part of the Soviet toward the development of the bomb in

WE FEAR THE ENEMY AND WE FEAR THE NATION WE HAVE BECOME.

what in effect will be a secret armaments race of a rather desperate character."

Today we would call Stimson's approach constructive engagement. It seems extraordinary that such an idea could have been conceived at that time, not by some idealistic political marginalist or Soviet sympathizer but by a career diplomat and public servant. Henry Stimson knew that Stalin was a barbarian mass murderer of the same magnitude as Hitler. But it was as if he foresaw the next 50 years of a cold war that would engender enough moments of tension between two nuclear-armed superpowers to threaten a planetary holocaust.

As it happened, the Soviets had proposed a treaty based on co-existence that was virtually what Stimson was recommending. To Truman this could mean only that his 78-year-old secretary of war had gone soft in the brain. Bomb hefting was what Truman trusted. The hard-liners in both camps assumed control, and the desperate arms race predicted by Stimson became a reality.

Does Stimson's vision seem naive and soft-brained now? The Soviets had been devastated by World War II. Their industrial base was shattered, and they'd lost 20 million people. Truman's secretary of state, Dean Acheson, would testify that even after the Russians got the bomb we did not seriously regard them as a military threat. Presumably the containment factor of mutual assured destruction would have been operative with or without all the sword rattling.

In the 1970s President Richard Nixon chose to engage constructively with another monolithic communist nation: He brought about a détente with Mao's Red China. The Chinese Communists do not intend to yield power and bring about a democracy. But their economy has become somewhat recognizable to us. We trade with them now. China is a big market. And we're a big market for her. We have had some leverage in her treatment of human rights activists and political dissidents. And our profound differences are mediated by diplomacy. Is it inconceivable that the same degree of constructive engagement could have moved Russia away from its Stalinist

horror—Mao having been a no less malevolent ideological enemy of ours than Stalin?

The dangerously bisected world of the Cold War period was to a great extent a self-fulfilling prophecy of American governance. Once they scraped together their own nuclear arms and the means to deliver them, the Russians became just the foreign menace we always said they were.

With the Cold War under way, the voting public had to be persuaded to accept not only nuclear weapons development but also the enormous percentages of tax money given over to military security. Senator Arthur Vandenberg, a Republican statesman of the time, knew how to do it: "We've got to scare the hell out of the American people," he said. And so the animus of our Cold War was unleashed to an astonishing degree on ourselves.

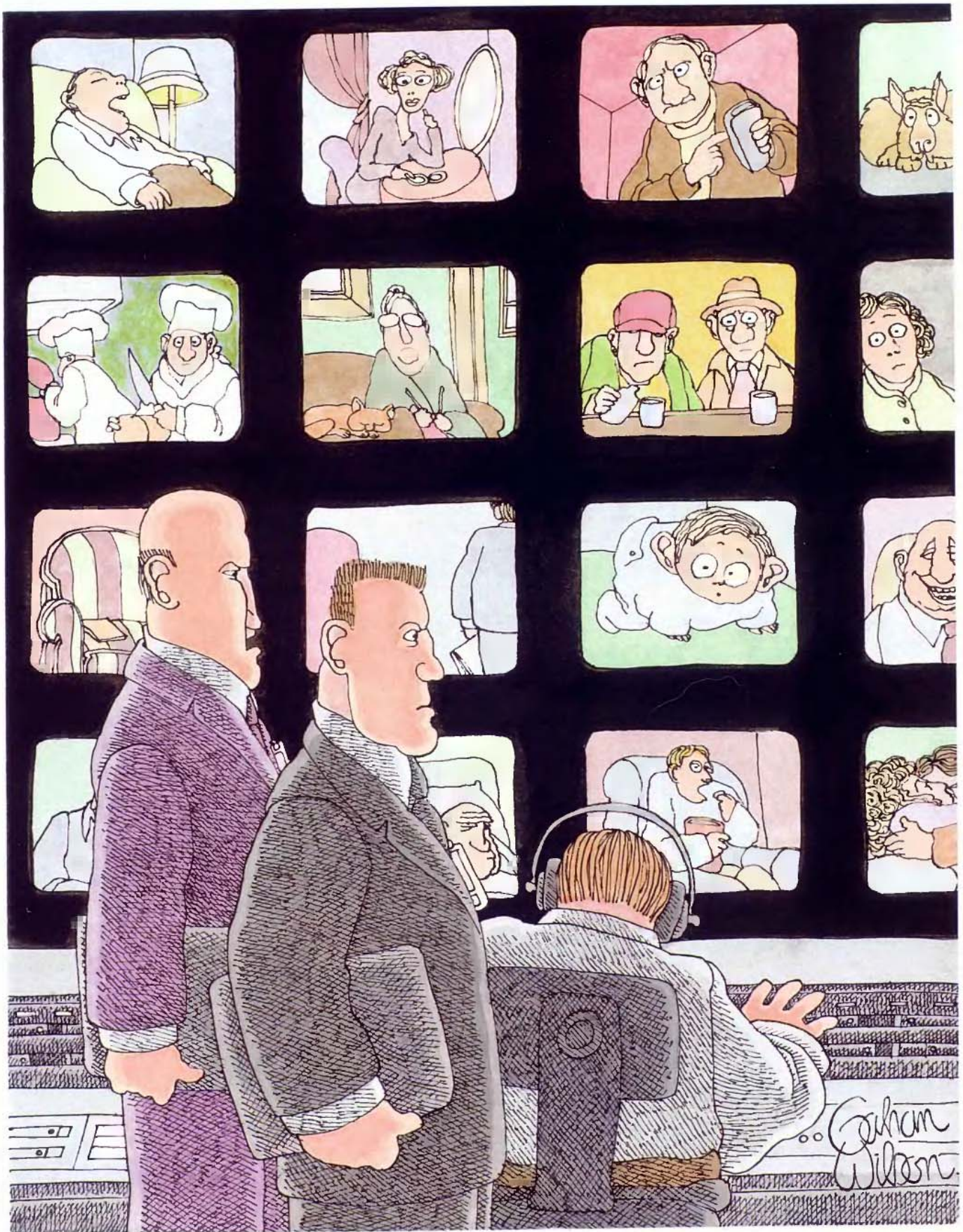
By 1954 the ideology of fear pumped out by our politicians had evolved into something like a state religion. It sought out the subversive elements living among us and prosecuted them for crimes of espionage, but it also staged public rituals of confession and repentance before congressional committees when no crimes were supposed to have occurred except crimes of thought. Teachers, university professors, journalists, editors, actors and scientists whose ideas did not conform either were fired from their jobs or stayed employed by coming forward to attest to their anticommunist credentials and offer their services to the thought-cleansing authorities. Everyone ran scared because reputations were being ruined and livelihoods destroyed by unsubstantiated accusations from self-appointed publishers of blacklists who were the 1950s equivalents of vigilante posses.

The 1950s taught our conservative politicians that nothing was more useful to their domestic designs than the fear of a foreign enemy. Under that era's barrage against civil liberties, it became apparent to the Republicans that they had forged another powerful weapon: Political correctness was a means (continued on page 144)

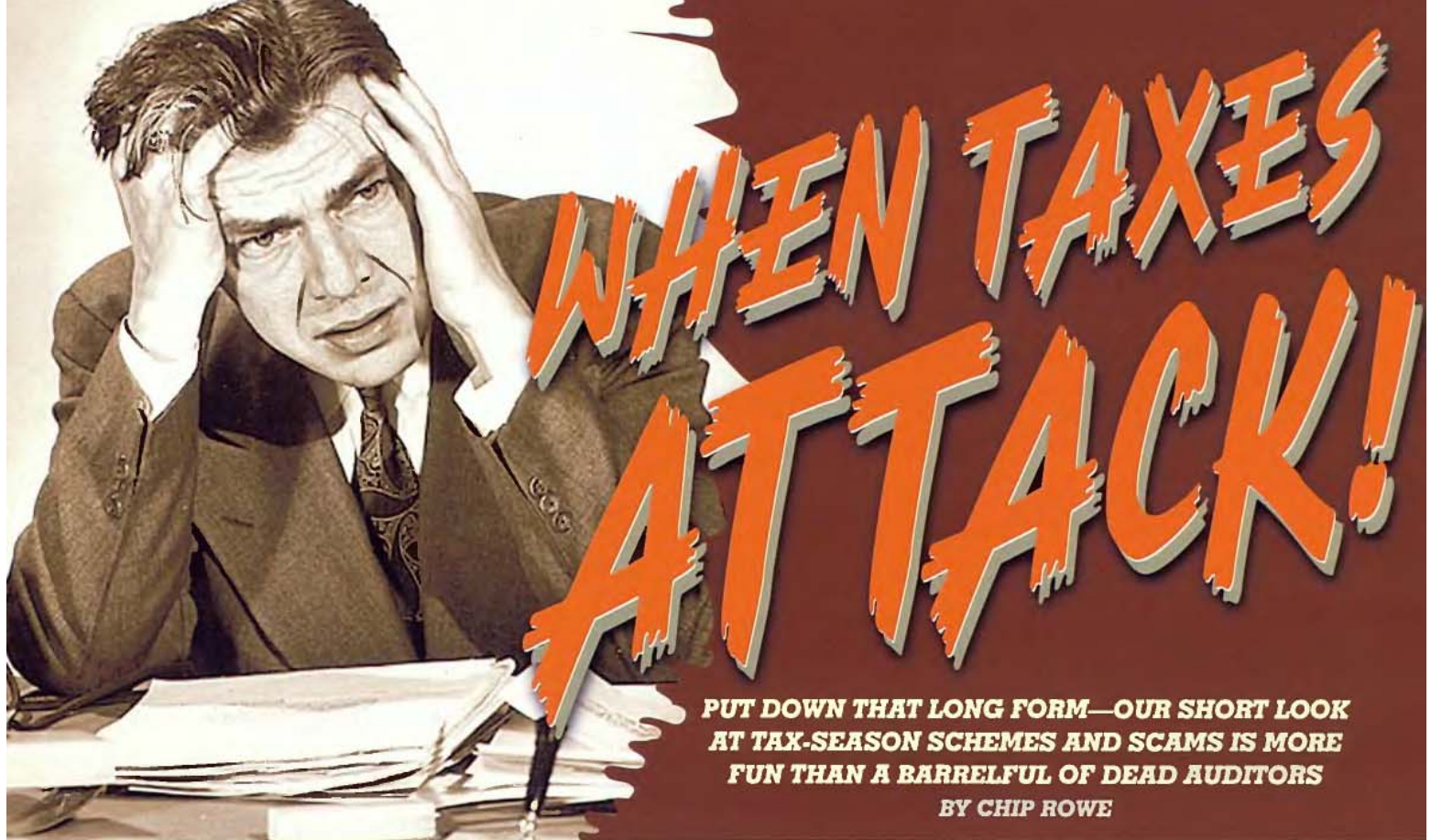
THE FEARMONGERS



Joseph Stalin gave us nuclear nightmares, Joseph McCarthy found commies under every bed, Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini took us hostage and made us feel weak. Osama bin Laden? Enough said. Could Saddam Hussein have nuked us? No, but he scared us anyway, and John Ashcroft hides behind fear to chip away at freedom and privacy.



"Of course, if they ever start to suspect all their TVs are watching them back, we may have problems."



PUT DOWN THAT LONG FORM—OUR SHORT LOOK AT TAX-SEASON SCHEMES AND SCAMS IS MORE FUN THAN A BARRELFUL OF DEAD AUDITORS

BY CHIP ROWE

DEDUCTION JUNCTION

WINNERS

Breast implants: A tax judge allowed Detroit stripper Chesty Morgan (left) to deduct \$2,088 for her implants. He compared them to a work uniform.

Beer: Another tax judge let a gas station owner in Oklahoma deduct the cost of stocking a soda machine with beers that customers drank for free as they filled up.

Bribes: A businessman successfully argued that he should be able to deduct the \$90,286 he had paid to get contracts.

Mob lawyers: The IRS took issue when a Chicago mob boss deducted his legal fees as a business expense. The agency argued that because he had not succeeded in his attempt to skim profits from a casino, he had only *expected* to have a business. A tax court ruled that being a mobster was his business.

LOSERS

Prostitutes: A former Treasury Department analyst deducted the cost of visiting brothels as a business expense, claiming he was doing research for a novel. A judge disallowed the write-off.

Puppet protests: A tax court ruled against a kid-friendly police officer who had been told by supervisors to leave his ventriloquist's dummy at home and then tried to deduct the \$11,465 he had spent getting the issue on the ballot.

Front-row seats: An attorney tried to deduct \$60,000 for concert tickets he'd bought from scalpers. He claimed that by getting front-row seats for clients, he gained exposure to rock stars and groupies who might hire him as an attorney. He ended up as a case study in a training manual for IRS auditors.



A SHORT HISTORY OF THE INCOME TAX

1862 The newly created Bureau of Internal Revenue collects taxes to finance the Civil War.

1913 The Constitution is amended to allow Congress to collect income taxes.

1934 Treasury goes after its former chief, Andrew Mellon, after learning that he had asked the BIR for a memo on "the various ways in which an individual may legally avoid tax"

and then used five of the 10 methods on his personal return. 1942 FDR declares, "In this time of war, no American citizen ought to have a net income, after he has paid his taxes, of

more than \$25,000." 1981 Congress cuts the top tax rate from 70 percent to 28 percent, the largest cut in U.S. history. The following year it passes the largest peacetime tax hike

in U.S. history.

1986 The IRS begins requiring taxpayers to give Social Security numbers for dependents listed as deductions. The next year, 7 million "children" disappear.





PAY NO TAXES!*

* unless you get caught

Ploy: If you're an ordained minister, you can deduct your income as a charitable donation to yourself.

Why it doesn't work: The IRS is more powerful than God. In 1984 then-U.S. Attorney Rudy Giuliani indicted nine leaders of the Life Science Church, which raised \$10 million hawking quickie ordinations used in tax scams. Investigators discovered that 1,000 New York City employees, including hundreds of cops and firefighters, had found religion.

Ploy: You don't have to file a return if you make money from illegal activities, because it would violate your right against self-incrimination.

Why it doesn't work: You can write "Fifth Amendment" in the blanks where you would normally list the source of your wages, but you must still list the amount. This keeps the cops from knowing too much—but it doesn't stop the auditors.

Ploy: The 16th Amendment, which allows Congress to collect income taxes, wasn't properly ratified.

Why it doesn't work: This is a shaky argument based on the premise that 33 state resolutions contained nullifying errors of spelling, capitalization or other typos. But a federal court ruled in 1986 that the same 1913 State Department memo that acknowledged the errors also advised that the secretary was authorized to declare the amendment adopted and "his decision is now beyond review."

Ploy: Black taxpayers can claim a deduction as a reparation for slavery.

Why it doesn't work: Nothing in the massive U.S. Tax Code allows for this. Even so, in 2000 and 2001 the IRS received 100,000 returns (including 12 from agency employees) claiming \$2.7 billion in reparation refunds. The IRS mistakenly sent out \$30 million before realizing what was going on. In 1993 an *Essence* columnist urged readers to claim a deduction of \$43,209, which the writer calculated as the current value of 40 acres and a mule.

LOOPHOLE LUNACY

• **Two Iowa farmers** tried to avoid Social Security taxes by paying themselves in hogs, which they then sold. They claimed the "hog bonus" was designed to motivate employees, although they were the only employees who got them.



• **During the late 1990s** Wal-Mart took out secret life-insurance policies on 350,000 employees—policies that paid benefits to Wal-Mart if the employee died and that allowed the company to deduct premiums as business expenses.

• **O.J. Simpson's Brentwood neighbors** took a \$751,000 "casualty loss," arguing that the accused killer's notoriety lowered their property values. A court upheld the IRS's demand for \$292,000 in back taxes.

• **Convicted spy Aldrich Ames** argued that he shouldn't have to pay income taxes on \$1 million he received from the KGB from 1989 to 1992, because the Soviets had actually set aside the money for him in 1985 and the IRS wasn't disputing his return from that year. The court told him to give it up.

TAX STYLES OF THE RICH AND FAMOUS



• In 1986 Arkansas governor Bill Clinton deducted \$2 for a pair of used underwear he gave to Goodwill.

• As president, Richard Nixon underpaid his

taxes by \$445,000, based largely on a huge deduction he took for donating his papers. In response the IRS limited the value of "self-created" documents to the cost of the ink and paper.

• In 2002 action star Wesley Snipes asked the IRS for a \$7.3 million refund based on a tortured reading of the code that he and other tax kooks claim exempts Americans who work for American companies.

HARD NUMBERS

\$1 billion—value of federal contracts given to American companies that have incorporated in Bermuda to avoid paying U.S. taxes

\$8 billion—amount the IRS plans to spend to upgrade its computer system, which dates to the Kennedy administration

53—percentage of Americans who pay someone else to do their taxes

11—percentage who check the "presidential campaign contribution" box on their 1040s

195—taxpayers who paid more than they owed in 2001 to reduce federal debt

774,746—words in the Bible

2.8 million—words in the tax code



NOT-SO-FREE SPEECH

"I like to pay taxes. With them, I buy civilization."

—Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes

"Do senators introduce tax bills because the tax system is a mess? Or is the tax system a mess because senators introduce tax bills?"

—Martin Sullivan, *Tax Notes*

"On my 1040 it says, 'Check this box if you are blind.' I wanted to put a check mark about three inches away."

—Tom Lehrer

"Old MacDonald had an agricultural real estate tax abatement."

—Anonymous





RISE and SHINE

Miss April is the perfect eye-opener

When we heard that Krista Kelly's grandmother nicknamed her Motor Mouth, we knew the 26-year-old Toronto native would make for a fun interview. Get Krista charged up about a topic—her childhood, her Catholic-school upbringing, her romantic relationships—and she'll spin a story at a feverish pace. "I was discovered by model scouts outside an underage nightclub when I was 15 years old," she says, "but I didn't take modeling seriously at first. Growing up I was a tomboy—very athletic. I hated Barbie dolls, I had no girlfriends, and I hung around the jocks. I didn't like getting my makeup done or being pretty. When the modeling agency asked me to move to New York to continue my career, I caused a lot of trouble. I didn't make curfew, and I wasn't in my room for orientation."

Krista was no easier to handle as a student: "I met a friend who went to Catholic school, and I begged my mom to let me go," she says, "but I used to cut my kilts too short. I actually got suspended for it." Though she still resides in Toronto, Miss April—whose mother has dual citizenship in the United States and Canada—believes a move to the States is imminent. "In Toronto we love Americans because they're so friendly," she says. "I always felt like I could relate to them because I've done so much traveling in the U.S. My grandfather is American, so we had family reunions every two years—usually in Nebraska."

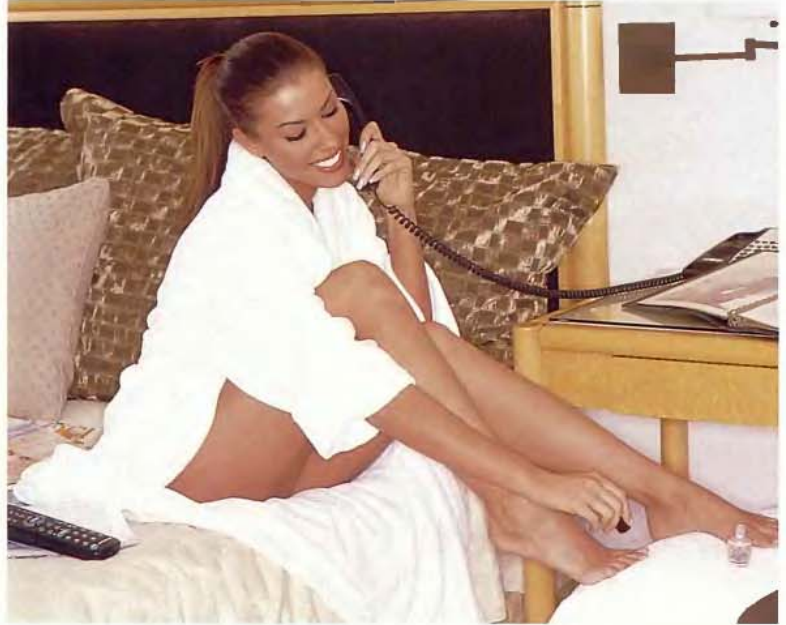
Her favorite place in the world to visit? Anywhere the weather is warm. "I'm a total sun bunny," she says. "I love Rollerblading, tanning and going to the beach, though I have a serious shark phobia. When I vacationed in Cancún, I would go in the ocean only if there were a lot of people in the water, and even then I would go in only up to my waist." Lest you think she's a wimp, Krista explains that she hasn't had the best luck with water sports: "You're not going to believe this, but I once got lodged in a waterslide," she says. "They



PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WAYDA AND ARNY FREYTAG



When Krista accompanied a friend who was auditioning for *PLAYBOY*, a photographer pulled her aside and asked if she wanted to do a test shoot. "This is classic," she says. "I said no because my panties and bra didn't match. I felt like an idiot, but I came back the next day and set up a shoot."



had to turn off the park's water supply and rescue me!" Which begs the question: Does Krista enjoy being rescued? "I'm into manly guys, but personality—especially a sense of humor—makes a person more attractive. It's cute when a guy doesn't know how to do laundry. He goes into the experience feeling confident, but then it turns pathetic—but funny—because he ends up with wrinkly clothes. I like to be in relationships where everything becomes a fun event or activity." When it comes time to settle down with one lucky guy (be he laundry adept or not), Krista has a definite marriage-proposal ideal: "I'd like to find the ring box somewhere totally unexpected, like hidden in a grocery cart while we're shopping or in my food at a restaurant," she says. "I don't want to have a traditional wedding. I want to be naked, or maybe underwater. I would definitely elope, though not anytime soon. My mom would say, 'Krista, get your head out of your little fantasy world and go get married and have babies.' But she knows that isn't going to happen right now. I'm always late for everything."



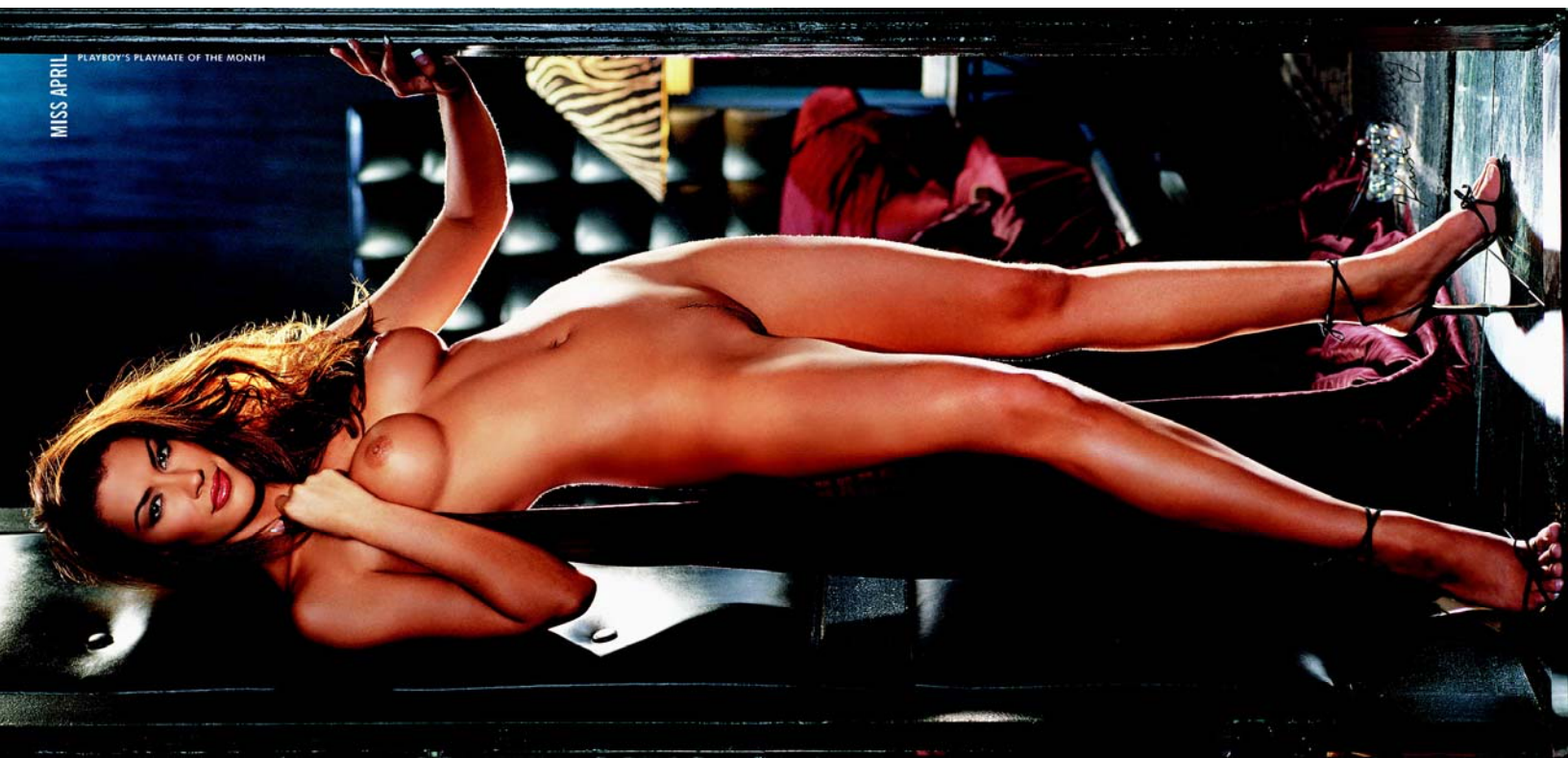




It's tough to walk down a Toronto street and not pass a hot dog stand, but you won't catch Kristi portaking. "I don't eat meat," she says. "I'm an animal lover. Cats are like water to me—they're o necessity. I once did a commercial in which I had to chose pigs around a pen oll day. They're reolly intelligent, ond I thought, I don't want to eat those guys."







MISS APRIL

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET



NAME: KRISTA KELLY
BUST: 34C WAIST: 25 HIPS: 35
HEIGHT: 5'9 1/2" WEIGHT: 127
BIRTH DATE: JUNE 18, 1977 BIRTHPLACE: TORONTO, CANADA
AMBITIONS: TO HOST AN ENTERTAINMENT OR MUSIC SHOW.
TURN-ONS: A GREAT SMILE + A GREAT SENSE OF HUMOR = CONFIDENCE.
TURNOFFS: ONLY ONE WORD... ARROGANCE! OH, AND BAD TEETH.
MY ETHNIC BACKGROUND: GERMAN, FRENCH, NATIVE INDIAN, NEWFIE.
SPORTS THAT I PLAYED IN HIGH SCHOOL: BASKETBALL, VOLLEYBALL, KISSING TAG, (i)
A CHARITABLE CAUSE THAT IS CLOSE TO MY HEART: I'm VERY INTERESTED IN CANCER RESEARCH.
MY CELEBRITY DOPPELGÄNGER: PEOPLE TELL ME I LOOK LIKE SHANIA TWAIN. I LOVE HER!



GRADE 8 GRAD.



ONE OF MY FIRST MODELING SHOTS AT AGE 17.



CANCUN, MEXICO MARCH 2003.



SEE SEXY VIDEO OF MISS APRIL
AT CYBER.PLAYBOY.COM.

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

A husband and wife went to see a marriage counselor, who said to them, "Let's start by talking about something the two of you have in common."

The husband thought for a moment and said, "Well, neither of us sucks dick."

What's the difference between sin and shame? It's a sin to put it in, but it's a shame to pull it out.



PLAYBOY CLASSIC: A farmer had 200 hens but no rooster. He wanted chicks, so he asked a neighbor if he had a rooster for sale. "Well, I have one, but he's expensive," the neighbor said. "His name is Brooster. He'll service every chicken you got, no problem."

The farmer bought Brooster, took him home, set him down in the barnyard and gave him a pep talk. "Brooster," the farmer said, "I want you to pace yourself. You've got a lot of chickens to service here, and you cost me a lot of money. I don't want you to run out of steam early, so take your time."

Brooster the Rooster nodded, so the farmer pointed toward the henhouse. Brooster took off and nailed every hen three or four times. The farmer was shocked. He was even more shocked when he heard a commotion in the duck pen. He went inside and, sure enough, Brooster was in there screwing the ducks. Later the farmer saw Brooster chasing after the flock of geese down by the lake. Once again Brooster did them all. And at sunset the farmer saw Brooster out in the fields chasing quail and pheasant. The farmer was troubled, worried that his expensive rooster wouldn't last another day.

The farmer went to bed, and when he woke the next day his worst fears had come true. There was Brooster the Rooster lying in the middle of the yard, buzzards circling overhead. The farmer, distraught at the loss of such an expensive bird, knelt beside Brooster and cried, "Oh, Brooster, why wouldn't you listen? I told you to pace yourself. I tried to get you to slow down. Now look what you've done to yourself."

Brooster opened one eye, nodded toward the buzzards and said, "Shhh, they're getting closer...."

A man walked into a dentist's office and said, "Can you help me? I think I'm a moth."

The dentist said, "You don't need a dentist. You need a psychiatrist."

"Yes, I know," the man said.

The dentist asked, "So then why did you come in here?"

The man replied, "The light was on."

Have you heard about the university Michael Jackson is founding? It's called Bringem Young.

A man and his girlfriend were messing around in bed. "Slow down, baby," she said. "Foreplay is an art."

"Well, you better get your canvas ready," he said, "because I'm about to spill my paint."

What do you get when you mix holy water with prune juice? A religious movement.

BLONDE JOKE OF THE MONTH: A brunette secretary told a blonde secretary, "I know how to get some time off from work."

"How?" the blonde asked.

The brunette climbed on top of the file cabinet, grabbed hold of the ceiling lamp and just hung there. The boss walked in and asked what she was doing. "I'm a lightbulb," the brunette answered.

"You need some time off," the boss told her.

The brunette jumped down and walked out. The blonde followed her. The boss asked, "Where do you think you're going?"

She replied, "Home. I can't work in the dark."



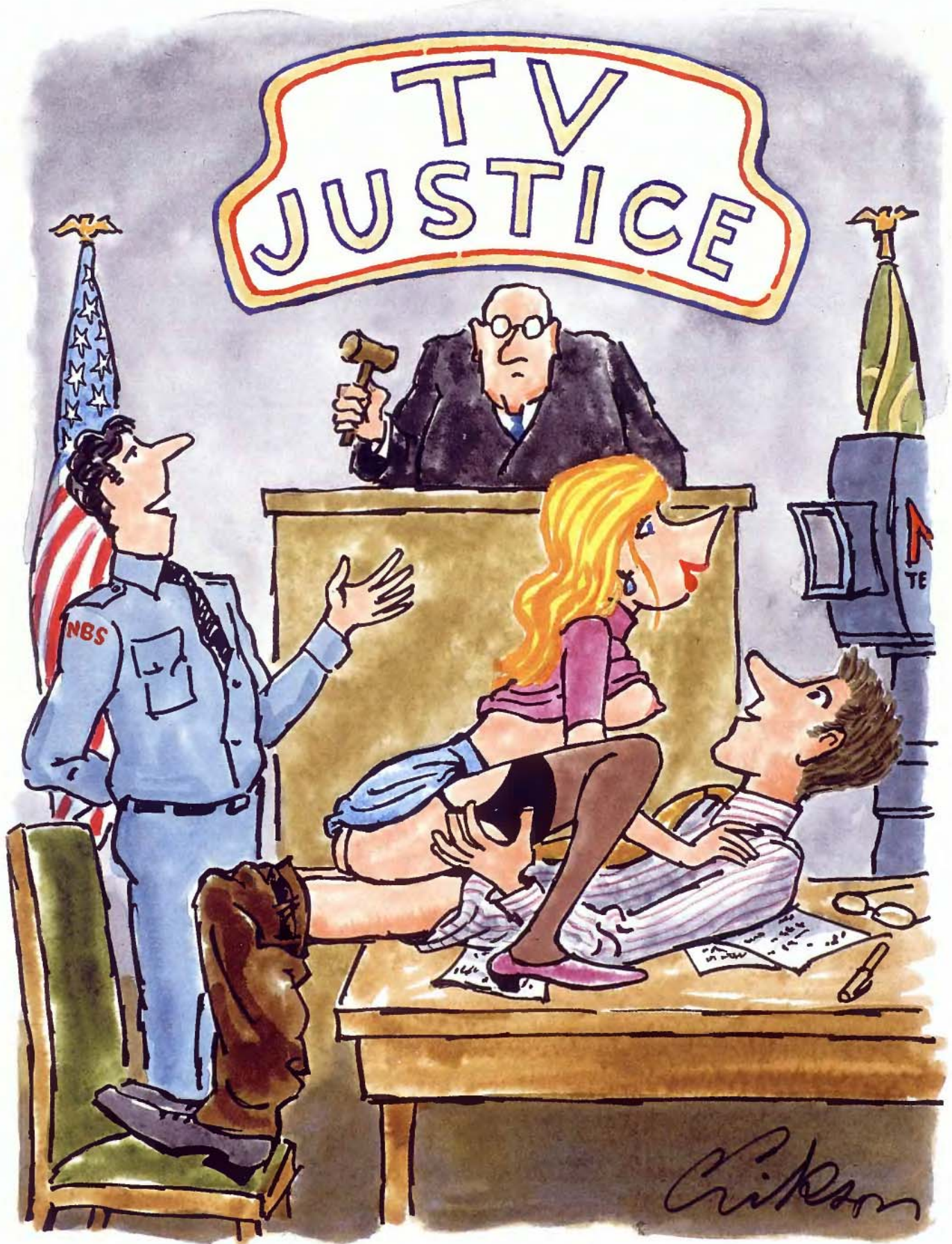
A machine operator came home from the factory and told his wife, "Honey, I've got some good news and some bad news. First, the good news: I got \$25,000 in severance pay."

His wife said, "That's great. But does that mean you lost your job?"

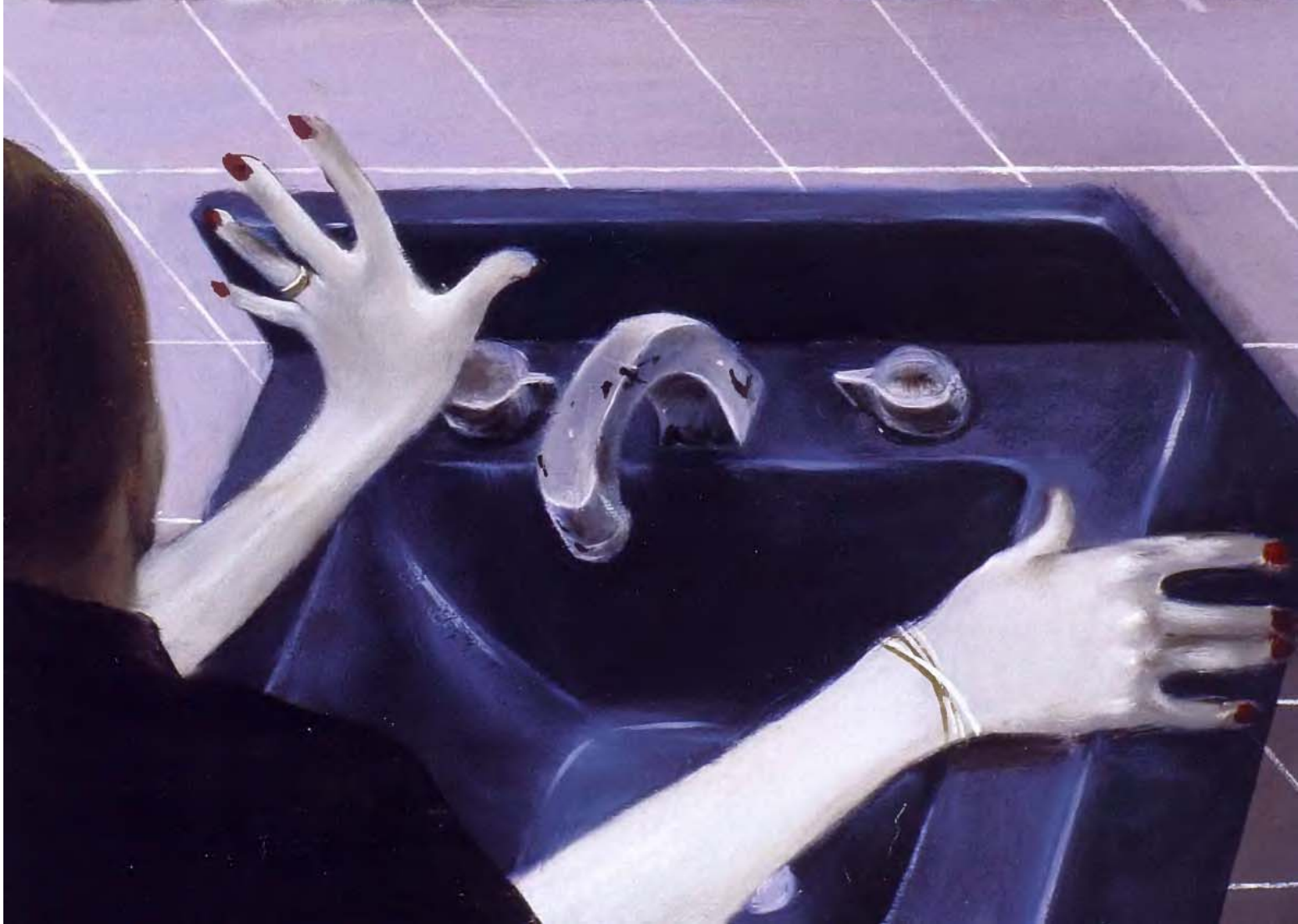
"No," he said, "but wait until you hear what was severed."

Our unabashed dictionary defines *déjà moo* as the feeling you get when you've heard the same bullshit before.

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



"Your honor, the plaintiff and defendant are trying to work things out during the commercial break."



YELLOW

DID SHE OR DIDN'T SHE? A LITTLE WHITE LIE TURNS DARK DURING AN IMPROMPTU GAME OF CHICKEN

Fiction by SCOTT SMITH

"Jen gaining weight?"

Rob senses rather than sees Vince turn to glance at him, his whole body shifting to do it, the leather creaking beneath him: a big, stiff-necked man.

"Saw her through the window this morning. In her robe. Looked a little, I don't know—plump?"

Plump. Has Jen grown plump? Rob debates the matter, watching the snowflakes rush past the windshield, too light, too dry to stick; Vince hasn't bothered to turn on the wipers yet. Well, why not? *Plump* is as accurate as any other word. Portly, padded, porcine: His wife is growing plump, a little pink pig posing before the window in her bathrobe.

"Pregnant," he says, surprising himself. He has no idea where the word comes from but, having uttered it, accepts it and lets it hang there in the darkened car.

That shifting glance again from Vince, but quicker this time, a double take. "No shit?"

Rob nods. A joke, he thinks. They'll spend the ride home talking about due dates, doctors' appointments, all the changes a child would thrust upon his life. He tries to think of funny names, imagines Vince struggling to seem supportive: Anatole and Erasmus, Barbie and Petunia. Or Orange, maybe—a girl named Orange. Why should Vince always be the one to make the jokes?

Vince slaps the wheel with his big hand. "Well, fuck, man! That's great, isn't it? I mean, it's good, right? It's something you wanted?"

Rob lifts an arm, an abbreviated shrug, still running names in his mind. Would Yellow be better than Orange? He smiles again, picturing a jaundiced little girl, plump and blonde like her mother. Hello, Yellow.

"Jen's happy? Jen must be happy."

"Of course," Rob says.

She would be, too. Jen comes from a big family; she'd want to quit her job, embrace the thing wholeheartedly. They'd have to move, he supposes, to a larger house, a better school district, something they can't afford just now. Rob works in the Parks Department, in procurement, a civil servant. He spends his days arranging for the purchase of fertilizer and grass seed, new swings for the playgrounds, dark green uniforms for the rangers. That's what Vince likes to call him—Ranger Rob. He's a bureaucrat, a pencil pusher, but Vince won't accept this. At barbecues, when someone's struggling with the grill, he'll shout, "Let Ranger Rob do it. He knows how to build a fire." Vince is an estate lawyer. He already has a bigger house.

Vince flicks his blinker—*click, click, click, click*—shifts lanes. "How far along?" he asks.

Time for bed, Red, Rob is thinking. Tie your shoe, Blue. Don't frown, Brown. A little rainbow of children. A boxful of crayons.

"Hmm?" he says.

"When's she due?"

"August," Rob answers, reflexively, thinking of his own birthday, then briefly panics, worried it's too distant, a 10- or 11-month pregnancy. He counts quickly in his head, but he's safe. Seven months. A December conception.

Vince is obviously making the same calculations. "No way—on the trip?"

The trip. Barbados, the two couples sharing a condo for a week. Rob and Jen lying in their bed each night, listening through the thin walls as Vince and Grace fucked their way into sleep. One of them, he and Jen couldn't decide which, made an odd barking sound in the climb toward climax. Jen had hid her face in her pillow, laughing. There was the sense—was it something Jen had said?—that Vince and Grace themselves had been trying to get pregnant. Unsuccessfully. For some time. But had Jen actually known this or merely been guessing? Rob wavers for an instant, contrite, searching for a way to wave his joke aside, harmlessly, a silly prank, but it doesn't come, not easily enough, and Vince is waiting. So he nods. "Little island baby," he says. "How cool is that?"

"Well, Christ. I..." Vince can't seem to find the words. Both hands grip the wheel, and he stares at the car ahead of them, the telegraphic dot-dot-dash of its brake lights. The snow is growing thicker, traffic slowing. "Big news," he says, finally. "Big, big news."

And that's it. No more congratulations, no more questions. *Yellow* is poised in Rob's head; he's waiting, eager to speak the word—*Yellow*, we're thinking of naming her *Yellow*—but Vince refuses to indulge him. He's sunk into himself, mute, concentrating on the driving, the pavement growing slick beneath them. Rob glances toward him, the hunch of his shoulders. His jaw is working—flexing, relaxing, flexing.

They reach their exit off the turnpike, then the long wait at the tollbooth, inching, inching, inching, the lowered window with its refreshing draft of cold, the wordless exchange of money, the acceleration onto route 78—a span of 10 minutes, maybe even 15—and still Vince is silent. The snow is growing wet now, the flakes larger. Vince turns on the wipers, and they go *thump-thump, thump-thump* as they slide across the windshield. "Can I ask you something?" he says, finally. "Hypothetically?"

"Shoot."

"You're an honest guy, aren't you? I mean, in a deep way?"

"I suppose."

"Always the best policy, right? Even if there might be a little pain involved?"

"That's what they say."

"Hmm." Vince taps the wheel with

his fingers, thinking. "It's tricky. A tricky situation. Not certain how to play it."

Rob is silent, waiting.

"Play it straight, don't you think?" Vince asks. "Friends, even if it's tricky, they ought to play it straight."

"That's right."

Vince shifts in his seat, clears his throat. He reaches toward his collar, as if to loosen his tie, but then just drops his hand back to the wheel. "So. Here's the thing. This baby. Jen's baby."

Silence.

"Go on," Rob prompts.

But Vince has changed course suddenly; he waves the whole thing away. "Fuck it. Nothing. It's great. Congratulations. Really. That's all."

Rob turns to watch him. Vince's jaw is still working, his hands tight on the



wheel. Jealous, maybe. Rob experiences a hint of pleasure—guilty pleasure, but pleasure nonetheless. He likes having something in his life for Vince to envy, even if it's imaginary. There's a fraternal quality to their friendship, and with it a sense of hierarchy: Vince has always played the big brother—gregarious, confident, worldly—leaving Rob to tag along two steps behind, hesitant and deferential. But now Rob has found himself out in front, and he likes the feeling. He has to fight to keep from smiling.

Vince senses his gaze, shifts to meet it. "What?"

"Tell me."

"Tell you what?"

"What you were gonna say. About the baby."

"Fuck it, Rob. Seriously. It was stupid."

"I want to hear."

"No you don't."

"Don't be an ass, Vince. You started to say something. You have to finish it."

Vince sighs. He reaches toward his neck again, and this time he follows through, loosening his tie, undoing the top button on his shirt.

"All right. The baby."

"Yellow."

Vince falters at this, peering toward him through the darkened car. "What?"

"We're going to call her Yellow."

"You're joking."

Rob shakes his head. "We talked about it. Last night. Yellow Keegan."

"That's dumb, Rob. You can't name a baby Yellow."

"Of course we can."

"What do you think you are? Hippies?"

Vince sounds genuinely angry at the idea, and it sets off a responding rush of anger in Rob. They've picked a name for their baby; what right does Vince have to criticize it? He gives Vince an impatient wave. "Just say what you meant to say."

They pass a snowplow dropping salt, its flashing lights briefly illuminating the car's interior. Vince sighs. He speaks without looking at Rob, his eyes on the road in front of them, the swirling snow. "Fine," he says. "Here's the thing. The tricky thing. About the baby. What I maybe shouldn't tell you, but then again—"

"Would you please just say it?"

"It might not be yours."

There's a little parenthesis of lost time here—maybe 10 seconds—while Rob struggles to grasp the import of this remark. "What're you saying?"

A shrug from Vince. "It's something you'd want to know, isn't it? If it were true?"

"The baby might not be mine."

"That's right."

"Because?"

"Well, that's the pain part."

"Why wouldn't it be mine, Vince?"

"You have to listen now, all right? You have to wait to get mad till you've heard the whole story. Because maybe it sounds like something it's not. Something worse."

Rob waits.

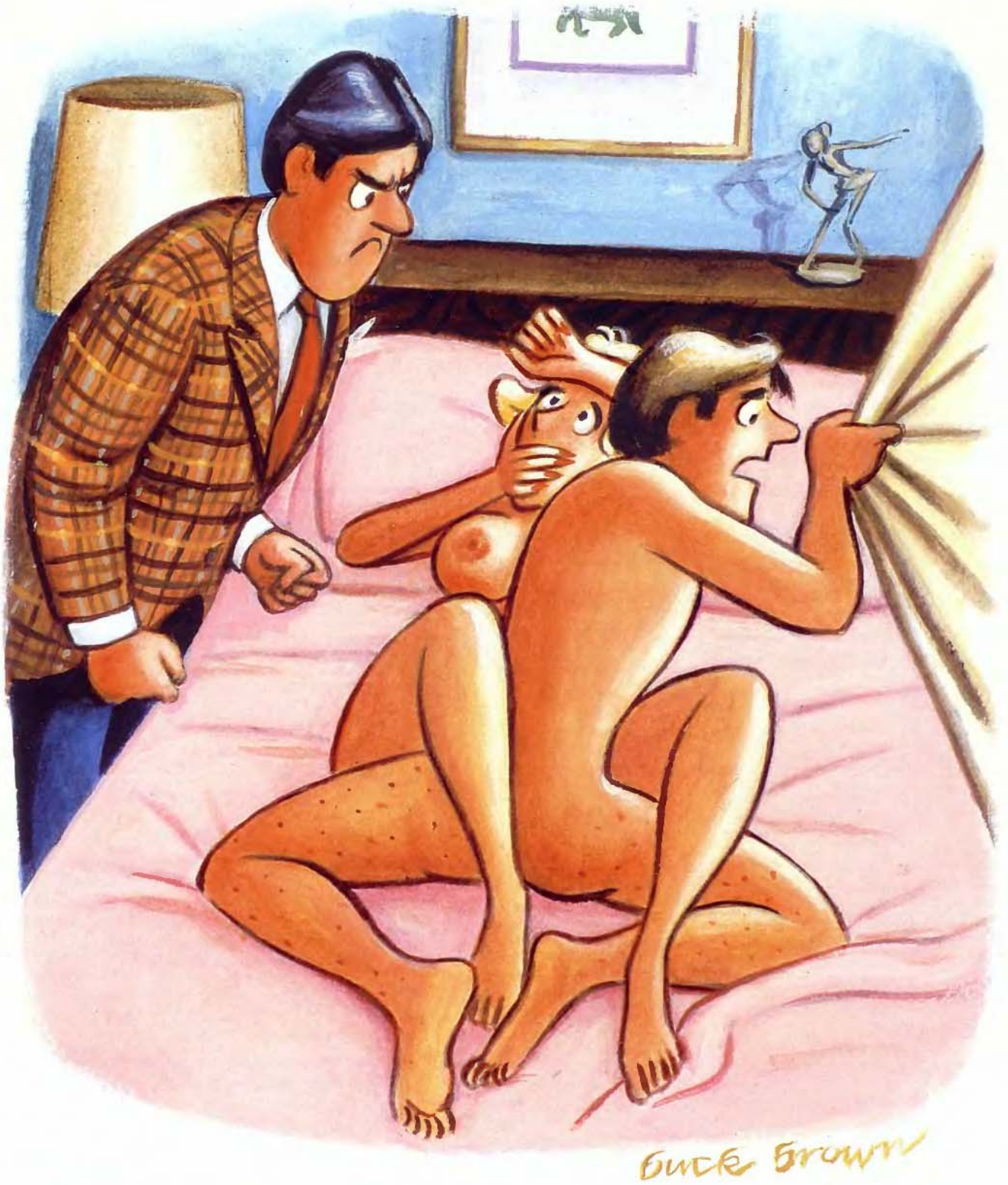
"It might be mine," Vince says.

Rob sees something close to a smile tug at Vince's face, just a hint, quickly suppressed. Immediately, he thinks: The dog, the Fowlers' yellow Lab. He sighs. "Fuck you, Vince. You botched it—you smiled. That same little half smile you had when Jack Fowler came to ask about their dog."

Vince doesn't say anything. He's squinting slightly, as if trying to decipher what Rob is talking about: Jack Fowler? A dog?

The Fowlers had gone to Europe for a month. They'd left their dog—still a puppy, not quite a year old—with

(continued on page 118)



Duck Brown

"That's odd. There's a fat lady down there—and she's singing!"

BOSS SPRINGSTYLE

WORN TO RUN



PLAYBOY
FASHION

CLASSIC **ROCK** **CLASSIC** STYLE

The LPs of the 1970s offered more than hits—each cover delivered a full square foot of attitude. We re-create the look behind the music

Who's dressed?



If a half-century of rock and roll has taught us anything, it's that cool is far more than just a state of mind—it's also a state of dress. Nowhere is this theory more on display than on the covers of classic rock albums. These pop culture masterpieces, produced before the days of tiny CD cover art, helped define rock star style for entire generations. These days, dressing like a guitar god is easier than ever. That's why we've re-created a six-pack of classic covers, using clothes the artists would be wearing today. **THAT PAGE:** For two albums, Bruce Springsteen was just a Dylan wannabe from unhip New Jersey. Then came 1975's *Barn to Run*, an American classic. Our Bass is in a leather jacket by **Schott** (\$484), jeans by **Parasuco** (\$70) and a tank top by **2xist** (\$16). Our Clarence is in a shirt by **Parasuco** (\$76), calfskin pants by **Andrew Marc** (\$495) and a hat by **Stetson** (\$200). **THIS PAGE:** The Who was not only one of the greatest bands in rock history—it was also a style trendsetter for decades. From left: Our John Entwistle is in pants (\$200) and a python blazer (\$5,565) by **Calvia Kleia Collection** and a shirt by **Paul Smith** (\$760). The boats are his own. Our Pete won't get fooled again in a knit shirt by **NYBased** (\$75), jeans by **DKNY** (\$68) and high-tops by **Tommy Hilfiger** (\$55). Our Keith Moon is in jeans by **Parasuco** (\$70), a T-shirt by **Buckler** (\$45) and boots by **Tommy Hilfiger** (\$80). Our frontman is in frayed G-Brand jeans by **Guess** (\$148), a henley shirt by **Neil Barrett** from Jeffrey, NYC (\$210) and sneakers by **Adidas** (\$70).

Fashion by **joseph de acetis** • produced by **jennifer ryan jones** • photography by **nick cardillicchio**



WISH YOU WORE THIS

Wish You Were Here was Pink Floyd's 1975 ode to departed band founder (and drug casualty) Syd Barrett. It was also a bridge between two of the most successful albums of all time—*Dark Side of the Moon* and *The Wall*. While *Wish You Were Here* never achieved the monster sales of those cultural icons, many aficionados consider it the band's best and most haunting work. The cover art of *Wish You Were Here* has proved enduring too. Plying against the band's psychedelic rep, the album cover shows two suits in a Hollywood back lot, perhaps representing record label execs putting the squeeze on the band after the unprecedented success of *Dark Side of the Moon*. At left, Mr. Pink is in a single-breasted one-button suit by **Perry Ellis** (\$495), a shirt by **Calvin Klein Collection** (\$145), loafers by **J.M. Weston** (\$325) and gold-rimmed sunglasses by **Randolph** for Fabulous Fanny's (\$71). Mr. Floyd wears a two-button suit by **Paul Smith** (\$1,020), a striped shirt (\$175) and tie (\$95) by **Calvin Klein Collection**, and pointed-toe loafers by **Prada** from Jeffrey, NYC (\$510).

set painting and props by brad fisher

FLY PRINTS & FLASHY TONES GREATEST LOOKS



Sly and the Family Stone's hippie-funk groove was so successful, the band was ready for a greatest hits album in 1970—after just three years of recording. When it came to style, the band had it going on as well. Dance to the clothing, clockwise from top left: Face L. Hair is in a white tux shirt by **Polo Jeans** (\$70), ski pants by **Balenciaga** (\$760), a belt by **Paul Smith** (\$230) and loafers by **Prada** (\$510). Monsieur Paisley is in a shirt by **NYBased** (\$295) and a hat by **Paul Smith** (\$150). The protoraver is in an orange flight suit by **Avirex** (\$125), a shirt by **D&G** (\$295) and shoes by **Toschi Internazionali** (\$385). Smiley wears a sleeveless tee (\$40) and shirt (\$125) by **NYBased**. Snow White is in a shirt by **Perry Ellis** (\$40) and a fur vest from **USA Furs by George** (\$995). Our Sly is in a polo shirt (\$75) and blazer (\$495) by **Tommy Hilfiger**. That's pseudo-Sly in the car, too, in a polo by **Tommy Hilfiger** (\$75) and a watch by **Oris** (\$750). Sister Slinky is in a top by **Paul Smith** (\$475), pants by **Alice Rei** (\$515), a calfskin jacket by **Levi's Premium Outerwear** (\$498) and boots by **Casadei** (\$620).

FLEETWOOD MAC DADDY BLOOMERS



Even in a genre rife with startling image makeovers, no band beat Fleetwood Mac, which in the 1970s went from English blues-rock shufflers to purveyors of slick, pristinely produced California pop. The key to the transformation: the addition of Lindsey Buckingham and Stevie Nicks in 1975. With 1977's *Rumours*, the band reached its creative and commercial peak. On the cover was an image that left head-scratching fans asking, "What the hell are those things hanging between his legs?" From left: To simulate the calf-length pants of the original cover, we've rolled up a regular pair of pants by **NYBased** (\$100)—but unless your idea of going out means hitting the local Renaissance fair, don't try this at home. He's also wearing a shirt by **NYBased** (\$85), a vest by **Rainbow Stintien** (\$80), socks by **Geld Tee** (\$6) and slippers by **Capezio** (\$36). His sterling silver neckloco is by **Jennifer Miller Jewelry** (\$265). Our Stevie is in a dress by **Stella McCartney** (\$670), stockings by **Danskin** (\$19) and slippers by **Capezio** (\$58). Her brocelet is by **Jennifer Miller Jewelry** (\$595).

women's styling by meriem orlet
set painting and props by brad fisher

RAMONES



Hey, ho, let's go. The Ramones recorded their eponymous debut for \$6,400 in 1976 and changed rock and roll forever. Never had the outer boroughs of New York seemed so cool. The Ramones filtered early-1960s pop—girl groups, surf music and Phil Spector—through a wash of punk noise and topped it with deliberately down-market lyrical imagery about glue sniffing, beatings and blitzkriegs. Oh, and the black leather motorcycle jackets were a nice touch too. From left: Our Johnny wears a leather jacket by **Schoff** (\$405), jeans by **DKNY** (\$58), a T-shirt by **Penguin** (\$24) and a pair of **Vans** from XLarge (\$90). Our Marky is in a leather jacket by **Hugo Hugo Boss** (\$695), distressed jeans by **Parasuco** (\$110), a T-shirt by **Penguin** (\$24) and sneakers by **Fifty 24 SF** (\$50). Our Joey is in a leather motorcycle jacket by **Hugo Hugo Boss** (\$895), jeans by **Diesel** (\$149) and sneakers by **Vans** from XLarge (\$90). Our Dee Dee wears a leather jacket by **Kenneth Cole** (\$425), jeans by **DKNY** (\$52), a T-shirt by **Paul Smith** (\$130) and sneakers by **Fifty 24 SF** (\$50).

YELLOW *(continued from page 110)*

"I guess at some point she kind of straddled me—my hip, I mean. Like a baby would—can you picture that?"

Grace and Vince. Vince spent the month training the dog. Every morning, before he left for work, he gleefully mixed up commands, crossing wires. A joke. By the end of the month the word *stay* would send the dog running off across the yard. *Down* would get him to jump against your chest. *Sit*, and he'd stand on his hind legs. *Shake*, he'd lift his leg and pee. Rob was there when Jack Fowler came calling, with a puzzled expression on his face, two days after their return. He remembered that half smile of Vince's as he denied everything. Rex was the dog's name: the king of confusion. It was great fun, an immense hit at the neighborhood cocktail parties and barbecues, until *stay* sent the dog running into the road one afternoon, under the wheels of a school bus.

"It's not funny," Rob says. "I was excited to tell you. This is..." He searches for a phrase with the necessary heft. "A huge moment in my life. It's not something to joke about."

Vince hits his blinker, shifts to the far right lane, eases them onto the median. He brings them to a stop, hazards flashing. It's a narrow median. There's a low cement wall on one side, traffic rushing past on the other. Vince puts the car in park, shuts off the wipers, then sits for a moment, silent, his hands resting lightly on the wheel. The traffic sends snow swirling across the windshield in sudden gusts. When a truck passes, the entire car shudders in its wake. "I'm not joking," Vince says.

Another truck passes, shaking the car again. We shouldn't be parked here, Rob thinks. We're going to get hit. "You're saying—"

"That's right."

"You and Jen."

Vince nods, still not looking at him.

Rob laughs, but it feels forced. "This isn't funny. Really. It's stupid."

Vince stares straight ahead, waiting him out.

"You're such an ass. You know that?"

Rob's voice has jumped in volume, rebelliously, against his will. He tries to bring it back, but it only grows louder: "You're such a goddamn—" But he can't think of another name to call him. *Ass* is all he can drag up, and it seems silly to say it again. "You're jealous, aren't you?"

Vince gives him a startled look. "Jealous?"

"You can't have your own baby, so you try to shit on mine."

"What're you talking about?"

"You and Grace, you're trying to get pregnant, and you—"

"We're not trying to get pregnant."

Rob falters at this, frowning. "You're not?"

Vince shakes his head.

"Jen said you're trying to get pregnant."

Vince lifts his hands, lets them drop. "News to me."

The snow is falling heavily now, coating the car's windows, muffling everything: the passing lights, the wet sound of tires speeding through the salt melt. Only the trucks maintain their proximity; they seem to slap at the car as they rush by.

"This doesn't have to be a big deal, Rob."

Rob gives him an incredulous look. He wishes they weren't in the car; he wants to jump up, pace about. "You fucked my wife?" he says. "You had an affair? And that's not a big deal?"

"It's not like that."

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"We slept together...a moment of weakness."

"Once?"

Vince frowns, seems to conduct an internal debate.

"How many times, Vince?"

"Three."

Rob takes that in. There was a first time, then a second one and then a third. "You and Jen," he says. "The two of you. Three times."

Vince nods. "It was a vacation thing. It was stupid. I have no idea what we were thinking."

The car's heater is on too high; Rob can feel his shirt sticking damply to his back. He considers struggling out of his jacket, but he can't find the strength to move. He's heard enough; they should go home now. "Tell me," he says. "Tell me everything."

Vince spends long enough thinking this through that Rob starts to suspect he might not speak at all. Then, abruptly, he begins to talk:

"It was our third day down there. You got too much sun in the morning. On your neck." He reaches up, touches

the back of his own neck. "Remember? You forgot to put on sunscreen?"

Rob nods, feeling it again for an instant, that band of burning rawness. Just turning his head had threatened to bring tears to his eyes.

"Grace drank too much the night before. She was hungover—you know how she gets. When you said that you were heading back to the condo, she went too."

Rob nods again—he remembers all this well enough.

"She slept, I think," Vince says. "A nap. I don't know what you did."

"I took a bath."

"Yeah?"

Rob makes a rolling motion with his hand, urging Vince back on course.

"So we're on the beach, reading. You know, just a normal sort of afternoon down there—"

Rob makes the rolling motion with his hand again. "I don't need you to paint a fucking picture. I just—"

"All I'm—"

"Get to the point, Vince. Don't tell me about the beach. Don't tell me what you were reading. Either tell me—right now—how you fucked my wife, or I'm climbing out of the car." He reaches for the door handle.

Vince pats at the air, calming him, nodding. "We went for a swim," he says. "Late in the afternoon, right before we were gonna leave. The two of us, standing out in the water, just beyond where the waves were breaking. Bobbing up and down in the swells. That warm water—remember how warm it was?"

"The point, Vince."

"Right. The point. We were bobbing up and down in the swells, and one of them—it sort of threw Jen against me. I caught her, held her up. And she slipped her arm around my neck. It was innocent, you know? Nothing sexual. We were just deep enough that it was hard for her to touch the bottom, so it seemed natural to keep standing like that, my arm around her waist, her arm around my shoulder, bobbing in the waves. Talking. And I guess at some point she kind of straddled me—my hip, I mean. Like a baby would—can you picture that?"

He turns to look at Rob, but Rob just stares at him. Of course he can picture it.

"There was nothing flirtatious about it—like I said, it seemed natural. We kept talking—where we might go for dinner, that sort of thing. We were bobbing up and down, pressed together, me in my trunks, Jen in that little yellow bikini of hers. And I guess at some

(continued on page 147)

Don Madden



"This is a temporary position for six months or until my wife finds out about you, whichever comes first."



OPEN SEASON

Fasten your seat belts. With more scandal, more vitriol and more cash at stake than ever before, this could be the weirdest baseball season in history.

Here's all the juice on who's up, who's down and who's out

By ALLEN ST. JOHN

Baseball is in a state of shock. The 2004 season is set to start this month—2,430 games, nearly 22,000 innings, during which stars will be born and careers will be destroyed and millions of dollars will change hands, just as in so many summers before. But given what happened last October and over the winter, this season could be freakier than any other in 150 years of midget pinch hitters, bench-clearing brawls and acid-tripping aces.

Let's start with last year's wild-ride postseason. You're mistaken if you think for a minute that the Cubs aren't desperate to erase from memory their monumental collapse, that the potential for violence between Red Sox and Yankees fans and players isn't real,

that George Steinbrenner isn't still humiliated by having his nose rubbed in the sacred turf of the House That Ruth Built. Baseball seasons usually heat up in late summer, when the rage born of competition starts to fuel the game.

This season *begins* on that note.

The wild postseason led to an equally wild off-season. No, the trade of the century—the one that would have shifted the allegiances of five All-Stars, most notably Alex Rodriguez, the game's highest-paid player—

didn't come to fruition. Still, two former MVPs, two Cy Young Award winners, two 20-game winners and a guy who has been compared to a young Joe DiMaggio changed addresses. Few teams resemble what they once were.

And then there are the looming scandals—an ever-growing number of land mines waiting to explode onto the front page of your daily sports section.

So what will be the most enduring stories of 2004? Read on.

THE S WORD. This season, for the first time in history, every major league baseball player will be subject to random steroid testing. If we go through a second straight year without someone hitting 50 home runs, or if certain suspiciously beefy players suddenly resemble

Ichiro from the neck down, what will that say about the purity of recent stats? Which records should have asterisks next to them? With the Balco investigation under way, these questions will come into play this season. Ten years from now, folks could be dissing Barry Bonds's



ALEX RODRIGUEZ



BARRY BONDS

home run records—he's fewer than 100 behind Hank Aaron for the all-time mark—in a way Pete Rose could never have imagined. Or not. Stay tuned.

ANYONE CAN WIN. The Tigers will make the playoffs sooner or later. (Okay, later.) But in the 21st century, winning is no longer just a function of payroll but of the new way GMs are evaluating talent. Each year a small-market club—the Twins, the Angels, the Royals—comes out of nowhere to contend. Last year's National League East standings prove that it's better to be smart than rich. The Mets spent twice as much as the Marlins...and finished 24 and a half games behind them.

So which team will step up this season? The underachieving Rangers? The Padres, with their young pitching and new park? These teams could lose 95 games—but they're capable of winning that many as well. No matter what baseball town you live in, don't be surprised to see games played there come October.

THE C WORD. Sometime last winter baseball's owners got together and took a blood oath, like kids in a tree house: "No more expensive free agent contracts. Pinkie swear." At least that's what the suits at the Players Association believe. Hell, the off-season free agent market was flatter than Debra Messing. Free agents just aren't getting the big money. The owners say they're being frugal. The players' union says it smells like collusion part two, that the owners made



KAZ MATSUI

a deal not to bid against each other for free agents. (In the aftermath of part one, in 1987, the players won a cool \$280 million settlement.)

This is more than just a business-page story. If the players are correct, baseball is less about winning than it is about jacking up profits for a small handful of greedy suits.

Either way, after an unprecedented 15 months of peace, the sports world's answer to the Hatfields and the McCoy's are at it again. Get ready for war.

THE CURSE WILL BE BROKEN.

Repeat after us: The Red Sox and Cubbies aren't cursed, they're incompetent. Babe Ruth's departure didn't cause the Sox's post-season failures—a weak bullpen did, the problem that plagued the team from week one of last season. And the Cubs? If they had a bullpen in the postseason they'd be getting fitted for rings right now.



KEITH FOULKE

Guess what Santa brought to Beantown and the Windy City? Keith Foulke and LaTroy Hawkins, respectively, two relievers who could deliver baseball fans their dream World Series: Red Sox vs. Cubs. We can see it now. They'll get to game seven...and play 27 nail-biting innings. Boston will blow a lead when its first baseman boots a dribbler. A Cubs fan will reach out of the stands and alter the course of history. And at 3:42 A.M. Eastern time the game will be called on account of Bud Selig falling asleep.

Or the Cubs will just beat the Sox in six games.

PLAYBOY'S PICKS

NL East:

Phillies

NL Central:

Cubs

NL West:

Giants

NL wild card:

Astros

AL East:

Red Sox

AL Central:

Twins

AL West:

Mariners

AL wild card:

Blue Jays

NL champions:

Cubs

AL champions:

Red Sox

World champs:

Cubs

TOP OF THE LINEUP

Most Likely to Have a Breakout Season



Hank Blalock

Although it seems as if he's been around longer than Mookie Blaylock, Hank is just now completing puberty. Last year the 23-year-old third baseman hit .300 with 29 homers and 90 RBI for the Rangers and socked the decisive dinger at the All-Star game (see photo above). Runner-up: either of the Matsuis.

Most Likely to Start a Bench-Clearing Baseball War



Kerry Wood

Sure, Pedro Martinez will probably incite a riot in the Bronx this year. But Wood could incite the wrath of the entire league. The hurler, who throws 100 mph fastballs, has led the NL in hit batters for two years running. Last season he plunked more guys than any pitcher since 1969. Hitters are going to start swinging.

Most Valuable Fan



Bridget Hall

This gorgeous 26-year-old *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit model likes America's pastime so much, she was spotted arriving alone at Derek Jeter's Manhattan apartment at four o'clock one morning this off-season. Rumors promptly flew. Was she looking for baserunning tips? Who cares? We just can't take our eyes off her.

Most Overpaid Player



Mo Vaughn

The man with the ever-expanding waistline played in 27 games last year—and earned \$23 million (do the math!). This year he'll pocket \$15 million for terrorizing fast-food joints rather than pitchers. The all-but-retired Vaughn will suit up for zero games in 2004. He'd be a bargain if the Mets were paying by the pound. —Allen Barra

AMERICAN LEAGUE EAST



1. Boston Red Sox

Last season: 95-67. The Sox were on their way to beating the Yankees in the ALCS when...well, you know the rest. **Scouting report:** Whoa! GM Theo Epstein acquired Curt Schilling (career 163 wins, 3.33 ERA), who'll team with Pedro Martinez for a knockout one-two punch in the rotation. He also added closer Keith Foulke from the A's, who'll bolster the bullpen. This staff could be dynamite. In the field, newly acquired second baseman Pokey Reese will add some much-needed leather. David Ortiz (.592 slugging percentage) and Bill Mueller (AL-best .326 average) won't repeat their breakout years at the plate, but they won't have to. **X factor:** New skipper Terry Francona will have to mend fences with Nomar Garciaparra and Manny Ramirez, both nearly dealt in the failed A-Rod trade. **Prediction:** America's most self-loathing city badly needs a World Series win. It just might get it.



2. Toronto Blue Jays

Last season: 86-76. Lending a little order to an otherwise unpredictable world,

the Blue Jays finished third in the AL East...for the sixth consecutive year.

Scouting report: You can make an argument for Carlos Delgado (42 homers, 145 RBI) as the game's best hitter, for Vernon Wells (33 homers, 117 RBI) as the game's next superstar, for Roy Halladay (22-7, Cy Young Award) as the best pitcher in all of baseball. Still, the Jays haven't made the playoffs since 1993. Whether they can pull it off this year depends on...

X factor: ...three newly acquired pitchers, including the projected number-two starter (Miguel Batista), the number-three starter (Ted Lilly) and closer Kerry Ligtenberg, whose best year was in 1998, when he tallied a mediocre 30 saves with the Braves.

Prediction: The Jays will sneak in as the wild card. "O Canada...!"



3. New York Yankees

Last season: 101-61. For any other club, a World Series loss is a good season. Not for the Yankees.

Scouting report: Call it heresy, but replacing Andy Pettitte, Roger Clemens and Jeff Weaver with Javier Vazquez, Kevin Brown and a full sea-

son of Jose Contreras could make the pitching better. At the plate, though, this lineup is dubious, led by a hobbled Jason Giambi (.250), an aging Bernie Williams (64 RBI), a streaky Alfonso Soriano (130 strikeouts, 38 walks) and Gary Sheffield (.330), the newest pin-striped superstar, who will have to pull a lot of weight.

X factor: Zenmaster closer Mariano Rivera, 34, has made three trips to the disabled list in the past two seasons.

Prediction: The Yanks will miss the playoffs for the first time since 1993.



4. Baltimore Orioles

Last season: 71-91. The O's finished with their sixth straight losing summer.

Ever seen a bird fly full speed into a window? Welcome to Camden Yards.

Scouting report: In Miguel Tejada (27 homers, 106 RBI), Javy Lopez (.328, 43 homers) and Viagra stud Rafael Palmeiro (38 homers, 112 RBI), the Orioles added heavy bats to an already decent lineup (ranked 10th out of 30 in batting average last year). But management also cut loose some key pitchers, including Jason Johnson and Damian Moss. The team's top returning hurlers are, um, Rodrigo Lopez (7-10) and Omar Daal (4-11). The good news: Sidney Ponson has signed for 2004.

X factor: The O's sold 2.5 million tickets last year, 1.2 million fewer than in 1997. Our advice: *free beer*. Never fails.

Prediction: Lots of hitting—in both halves of the inning—will juice Camden Yards and make new manager Lee Mazzilli pine for the Bronx.



5. Tampa Bay Devil Rays

Last season: 63-99. Manager Lou Piniella doesn't like to lose. He's in the wrong town.

Scouting report: The D-Rays had the lowest payroll in baseball last season, and they don't figure to spend much more this year. The squad has some young talent, like Carl Crawford, who may be the best athlete in the bigs (he was recruited as a quarterback by Nebraska and as a point guard by UCLA), and rising stars Aubrey Huff (.311, 34 homers) and Rocco Baldelli. But the pitching remains suspect. At best.

X factor: Tampa Bay has seen its attendance fall every year the team has been in the league.

Prediction: If last year proved anything, it's that any club can win the World Series. Except the Devil Rays.

THE 2004 ALL-PLAYBOY TEAM

Talk about your fantasy team. By our calculations three of these players are the greatest ever at their positions (can you guess which?). Total team payroll: \$101 million. And worth it!



NATIONAL LEAGUE WEST

1. San Francisco Giants



Last season: 100-61. Losing the World Series and manager Dusty Baker didn't faze the Giants, who won their second division title in four years.

Scouting report: The good news is that they acquired catcher A.J. Pierzynski (.312), who might be their second-best hitter behind Barry Bonds. That's also the bad news. They lost Rich Aurilia (mediocre in 2003, but he hit .324 with 37 homers in 2001) to the Mariners. On the mound, Jason Schmidt is a true ace. Since coming over from Pittsburgh in 2001, he's gone 37-14 with a 3.06 ERA.

X factor: For this team to click, untested hurlers Jerome Williams, 22, and Kevin Correia, 23, will have to step up. **Prediction:** The win-it-now Giants will go as far as 39-year-old Bonds will take them. And that should be deep.

2. San Diego Padres



Last season: 64-98. The weather was great. The baseball wasn't.

Scouting report: Is this a baseball team or a day care center? A group of promising kids, led by third baseman Sean Burroughs and shortstop Khalil Greene, will help power the Pads, while vets David Wells and Ismael Valdes will support young guns Jake Peavy, Adam Eaton and Brian Lawrence on the mound. Newly acquired Brian Giles (.427 on-base percentage since moving to the NL) and a full season of Phil Nevin will improve the lineup. GM Kevin Towers has raised the team's payroll to \$60 million to move the Pads into quick contention.

X factor: With San Diego's gorgeous female fans showing up in bikini tops, will the young players be able to keep their eye on the ball?

Prediction: A little luck (okay, a lot) could make the Padres this year's version of the 2003 Marlins.

3. Los Angeles Dodgers



Last season: 85-77. The last time the Dodgers won a division title in a nonstrike season, Slim Fast—chuggin' Tommy Lasorda was the manager.

Scouting report: While first in ERA, the Dodgers finished dead last in the majors in runs scored in 2003, and they don't figure to get any better this season. Their great hope: Juan Encarnacion (94 RBI), acquired from Flori-

da. He won't be enough. The Dodgers traded ace Kevin Brown for head case Jeff Weaver, but 20-year-old super-prospect Edwin Jackson (2-1, 2.45 ERA in three late-season starts) could be the second coming of Pedro Martinez. The game's best closer, Eric Gagne (55 saves in 55 opportunities), will hold as many leads as this team's anemic offense can give him.

X factor: After hitting 91 homers in the two previous seasons, Shawn Green hit 19 in 2003. Bat him cleanup or leadoff? **Prediction:** The Dodgers will give the crowds at Chavez Ravine little reason not to beat the traffic.

4. Arizona Diamondbacks



Last season: 84-78. The D-backs posted their worst record since their 1998 expansion season.

Scouting report: The addition of Richie Sexson (45 homers, 124 RBI) should boost what was a meager lineup—36-year-old Luis Gonzalez and 39-year-old Steve Finley were the only hitters to drive in more than 52 runs in 2003. But the club's real strength has always been pitching. Despite an underwhelming 10-9 record, rookie Brandon Webb finished fourth in the NL in ERA (2.84). He could offset the loss of Curt Schilling.

X factor: Cooperstown-bound hulk Randy Johnson turned 40 last September (nine days before hitting his first major league homer). Tough to say what he'll do this year.

Prediction: Sorry, folks. There will be no October surprise in Arizona in 2004.

5. Colorado Rockies



Last season: 74-88. The Rockies had the most extreme home-road splits in baseball, going 49-32 (.605) at Coors and only 25-56 (.309) on the road.

Scouting report: Management spent the off-season signing players from all over and sending others packing. All this movement will have little impact. We're not sure what GM Dan O'Dowd is trying to pull. The biggest incoming name is aging Vinny Castilla (.277, 22 homers with the Braves), who thrived with the Rockies in the 1990s. Meanwhile Todd Helton (.358, second in the majors) is poised for another great year.

X factor: On the mound, club ace Jason Jennings (12-13, 5.11 ERA) is no doubt counting the days until free agency.

Prediction: Dig offense? Watch the Rockies. Dig winning? Look elsewhere.

Field of Screams

The brawls you'll get off on this season. In this corner...

Pedro Martinez vs. the Yankees

History: Watching Red Sox ace Martinez body-slam 72-year-old Don "the Hulk" Zimmer in last season's American League Championship Series was both shocking and hilarious (sorry, Zim, you asked for it). But watching Pedro throw heat at the heads of Yankees batters was just plain scary. That the Yanks humiliated him and won the series only added fuel to this fire.



Who wins: As in last year's ALCS, it'll take the entire Yankees lineup to subdue Pedro when the fists fly. The 170-pound Dominican will hit anybody—geriatrics, team mascots, kittens....

Milton Bradley vs. anybody

History: This Milton Bradley doesn't play games. The Indians' young star has had heated words with Dodgers catcher Paul Lo Duca, Royals catcher Mike DiFelice and others. His statement to the media last year says it all: "If you don't know me and I don't know you, don't approach me and I won't approach you. Don't insult me and I won't insult you, because you don't know what I will or won't do."



Who wins: This guy is so disliked—one of his own teammates put a sign near his locker reading SHUT UP AND PLAY—somebody will knock some sense into him. Soon.

Reds vs. Cubs

History: Last June Cincinnati's Paul Wilson took a step toward the mound after Chicago's Kyle Farnsworth had brushed him back. In a turn of the tables, the six-foot-four, 240-pound pitcher (and former prep school line-backer) charged home plate and decked Wilson. Talk about seeing red. We'll be surprised if the benches don't clear again this season.



Who wins: The kids! Young, impressionable fans learn plenty from watching adults in tights beat each other bloody.

—Bruce Feldman

AMERICAN LEAGUE CENTRAL



1. Minnesota Twins

Last season: 90–72. Division champs. These players are scoring—chicks, that is.

Scouting report: No money? No problem. The Twins' farm system has yielded three players ready to move into the lineup—catcher Joe Mauer and infielders Justin Morneau and Mike Cuddyer. They hope that will make up for the loss of A.J. Pierzynski (.312, 74 RBI). The team will need everything it can get for the \$6 million it's paying Shannon Stewart (.307 but only 13 dingers). **X factor:** Pitching. Southpaw Johan Santana (12–3, 3.07 ERA) is a jewel, but the team lost closer Eddie Guardado and setup man LaTroy Hawkins.

Prediction: The Twins will snatch the division in the final days of the season.



2. Kansas City Royals

Last season: 83–79. Kansas City bounced back after losing 100 games in 2002.

Scouting report: The Royals are a testament to the quality of baseball's scrap heap. Sure, shortstop Angel Berroa (great baseball name) was AL Rookie of the Year, but the guys who pulled the weight were journeymen, most of whom return this season: Joe Randa, Jose Lima, Curt Leskanic. The big news in Kansas City? The arrival of two-time-MVP outfielder Juan Gonzalez and the re-signing of Carlos Beltran. Score!

X factor: Can Gonzo stay healthy?

He played only 152 games in the past two seasons.

Prediction: Don't be surprised if this club takes the field for a 163rd game.



3. Chicago White Sox

Last season: 86–76. Five consecutive September losses to the Twins cost this team the division. That's gotta hurt.

Scouting report: Let's see. The Sox lost their best starting pitcher (Bartolo Colon), their best reliever (Tom Gordon), an All-Star outfielder (Carl Everett) and a Hall of Fame second baseman (Robbie Alomar). They did re-sign outfielder Carlos Lee and southpaw hurler Mark Buerhle, but that's a Band-Aid on a bullet wound.

X factor: Is Esteban Loaiza for real? Last year's numbers (21–9, 2.90 ERA) say one thing. His 69–73 career record entering 2003 says something else.

Prediction: New manager Ozzie Guillen will need every bit of the goodwill he built up in 13 years of playing in the dirt at Comiskey Park.



4. Cleveland Indians

Last season: 68–94. The team amused fans by playing guys named Milton Bradley and Coco Crisp.

Scouting report: The Indians didn't pick up any serious new talent. The club will rely on youngsters such as Ryan Ludwick, Victor Martinez and

Alex Escobar, hoping that a couple will break out the way Bradley did last season (team-high .321 average). Key player: Cleveland's ace, C.C. Sabathia (13–9, 3.60 ERA), is young enough to be part of the rebuilding program.

X factor: Bradley is a head case (see "Field of Screams" on page 123). Will he end up an All-Star or an inmate?

Prediction: It's been 55 years since the Indians won a World Series. Next stop: 56. Go Browns!



5. Detroit Tigers

Last season: 43–119. The Tigers didn't just suck. They sucked like Madonna's last album. Worse, even.

Scouting report: Tigers GM Dave Dombrowski built the Marlins' 1997 title team and the foundation of their 2003 team. Now he's making a commitment to prospects such as first baseman Carlos Pena and shortstop Omar Infante, and pitchers Jeremy Bonderman, Nate Cornejo and Franklyn German. The future could get brighter. But for 2004, even Pudge Rodriguez wouldn't make a difference.

X factor: Bonderman lost 19 games last year. But that's a ton of big-league experience for a 20-year-old. Don't be surprised if the young gun turns out to be 2004's silver lining.

Prediction: The Tigers will make a nail-biting September run for second-to-last place! And come up short.

(continued on page 159)

TOP OF THE LINEUP

Most Hated Player



Pedro Martinez

Martinez is a future Hall of Famer, but shouldn't a great pitcher be able to find a way to get five more outs with a three-run lead in the most important game of his life? And then there are his antics—dissing his own manager, hiding from the media, bloodying septuagenarians. Can you say "prima donna"? We knew you could.

Manager Most Likely to Be Fired First



Ken Macha

The A's skipper was outmanaged by the Red Sox's Grady Little during last year's postseason. His players made Little League–like baserunning errors, and we're still scratching our heads about why he pinch-hit for Jermaine Dye in game five. If the A's get off to a bad start, Macha could be flipping burgers by July.

Most Valuable Vrities



Boog's Bar-B-Q

You want healthy concession food? Keep searching. Boog's Bar-B-Q's tangy beef sandwich at Camden Yards gets the nod this season for best ballpark meal. The, uh, low-fat plate was inspired by the prodigious appetite of 240-pound first baseman Boog Powell, who spent 14 summers in Baltimore. *Bon appétit.*

Most Likely to Hit a Walk-Off World Series Home Run



Alex Gonzalez

Last season's most dramatic homers were hit by slumping Yankee Aaron Boone and the Marlins' Alex Gonzalez, of all people. Our pick for this season's most unlikely hero is the *other* Alex Gonzalez. The Cubs shortstop will atone for his fateful 2003 playoff error with a dinger that will warm all of the Midwest. —Allen Barra

Pillow Communication





RACHEL ROCKS

The supermodel hits all the right notes—and loses all the right clothes

As one of the world's top models, Rachel Hunter has made a stellar career out of showing off the latest trends in sexy swimwear. So why did she decide the time was right to show off her birthday suit? "I never had a problem with nudity growing up, and I think you get to a place where you're comfortable with yourself," says the 34-year-old native New Zealander, flashing a hint of her trademark mischievous smile. "You think, Fuck it, why not?"

Such leaps of faith have long helped her stand out from the crowd. After initially dreaming of being a ballerina, five-foot-11 Rachel began modeling at the age of 17, and in 1989 she left her footprints in the sand by making the first of several appearances in *Sports Illustrated's* annual swimsuit issue. Of course, being among the most recognizable models in the world has a way of attracting famous men, one of the most persistent of whom was rocker Rod Stewart. In 1990, though he was 24 years her senior, the two got married. They experienced the ups and downs typical of a glamorous rock couple and, after having two children together, separated in 1999. "All I can say about Rod is that he's an awesome father and an amazing person," says Rachel, who notes that their divorce is only now becoming final. "I just got married very, very young."

While making her home in Los Angeles, Rachel studied acting, which led to parts in several indie



PHOTOGRAPHY BY SANTE D'ORAZIO



movies and a role in the 2001 Mark Wahlberg film *Rock Star* as—surprise—a rock star's wife. But perhaps her biggest on-screen splash to date was in the recent Fountains of Wayne video for "Stacy's Mom," in which she stars as the object of a teenage boy's lusty daydreams. "I've always been seen in a commercial way, so I wanted to go over that barrier and strip on top of the kitchen table," she laughs. "I was shocked that the video became so popular, but I had a great time doing it." The video's, uh, climax is a slow-motion shot of Rachel emerging from a swimming pool in a red bikini. It's a direct homage to the famous *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* scene with Phoebe Cates, but Rachel insists she didn't prep by watching the 1982 teen flick. "I had no idea about that scene, but every guy apparently loves it," she says. "I did look at it afterward because I hoped I hadn't mimicked her exactly." Now that Rachel has toweled off, you can catch her next in the Sci-Fi Channel movie *Larva*.

Though she says you'd find mostly hip-hop in her CD collection, Rachel does seem to have an affinity for rock musicians. After splitting with Stewart she was linked to singer Robbie Williams and is currently seeing Puddle of Mudd frontman Wes Scantlin. Which begs the question: What is it with models and rockers? Rachel chuckles. "They should have sessions for us, like AA meetings. It's just as weird to me as it must seem to anyone else. It's not like I go out hunting musicians or hang out at concerts, like, 'Let me find myself a rock star!' I meet them

REWINDING RACHEL

Our cover girl has graced hundreds of magazine covers, including the *Spats Illustrated* 1994 "dream team" swimsuit issue with Elle Macpherson and Kathy Ireland (far left). In





1993 she shared an awards-show podium with then-hubby Rod Stewart, who no doubt was telling the crowd how damn lucky he is. On this page, Rachel's household chores are fuel for a teenager's fantasies in the popular recent music video for the Fountains of Wayne hit "Stacy's Mom."





through friends or if I'm out having a drink. I don't expect anyone to sit down and play me the guitar—it's not a prerequisite to whether I'll go out with you or not."

A love for animals just might be a prerequisite, however. Rachel dotes on her two horses and established a fund to protect lowland gorillas after touring their habitat in the Ugandan rain forest in 2000. "I saw how similar they are to us," she says. "Actually, in some ways I think they have their shit together better than we do." Don't worry, we're not in danger of losing Rachel to the wilds any time soon. "I like hot baths. To be completely greedy, I would want to live on a big ranch and still be able to go out to a nice restaurant," she says. "I love the big-city thing and going out dancing, but I may have to stop that soon, because I certainly don't want to run into my kids at a club!" When we ask if she's more cautious about marriage now, she shakes her head. "I'm a ridiculous and hopeless romantic," she says. "I'm pretty fearless when it comes to love. I still jump in...with four feet."



Rachel got a tattoo of a bee, inspired by her production company, the Bees Knees, but has since had it altered. "It is now being transformed into a cross between a Celtic goddess and the Virgin Mary at the base of my spine," she says, "which I guess would put any Catholic boy into a state!"





SEE MORE NUDES OF RACHEL HUNTER
AT CYBER.PLAYBDY.COM.







Kevin Smith

The Jersey-obsessed director has taken on the Catholic Church and Disney. But can he survive Bennifer?

1

PLAYBOY: In retrospect, considering the huge bomb that was *Gigli*, does casting Ben Affleck and Jennifer Lopez in your new movie, *Jersey Girl*, seem like a smart idea?

SMITH: Just make sure you don't call the movie *Gigli 2*. I wasn't one of the people who hated *Gigli*, but look, *Jersey Girl* is not about Ben and Jen. It's about Ben's character coping with being a dad, because Jen's character dies within the first 15 minutes. We were trying to keep that quiet at first, because her death is supposed to feel unexpected, but after the mess with *Gigli*, the secret got out. [smiles] Which was fine with me.

2

PLAYBOY: Did you bust Affleck's balls about *Gigli* mirroring certain plot points of your previous collaboration, *Chasing Amy*?

SMITH: Oh yeah, totally. The first time I saw it I turned to Ben and said, "Dude, are you trying to corner the market on straight guys who flip lesbians?" He said, "Yeah, there's a similarity. The big difference is that I got paid a hell of a lot more for doing this movie."

3

PLAYBOY: Do you think the Bennifer brouhaha will help or hurt *Jersey Girl*?
SMITH: Controversy is never good. It's always negative. *Clerks*, *Chasing Amy*, *Dogma*—they've all been dogged by some sort of controversy. When I started *Jersey Girl* I was like, "Okay, there's nothing objectionable about this movie. It's completely inoffensive." And then the fucking anti-Ben and Jen wagon comes rolling along and I find myself out there doing spin control again. The thing is, I got wonderful performances out of both of them because they were playing a couple falling in love while they were being a couple falling in love. But to-

ward the end of the production, I was behind the monitor with Jennifer, watching Ben, and she said, "He just doesn't understand. It'll never be this good again." And I said, "What are you talking about?" She was like, "I mean everything is perfect. We're falling in love, we're having fun, he's working with you, and he thinks we can do this with every movie. But we can't. It'll never be like this again."

4

PLAYBOY: Do you still call yourself an indie filmmaker now that you've moved from your beloved New Jersey to Hollywood?

SMITH: Dude, I haven't made an indie movie since *Clerks*. But it depends on how you define indie. If it's not having a budget, then I haven't been an indie filmmaker in a while, because people have given me a budget for every movie since then. If it's defined by content, then maybe I'm still an indie filmmaker, depending on the movie.

5

PLAYBOY: Do your fans bitch that you're selling out?

SMITH: Maybe, but I don't think I've sold out, at least not in the way that everyone defines it, like I have no integrity. If I was going to sell out I wouldn't have made *Dogma* or even *Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back*. You don't make a 90-minute in-joke where you fuck around with your friends on someone else's dime and call yourself a sellout. Selling out would be directing *Mighty Ducks 9*.

6

PLAYBOY: *Jersey Girl* is your first film that doesn't include at least a cameo by ubiquitous stoner characters Jay and Silent Bob. How did old pal Jason Mewes, who plays Jay, take the news?

SMITH: Jay and Silent Bob are dead for

now. But I always told Mewes that if he could get clean and sober I would think about doing another film with them. And he's been clean for nine months now, which is the longest in eight years, because he seems to stay clean only when we're shooting movies.

7

PLAYBOY: In addition to being a pot-head icon, Mewes has been busted for heroin. Do you indulge in controlled substances with him?

SMITH: I can count on two or three hands the times I've been stoned. It's just not productive. You can't get shit done. With Mewes, I've seen the toll that drugs can take. It's been heart-breaking, watching him go in and out. If he had stayed with weed, he probably could have managed. I don't even like the taste of booze. I'd rather drink chocolate milk, because it tastes better. The only drink I can really get behind is one of those strawberry margaritas, which is more like candy.

8

PLAYBOY: Have you ever written anything so outrageous that no one would allow you to shoot it?

SMITH: I took a scene out of *Mallrats* in which Silent Bob is spying on Joey Lauren Adams's character in a dressing room. He starts jerking off and shoots a wad that goes over the top of the stall and into the other room. Then you hear her scream. Throughout the rest of the movie, when you see her she's supposed to have this spot on her hair where it's stiff from all the come. And the executives were like, "You can't do that. Forget it. We'll get an NC-17 rating and it won't get released and nobody will find it funny. It's just tasteless!" But years later I went to see *There's Something About Mary*, and the poster—the poster—is of Cameron Diaz with come in her hair.

And I was just like, "Fuck! I should have stuck to my guns."

9

PLAYBOY: What's the weirdest script you've ever been asked to direct?

SMITH: Right after *Clerks*, this producer pitched an idea called *Hot Rod*. It was about Michael Jackson morphing into a car. No lie. Jackson was behind it, and he wanted it to be this story about a guy, played by himself, who hangs out with a little boy, and this little boy gets into the car and drives him around. In retrospect I'd love to make that movie. But it wouldn't be anything like the version Jackson or the studio wanted to see.

10

PLAYBOY: Why do your movies have so many homosexual references?

SMITH: All that gay stuff is in there because of my brother. When he first told me he was gay, I asked him, "What happens when you go to movies and see a girl and guy fall in love?" And he was like, "It's no big deal, because it happens all the time. But ultimately you just don't feel like you're being included." And that affected me, because when I go to movies the whole point is to connect with the characters. So I started throwing in the gay stuff for my brother and his friends so they wouldn't feel left out.

11

PLAYBOY: Even your hetero characters are surprisingly intimate. Do you think guys are generally too repressed when it

comes to expressing their feelings?

SMITH: Depends. I mean, look at *Clerks*. Those two dudes are one cock and a mouth away from being gay. They spend all their waking hours together. They have the most intimate conversations. The only thing they haven't said is "Okay, let's just fuck." I'm not saying that's what guys want, but chicks are totally free of that. I haven't met a woman who hasn't had a girl-on-girl dalliance, yet I can't point to a single guy I know who has had a guy-on-guy dalliance. None of them crosses that line. And that's a weird double standard.

12

PLAYBOY: What's the kinkiest thing you've ever done?

SMITH: When I was younger I was in a three-way with a girl and another guy, but he was on one end and I was on the other, so it wasn't a total orgy or anything like that. Later there were three-ways with me and two girls. But it's always a slippery slope when you're involved with one of the girls. Spend a little too much time over there and not enough over there and there may be hell to pay later on.

13

PLAYBOY: Have you ever thought about directing a porn flick?

SMITH: I love porn films, but I've never seriously considered shooting one. If you look at my movies, it's pretty obvious that my language isn't very visual. If I were to make a porno it would probably be the talkiest porno ever. It would

be a bunch of close-ups of two people talking dirty to each other.

14

PLAYBOY: So you're comfortable with not being a great cinematic stylist?

SMITH: Yeah, because I'm a writer first and foremost and a director by default, because I want to protect the shit I've written. The difference between me and other directors who worked in video stores, like Quentin Tarantino, is that when I was working I could only listen to the movies. So I was listening to movie after movie and not soaking up the visuals. Even now when I watch television I tend to be on the Internet at the same time. I might be a more visual director if I spent as much time looking as I do listening.

15

PLAYBOY: Apparently that's not a concern for Miramax, which is giving you the mission of dusting off the *Fletch* franchise from where Chevy Chase left it in 1989.

SMITH: I just finished the first draft of *Fletch Won*, which has been weird because I've never adapted a book before. But I was faithful to Gregory McDonald's novel because I think his *Fletch* stories are where I learned to write dialogue in the first place. A lot of my dialogue blends with his, so you really can't tell where his ends and mine begins. I just had to resist too many of my own pop culture references.

16

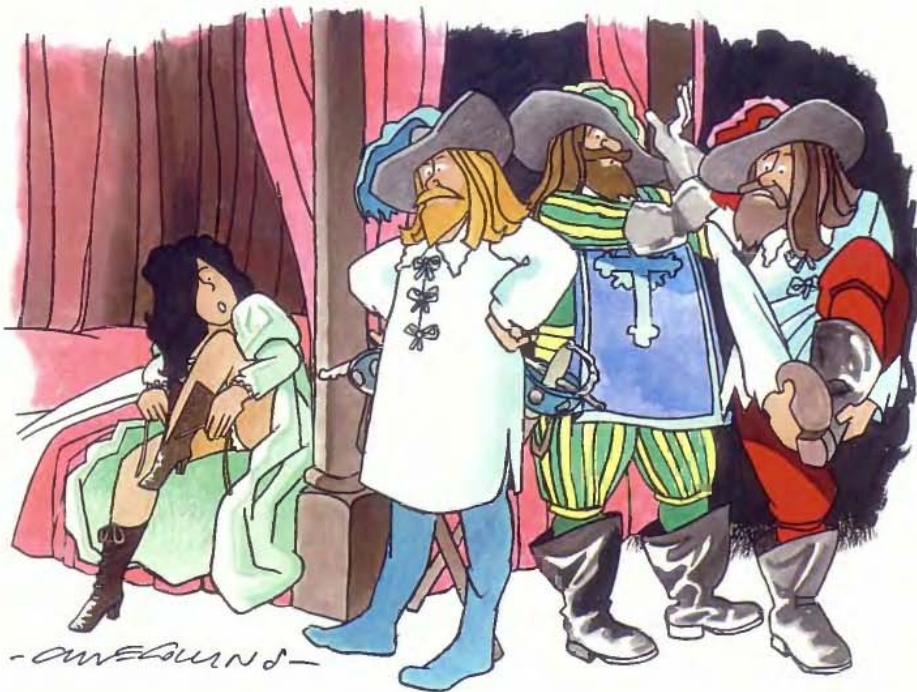
PLAYBOY: How old were you when you became sexually active?

SMITH: It happened the day before my eighth-grade graduation, so it's kind of like the gentile version of a bar mitzvah—the day I became a man. This girl came over to my house, and we just started fooling around. I went to second base and third base, and then I talked her into giving me a hand job. And after a few minutes she was like, "What's supposed to happen?" And I said, "Just keep going." And finally something happened, and she was like, "Ewww!" And I was like, "Yeah, I know."

17

PLAYBOY: So you had a way with the ladies even before you became well-known?

SMITH: The fact that I used to get laid is testimony to personality—if you can make a woman laugh, you're going to do okay. I've been pretty lucky. With the 30 or so women I've been able to bang, the worse-looking one in the relationships has always been me. Then there are guys like Affleck who don't have to say a fucking word. Sometimes with these really good-looking guys, they open their mouths and you're like, "Well, at least I'm funnier than that dumb fuck." But then you hang out with Affleck and it's like, "Shit, he's funny, too. Fuck." He ruins it for the rest of us.



"This 'one-for-all-and-all-for-one' stuff—don't you guys know any other girls?"

PLAYBOY: Why do you make jokes about having a small dick?

SMITH: Probably because I've never had a woman actually tell me that. Instead they always say, "No, it's okay. You have a *good* size." Which to me means I'm not memorable. Once in a while I get insecure and ask Jen, my wife, "Wouldn't you rather have a bigger cock?" And she'll say, "Bigger dicks just hurt. You're the perfect size." But to me "perfect size" means something that's easy to handle, like a walk in the park. Jen is very sexual, and I can't help but think she'd love to have a huge fucking cock and the only reason she's with me is because we're in love. When I say that, she's like, "You're crazy! Why do you say that?" Well, if I were a chick, that's what I'd want. What's the point of doing it unless it's going to be massive and leave stretch marks and be memorable on so many levels?

19

PLAYBOY: For our recent directors' fantasies pictorial, you shot your wife with another man. Was she cool with that?

SMITH: She was cool with being naked, but she didn't want to be with another guy. I was like, "The concept is my vision of erotica, and to me there's nothing more erotic than the thought of you with another guy. We don't need to actually go down that road, but that's what gets me excited." We're fucking filthy talkers in bed, and all the talk involves her fucking other guys. So when **PLAYBOY** asked me to realize my fantasy, I immediately thought of my wife with someone. Of course, I wasn't going to shoot a pictorial of her getting nailed by some guy with a gigantic dick. It was more about putting her in that situation. At one point while taking the pictures, I looked over at this crew guy who was just staring at my wife in the nude, and I thought, There's something cool about that. For me it was more bizarre to watch how she went from being totally reluctant to parading around in the nude in a matter of minutes.

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PLAYBOY: What if your wife tells you that all this fantasizing is making her actually crave sex with other guys?

SMITH: I've thought about that a lot, and if Jen really wanted to fuck some guy, I think I would be cool with it. But I'm afraid I'm one of those husbands who just want to watch their wife get fucked by someone. You read those stories about couples who play this game where the husband hides in the closet and watches while the wife brings some unsuspecting guy home and fucks him. I have this fear that I might actually be that guy, you know? Is that fucked-up or what? Hey, what can I say? I'm a filmmaker. I like to watch.



50 CENT

(continued from page 65)

doing the wrong thing, was to generate enough finances to make legitimate investments. The object is to get money the way you know how, then move into legitimate business ventures. Everybody in that life should know there are two endings to it: You're dead, or you go to jail. There are no exceptions to the rule.

PLAYBOY: When you were signed to Columbia, you decided to quit dealing. Then what happened?

50 CENT: I got a \$65,000 advance; \$50,000 went to Jam Master Jay, and \$10,000 went to the attorney to negotiate my contractual release from Jay and do my contract with Columbia. I had only \$5,000 left. I had to be able to provide for myself, so I took the \$5,000 and

turned it into 250 grams.

PLAYBOY: You went back to dealing.

50 CENT: I had no choice.

PLAYBOY: Do you think Jam Master Jay ripped you off?

50 CENT: He didn't. He took what he felt was his. I was never bitter at Jay, because what I learned from him is what allows me now to sell 10 million records. He groomed me. That's worth \$50,000.

PLAYBOY: After Columbia dropped you, Eminem signed you to Interscope. Does that help Eminem's credibility?

50 CENT: Do you think Em needs the money he generates from me? No way. He just loves hip-hop. If a record comes out, he has to have it, hear it, examine it. He's a lab rat—if we called, he'd probably be in the studio right now in Detroit. He gave me my shot. I love Eminem.

PLAYBOY: In the song "White America,"



"Tell the truth. Does swallowing this pig make me look fat?"

he says that if he were black, he'd sell half as many records. Would you be even bigger if you were white?

50 CENT: If I was white, I don't think they would have believed me. The suburbs identify with him. Em has problems with his mother, and when you're in the suburbs, your parents are your structure. Who do you get upset with when you can't go to the mall? Your parents. My experiences are hood experiences. Even though it could be a white boy in my neighborhood going through those same situations, it would be harder to believe.

PLAYBOY: Would you have sold as many records if you weren't the guy who got shot nine times?

50 CENT: I know people who've been shot *more* than nine times. Some people realize the only thing that's cool about that is how I bounced back from it. In a lot of ways I'm a role model—people from that environment feel like they *do* have a chance.

PLAYBOY: When you were hustling, did you meet Kenneth "Supreme" McGriff, who's serving 37 months for possession of a handgun after a 10-year sentence for leading the Supreme Team, which dominated crack dealing in southern Queens?

50 CENT: Not back then. He's older than me. Later, when we did meet, we were cool at first, then we had differences. One time I heard he got into a fight, and I was looking at his face. He was like, "Yo, what are you looking all up in my face for?" I said, "I heard niggas whupped you. I'm checking." It ain't that serious, but I don't like the nigga.

PLAYBOY: Some people think he might have had your mom killed.

50 CENT: I don't believe that. He wasn't even in that area where she was getting money. The cops thought he was responsible for me getting shot, too. We just don't get along. Fuck him. I was saying that before he went to jail. He don't like me, neither. He let niggas say shit

about me that he was supposed to check at the gate. He was letting niggas call me a snitch. Where I'm from, you sentence a nigga to death by calling him a snitch.

PLAYBOY: Ja Rule has a rhyme that goes, "So on ya grave it's gonna read: Here lies 50, who snitched on many." And Ja and Irv Gotti—the head of Ja's label, Murder Inc.—are friends with McGriff.

50 CENT: Them niggas is bitches.

PLAYBOY: Ja Rule's latest record didn't sell very well.

50 CENT: That's what fucking happens! He makes a whole fucking album where he's attacking me. You say something negative about me, people are not going to like you. I always looked at Ja like he's a weak little nigga. He's never been in any of the tough-guy scenarios he raps about. He grew up a Jehovah's Witness, the nigga that knocks on your door on Saturday and tries to sell you a *Watchtower*. Meanwhile I was hustling to provide for myself. He's not strong enough or smart enough to maintain anything.

PLAYBOY: It's been previously reported that Irv Gotti started Murder Inc. with drug money from McGriff.

50 CENT: I don't even want to talk about that. Saying that is telling. I'm not going to discuss those situations. You know, I get in a fucked-up zone when I start talking about these people.

PLAYBOY: Your vocabulary just changed. Your posture changed. You got angry.

50 CENT: I get right back into that mind frame where I'm in the neighborhood, talking about "Fuck this one, fuck that one." I don't want to carry myself like that. I feel like I should be doing positive things. I want to build a community center for kids. But that's become part of my character. Before I take a timid position and be afraid, I say fuck it and jump out the window. I'll be the nigga they remember for killing a few of these niggas.

PLAYBOY: Let's talk about what happened at the Hit Factory in March 2000.

50 CENT: That shit is so old.

PLAYBOY: You got stabbed that night by Irv Gotti and a few of his associates.

50 CENT: A nick. I ended up getting three stitches.

PLAYBOY: The newspapers said you had a punctured lung.

50 CENT: Not me! It was a scratch. It stopped bleeding on its own. I went home, and my grandmother said, "You should go to the hospital—you could get an infection." It was no big deal. They expanded that shit to make it look good for them. I had already punched this boy Ja Rule in the eye, in Atlanta.

PLAYBOY: How did they get the jump on you?

50 CENT: When they came to the Hit Factory, they were truly blessed. If they had come about 10 minutes before, one of them would have been killed. Because my jacket was in another room. You see what I'm saying?

PLAYBOY: You had a gun in your jacket.



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50 CENT: I would have tried to kill anybody that came in the room. In New York State you're allowed to use the same force to protect yourself as a person is using against you. So I'd have just started firing. Fuck it.

PLAYBOY: Did you—

50 CENT: Yo, I don't even want to go down that road. People keep asking about it. If you didn't ask about it, I wouldn't mention it. But I don't want to not answer the questions you're asking. It's over. The shit is dead. Homey don't even sell records no more.

PLAYBOY: One final detail. Murder Inc. says an order of protection was filed against them on your behalf. True?

50 CENT: To my knowledge it's not true. They could've done that shit, to make themselves look hard. Me? I ain't going to a fucking police precinct to file an order of protection on these niggas. Look at this guy—he's a fucking idiot. Names himself Gotti. You know where the name Murder Inc. originates? This guy watches too many movies. When you write this, I hope you'll minimize the portion that has anything to do with these guys.

PLAYBOY: Do you think Murder Inc. is on its way out?

50 CENT: They're hurting Ashanti by sticking their heads into her video. She's got to be fucking Irv Gotti. You can write that! Her music is not the hottest shit in the world. She says "baby" on four different records. First it was "Baby, baby, baby, baby." Then it was "Ooh, baby."

PLAYBOY: This feud's been great for business, hasn't it? It's helped you sell records.

50 CENT: Yes, it's effective. When I do radio, I'm doing radio. When they do radio, I'm doing radio. All they do is talk about me, and all I do is talk about me.

PLAYBOY: Do you know who shot you in May 2000?

50 CENT: Yeah. I didn't know him when he shot me, but I found out who he was on the street.

PLAYBOY: What was his name?

50 CENT: His street name was Hommo—that's short for "homicide." I don't know his real name.

PLAYBOY: Do you know why he came after you?

50 CENT: It could've been a favor, or he could've been paid. The kid who shot me was a rider—he came to kill me. You understand? He wasn't bullshitting. It just wasn't my time to go.

PLAYBOY: Do you believe that death is predestined?

50 CENT: I accept that death is going to come. So I don't fear none of these niggas. Death is a part of the largest form of entertainment. Action films are all based on scenarios that, if we were doing them, we could possibly die. It's hard to wake up ambitious tomorrow if you spend today thinking about dying.

PLAYBOY: In the song "Fuck You," you refer to the shooting and say that people on the street ask you if McGriff was be-

hind it. Do you think he sent someone to kill you that day?

50 CENT: I don't believe it. I don't know for sure. But I *hate* to talk about this nigger now. If people ask me those questions, the police are going to feel, Well, we should bring him in and ask him some questions. And I don't have anything to say to the police. For me, when the cops come, it's to take me away. So what does that do to me? That puts me in contempt of court, and they got me in jail. McGriff is a fucking loser. He had a strong fucking crew that would do anything, kill anything. But everybody affiliated with him is in the penitentiary or dead. That's the kind of leader he is.

PLAYBOY: The police believe there's still a contract out on your life.

50 CENT: See, what trips me up is that when the police come and say, "We know for a fact, from reliable sources, there's a hit on your life," the next thing is supposed to be, "We're looking for the guy." Unfortunately that is never what they say. They want *me* to tell *them* something.

PLAYBOY: They want you to snitch.

50 CENT: But I've always had people who wanted to kill me, whether it's because I was doing better than them in the hood or because we didn't get along.

PLAYBOY: Was the guy who shot you a professional killer?

50 CENT: Anyone you call professional would've gotten the job done.

PLAYBOY: What happened to him?

50 CENT: He got killed two weeks later. I'm uncomfortable answering these questions because people will think I might've done it. That's the kind of shit that could fuck me up. Everything is going so good for me right now. I just want to move forward.

PLAYBOY: Do you feel as if you're trying to change, to go straight, and people keep trying to pull you back into the hood?

50 CENT: People I grew up with, it bothers them to see me do this well. People say things openly now that they wouldn't have dared to say about me, because they figure, "He's doing too well to come down here and shoot me for saying this."

PLAYBOY: Let me ask this plainly: Did you have anything to do with the death of the guy who tried to kill you?

50 CENT: Nah. Not a thing.

PLAYBOY: Is it possible that someone did it as a favor to you?

50 CENT: It's not. It's the karma—that's what I believe. The shit you do comes right back to you. It may not be right away or two weeks later. You don't know who else he did something to.

PLAYBOY: Last year you bought a Lamborghini, an H2, a Mercedes SL500 and a BMW 745i.

50 CENT: I also got a Suburban. Bullet-proof and bombproof. You could throw a stick of dynamite at that truck and it'd probably be all right.

PLAYBOY: Did women throw themselves at you this year?

50 CENT: Absolutely. Groupie love. When we're traveling, the young ladies come and you indulge. Everybody will in the beginning. If this shit had happened a few years ago, I'd be nuts right now. You start to feel like fucking everybody is an option. But I don't anymore. I'll go in a room and lock the door, because it'll turn into Vanessa writing a book about it, you know what I'm saying? For them to be there, doing what they're doing, says they're sexually delinquent. I'm going to find somebody special.

PLAYBOY: You dated the actress Vivica A. Fox. Was she special?

50 CENT: I still think Vivica is a special person. We did too much too fast.

PLAYBOY: That sounds like PR talk. What do you mean?

50 CENT: If you meet somebody and are interested in her, you go out with her. That's what I thought I was doing. The next day, as far as the general public felt, I was married to Vivica. No, we just went out on a date.

PLAYBOY: But it's not the general public who broke up with her by telling Howard Stern the relationship was over. So why'd you dump her?

50 CENT: I took photographs with her for *King* magazine, and some other photos from the same shoot ended up on the cover of *Black Woman* magazine, which I didn't agree to. I guess her management and publicists were looking to use it for publicity for Vivica, even if it was at my expense. There were times when I wanted to go places and just hang out, and it would turn into a publicity event.

PLAYBOY: Like when you won five trophies at the World Music Awards in Monaco last October?

50 CENT: Yeah. I said, "Come hang out" to her, and then her people made a call and it turned into a job for her as a host. That shit happened at the same time as the magazine covers. I said, "That's it." Her management and publicists were doing what was in their best interest.

PLAYBOY: Vivica described you as sweet. That might surprise some people.

50 CENT: To a woman, that's what you should be. I adjust to the situation. I had to be someone else when I was with my grandparents—I couldn't be who I was in the street when I went indoors, because I didn't want to disappoint them. I wouldn't curse in front of them. That's not acceptable. Even now that I'm grown I don't cuss in front of my grandma.

PLAYBOY: Do you think Vivica might be mad at you for not calling and breaking up with her?

50 CENT: Sometimes calling causes more confusion. So she can't be upset.

PLAYBOY: Do you listen only to hip-hop?

50 CENT: I listen to music people probably don't believe I listen to. Nirvana's "Teen Spirit"—I love that record. The melodies are ridiculous. I like Maroon 5's "Harder to Breathe." That's dope. I like the White Stripes' single. [*sings the opening riff to*

"Seven Nation Army"] There could be a hip-hop version of that. But the album is too rock for me.

PLAYBOY: Are you religious?

50 CENT: I don't go to church every Sunday, but I believe in God, and I pray. When I catch myself thinking negative things for no reason, I say a prayer so I'm forgiven for it.

PLAYBOY: You don't fear men, but do you fear God?

50 CENT: Absolutely. I fear that some of my actions won't be understood.

PLAYBOY: On "Get Rich or Die Tryin'" you say, "I got to make it to heaven for going through hell." If you died tonight, would you go to heaven?

50 CENT: Yeah. When I was doing wrong, I was in a different mind frame. I didn't understand better. I believe I'll be forgiven for those things.

PLAYBOY: You sold drugs. You shot people. And you're going to heaven?

50 CENT: Don't expect me to evolve into a new person in eight months. People shot me. Where I grew up, you were selling drugs or you were starving. Even the people who had jobs came home and sold drugs. My goals are to become something good. It's something positive that I'm supposed to do. I want to move into that space without losing the interest of the people who identify with me. The negative things I say about what I went through, people love that music because it's the theme song to their lives right now. You don't want to lose them. But when I die I want to be remembered as a good person.

PLAYBOY: Do you think you'll live to 40?

50 CENT: I ain't going anywhere. I feel like I have the same chance of living to 40 as anybody else in New York City.

PLAYBOY: You have a song that says, "Many men wish death upon me." That might make it difficult to live to 40.

50 CENT: Like I said, they wish.

PLAYBOY: So you sleep well at night?

50 CENT: Like a baby.

PLAYBOY: Does it hurt to get shot?

50 CENT: It hurts. But it hurts more after the doc says you're going to be okay and the medications wear off. The healing process hurts more than the actual shooting. I got shot in the right hand, too. The knuckle on my pinkie is gone.

PLAYBOY: Even people who don't know anything about rap know you're the guy who got shot nine times, because it's been written about so often.

50 CENT: Every time they wrote about me, they made me more exciting. They call me "the hunted man"—that's an action film.

PLAYBOY: So you're like the bad guy in an action film.

50 CENT: Well, they got me down as the bad guy. I'll accept that right now. When I watch movies, I root for the bad guys. I just turn the film off before the end, because they always die.



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FEAR

(continued from page 90)

of cowering the opposition, discrediting it and ensuring incumbency.

It has been proposed by some historians that the real target of all that 1950s anticommunist hysteria was the legislative record of the New Deal enacted under President Franklin Roosevelt. In the 1950s conservatives insisted on the natural relatedness of communists and Roosevelt liberals, who were said to be "soft on communism." (Liberals, on the other hand, have never insisted on the continuum between conservatives and fascists, though the claim would be no more ridiculous.) The dominance of conservative ideology in our nation today connects us irrevocably to the 1950s: In the current climate, the way to stick it to a politician is to call him or her a liberal, the conservative ideology brought to fruition by President Ronald Reagan having supplanted a liberalism supposedly passé, a failed politics of intrusive big government, high taxation, overregulation of free enterprise. Yet the opposite is true. It was President Roosevelt's application of liberal political philosophy that saved this country during the Depression. Government work programs for those out of work, Social Security, regulation of the banking and securities industries, the minimum wage and the National Labor Relations Act got the country back on its feet. The continuing implementation of liberal policy after the war—the G.I. Bill, Medicare, the Head Start program, the Civil Rights and Voting Rights acts under Lyndon

Johnson—gave working people equity in the American dream, rectified some of the terrible aspects of racism, gave a fair shake to outsiders and underdogs and in general alleviated the injustices residing in our 19th century world of laissez-faire capitalism.

Put on a permanent war footing in the 1950s, we were urged to summon our collective fear, forge it into an imperial resolve and from that compose our national identity. We did so then, and we are doing so now.

Though the Soviet Union is gone, the fear is back with us, the political sociology of the Cold War in the 1950s having jelled into a messianic culture, so that for our leaders today, containment of the terrorist enemy requires our compliance with policies that abuse our freedoms and undermine our Constitution.

Given the threat of international terrorism, the USA Patriot Act passed by Congress under presidential goading calls for secret military tribunals, isolated detention of people suspected of crimes and secret searches of homes and offices of people who may come under suspicion of the authorities. A legislative proposal floating around Washington would expand the Patriot Act and empower the government to revoke any American's citizenship on any grounds whatsoever. Had it not been stopped by Congress, the Bush administration would have created a nationwide data bank itemizing the business and personal transactions of every one of us, including the bookmarks on our computers and the books

we take out of the library. As Attorney General John Ashcroft predictably said, those who protest any of this in the name of liberty "only aid terrorists, for they erode our national unity and diminish our resolve. They give ammunition to America's enemies and pause to America's friends."

And so the liberals of today backed President Bush's invasion of Iraq precisely because they didn't want to be accused of being soft on terrorism. In the meantime, in the dazzle of its color-coded fear alerts, the Bush administration has stepped up the great conservative effort to weaken, if not totally dismantle, the economic, ecological and judicial enactments of liberal social policy that have brought inestimable benefit to the American people in the past 70 years.

The Cold War of the 1950s has so imbedded itself in the DNA of our ruling politicians that a militaristic future seems to be the only possibility for us. But of course there are generational differences. Our Iraqi adventure is a variant of our earlier efforts at regime change. In Iran in the 1950s we effected the ouster of a democratically elected socialist, Mohammed Mossadegh. In Chile in the 1970s we saw the overthrow of a democratically elected socialist president, Salvador Allende. Neither of these usurpings involved any appreciable military effort. They were clandestine CIA-State Department operations funded with a blank check by the American taxpayer. And when the deeds were done, we didn't have to install more than a few economic advisors and American diplomats to oversee things. Everything was worked through the locals, a right-wing regent in Iran and a right-wing general in Chile, both of whom fulfilled our vision for their countries by means of mass arrests, censorship, torture chambers, disappearances and other tried-and-true techniques of repression that we would not countenance in our own country.

Iraq, by contrast, has required a clamorous affair of a couple hundred thousand troops, Stealth bombers and Abrams tanks—a noise heard round the world. Surely to be open and honest about our imperial nature is more in keeping with our superstatehood than sneaking about and leaving it up to investigative reporters to find out what we have done. And overthrowing a cruel tyranny would seem more defensible than subverting a democracy.

What then is to be missed from the old Cold War days? This: To act surreptitiously is to have some residual connection to moral behavior. There is, in that means of going about things in an underhanded way, a tacit admission of your own hypocrisy: You are engaging



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in a realpolitik that you know has no ethical basis.

It may be difficult for the American people not to cheer the overthrow of a vicious dictator. But the nature of our act of preemptive war stands apart from its results or from any motives we have claimed for its justification. It is nothing more than simple aggression. We have in power today a junta of empire-dreaming ideologists and salivating CEOs for whom the 13th century tribal-war idea of getting them lest they get us is the coolest way to advance American interests. And so with Iraq under our occupation we have provided a recruitment base for all the nihilist terror criminals of the Near and Far East. They are pouring across the borders, these new enlistees in jihad, to destroy infrastructure and kill our soldiers, and once more we have fulfilled our own dire prophecy, and we are in a war to which there is no foreseeable end.

We can condemn this administration for its ruinous economic policies, its environmental sabotage, its unjustifiable war and disastrous political philosophy, but there is a sin underlying all of this, and it cannot be forgiven. There is no atonement for the obdurate political leader who has ignored the historic opportunity to use the unprecedented power and wealth of his nation to ensure

the well-being of its citizens, remediate the wretched poverty and suffering in so many parts of the world and affirm the ideal of a concordance of civilizations. No, no atonement at all for the political leader who is determinedly obsolete, a 19th century throwback.

And so now, as in the 1950s, we oscillate between fear's two poles: We fear the enemy we have helped create, and we fear the nation we have become.

But one phenomenon of the 1950s is to be cherished, having appeared, as we can see now, as prophetic of a different future. I mean the rising dissidence exemplified by the Beats, those self-designed dropouts who got in their broken-down cars and took to the road—those pad crashers, Zen dabblers, pot-smoking poets and grand fools, the first prominent voices of alienation to come out of a stultifying political culture. They were hardly angels, and they didn't produce a school of great art, but they stand out now as a historical inevitability.

And they weren't alone. I think of the great black R&B musicians and the Southern white boy who modeled himself on them; the rising tide of revolutionary comedians, streetwise, cruelly

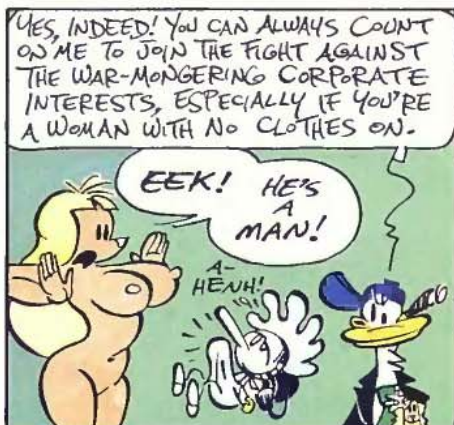
observant of everything around them; the jazz musicians of the Five Spot; Billie Holiday; Charles Mingus; the author Michael Harrington, who wrote *The Other America*, about endemic poverty in the United States; and the practical, brook-no-nonsense saint Dorothy Day, who lived poor and published the *Catholic Worker*. These and others were the prophets of the mass rebellions of the next decade, the great civil rights marches and the student antiwar protests that envisioned Vietnam as the Cold War's most absurd expression and attenuated rationale. Without the voices of the 1950s there would have been nothing in the manner of a reformation that the 1960s embodied, those socially painful years that monumentally challenged the rigid orthodoxies and dogma that had ruled us until then.

So we must remember the 1950s, that decade in so many ways like ours, as a time not without its energies of self-correction. There were these people outside the political spectrum and unempowered by any office who by the example of their fearless creative lives said that we can't leave it to the politicians to decide what America is.

Nor can we.



Dirty Duck[®] by Bobby London



YELLOW

(continued from page 118)

point, without even realizing it, I started to get an erection. But even then, I wasn't...I mean, I didn't have any intention of...you know...." He makes a vague gesture, as if he were shooing away a fly.

"Go on," Rob says.

"Her leg brushed against it. And she laughed." He thinks for a moment, smiling. "She's got such a great laugh, doesn't she? I love Jen's laugh."

"The point, Vince."

"She said, 'I felt a fish!' And then we both laughed. I was embarrassed; I was ready to pull away, but she kept her arm around my neck. And then, kind of smiling, she reached down and touched it."

"Your penis."

"That's right. Just pressed her hand against it. Through the suit, I mean."

"And then?"

There's something in Rob's voice that gives Vince pause. He turns, examines Rob, squinting slightly.

"Maybe you don't really want to hear this."

Of course not, Rob thinks. "Tell me," he says.

Vince hesitates, as if expecting him to change his mind. Then he sighs. "We kissed."

"You kissed her? Or she kissed you?"

"Both." Vince thinks about it, then shrugs. "I mean, I guess I kissed her."

Rob tries to feel some relief in this, but it doesn't come. She reached down and touched his penis: Who cares who kissed whom first? Again, he says the two words: "And then?"

"She sort of swung around so she was straddling me from the front, and we kept bobbing like that in the waves, kissing and smiling at each other, like we were maybe gonna stop at any moment, but then not stopping, kissing some more, pressing together. Then she reached down and pulled me out of my suit and kind of guided me...you know...into her."

"You fucked her. In the ocean."

Vince nods. "Ever done that?"

"Fucked a friend's wife in the ocean?"

Vince waves Rob's words away, a little impatient. "Had sex in the water." He glances at Rob, waits for him to shake his head. "Me either. Always kind of fantasized about it. Not with Jen—just the general idea of it. Grace isn't much of a swimmer. So I never had the chance. Bit of a disappointment, actually. Not Jen's fault, of course. The water gets in and...." He shrugs. "Everything feels kind of far away. Didn't even come, tell the truth."

Rob doesn't mean to speak but can't help himself. "Did she?"

Vince makes a strange noise. "This is weird, right? Talking like this? It's

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probably not the right way to do it. I wish I'd had time to think things through. You told me about the baby, and I just...." He shakes his head.

Rob's hands have begun to cramp. He's been making fists in his lap, without realizing it, squeezing them. He opens his fingers, flexes, wiggles. Time to go home, he thinks. Definitely time to go home. "Did she come, Vince?"

"Yeah, she came."

"And then?"

"She gave me a hand job."

"In the water?"

Vince nods. "Laughing, you know? Both of us. Like it was a joke. And it was, too. I'm sure it doesn't feel that way to you right now, but that's how it was to us, something funny that happened on the beach that day. An odd little adventure."

Rob can remember Jen coming back to the condo. He had that drugged, too-much-sun, half-dressed-in-the-afternoon feeling. She came in, her hair still damp from the ocean. Happy—smiling and chattering. And why not? She was 30 years old, tan and rested, on vacation with her husband and their two good friends. They'd left their window open the first night and in the morning had awakened to find a bird perched on the bedpost above them. Bright blue. It had roused them with its singing. Of course she was happy. She hugged him—bent for a quick embrace as she headed to the shower. They went out to dinner that night with Grace and Vince, lobsters all around. Everyone drank too much, became loud and giggly. Grace knocked over Vince's water glass, and it shattered on the stone floor. Waiters converged on the table, bearing towels, a broom. There was much laughter, slurred apologies, a little extra in the tip, then it was back to the condominium, Rob and Jen lying on their bed, laughing into the pillows as Vince and Grace jounced their way toward climax. It must be Grace who makes the noise, Rob decides. Or maybe not. Maybe Vince barked, seal-like, as Jen jerked him off, bobbing up and down in the waves.

It's not a big deal. Rob wants to believe these words, react with a pensive shrug, a knowing smile. The capriciousness of love, the volatility of desire. Cupid, after all, is a child with a bow and arrow; terrible things are bound to happen, and in the end, one has to admit that it's not a big deal. But he knows he'll never let this go.

"You said three times."

Vince sighs. "Is this really how you want to do this?"

Rob just stares at him, waiting him out, and finally Vince begins, once more, to speak.

"Remember that restaurant we went to? On the other side of the island? Like a chateau, with those weird gables?"

Rob nods.

"Toward the end of the meal, Jen and I got up to go to the bathroom. We weren't planning anything. It sounds weird, but we hadn't even spoken about it—what we'd done. Two whole days together—no meaningful looks, no guilty smiles, nothing. And this was no different. Down the stairs talking, just like normal. You go to the bathroom there?"

Rob half shakes his head, half shrugs. He can't remember.

"There was a men's and a women's room, side by side at the base of the stairs. Jen stepped inside the women's room, and there was this odd moment. She turned to shut the door and sort of hesitated, smiling at me. Not really an invitation—I don't think you could call it that—just that playful smile of hers." He shrugs. "I stepped forward, slipped into the little room with her. 'We can't,' she said. But she was already shutting the door. Then she was hitching up her skirt, and we were both laughing again. She said, 'We have to be quick.' I got my pants down around my knees, and she bent over the sink. And we just went at it."

"Then I cranked the seat back, and she slid out from behind the wheel, climbed on top of me, her dress up around her waist, both of us trying to do it fast."

We were laughing the whole time—nervous laughter, giddy. Just pounding away—it probably didn't take more than two or three minutes, just fast, hard fucking." He pauses, seems to debate if he should stop, but then can't help it: "It was great, man. I know it's totally wrong to tell you that, but it was the best sex I've ever had, hands down."

He laughs, shakes his head—he can't help himself, he's so full of the moment. It's as if he were talking to someone else, someone sympathetic: a confidant.

"Know what happened?" he asks. "Jen pulled the fucking sink out of the wall. I'm serious: The bolts came right out of the wall. I'm guessing, if I'm the father, that's when it happened. We came—" He snaps his fingers twice, quickly. "One after the other. Then, up with the pants, tuck in the shirt and I'm gone. Jen stayed to pee. There were two women waiting outside—two prim-looking older women, and they were smirking and shaking their heads, pretending to scold me. They'd heard the whole thing."

Rob remembers the restaurant. He doesn't remember Vince and Jen going off together, but that doesn't mean it

didn't happen. He and Grace are comfortable together; they're both soft-spoken, quick to laugh, and they would've talked easily enough, covering their spouses' absence without much effort.

"And then?" Rob asks.

"What do you mean?"

"The third time."

Once more, Vince sighs, gives him the pained look, and once more Rob waits him out. "At the airport," he says. "As we were leaving."

"The airport!" Rob exclaims. As if this, finally, is the last straw.

Vince nods. "We dropped you and Grace off at the curb with the luggage, then went to return the car. Remember?"

Rob remembers: wrestling the bags out of the trunk, fumbling with his wallet to tip the porter, Grace offering her own wad of brightly colored bills, which Rob waved away.

"We had to talk, you know. We had to get our heads straight. And we both agreed: It wouldn't happen again. Ever. It was an island thing, and that's where it'd stay. Just this weird vacation adventure. It took maybe 30 seconds to discuss. Then we just drove—around the airport, that long access road to the rental lot. Gravel, or crushed shells—I don't know—but you had to drive slow on it."

"The point, Vince."

"This is the point. If we'd driven faster, we might not have, you know..."

"Fucked."

Vince nods. "Exactly. Jen was driving. We were almost at the lot. Jen said, 'I guess there's one thing we didn't get to do.' Then she licked her lips in this exaggerated way and glanced down at my lap."

Rob can imagine *I felt a fish*, he can even imagine the sink pulled from the wall, but the licked lips, the coy glance, trips him up: It isn't Jen. "Jen wouldn't do that," he says. His voice is vehement, loud.

"You want to hear this or—"

"She wouldn't. I know her. I just—"

"I'm telling you what happened, Rob. Maybe you don't want to believe it or hear it or whatever, and I can understand that. But what I'm telling you? It's the truth."

Rob is silent, frowning. Finally, he rolls his hand again.

"I said, 'Still on the island, aren't we?' We both laughed, and I started to undo my belt buckle, half joking, you know? But she pulled over and put the car in park."

"She sucked you off."

"She started to. Then I cranked the seat back, and she slid out from behind the wheel, climbed on top of me, her dress up around her waist, both of us trying to do it fast. But it was too cramped, too awkward—it was taking too long. The car was growing hot, and

we were both beginning to sweat. Then I saw the rental guy walking toward us up the road, shielding his eyes. The sun was bouncing off the windshield. I don't think he could see what we were doing. 'Someone's coming,' I said. And Jen—she thought I meant me, 'cause I was close, and she could tell. 'Wait,' she said, 'wait for me.'

He laughs, then notices the way Rob is staring at him and stops.

"It's the rental guy," I said. And she threw herself off me just as I came—half in her, half on her dress. Which she was angry about afterward. She was afraid you'd notice. The stain, I mean."

Rob and Grace had checked the bags, gotten their boarding passes. They waited in a tiny coffee shop for Vince and Jen to return on the shuttle bus. The end of the vacation: Everyone was a little somber. Jen slept on the plane, curled away from him, covered with a blanket, head resting against the window.

"That's it," Vince says. "That's the whole thing."

It's grown dark inside the car. Vince is a dim shape across from Rob, motionless. The windows are completely covered with snow now; the passing headlights offer only a vague glow. If they're not careful, they'll get stuck here, snowed in.

It's not a big deal. Those words again, and then, because they're not enough, because they have no hold on him: *He's lying*. Vince is a joker, a jester; he prides himself on this. And it's true—he's fun to be around. But he's not a trustworthy person.

"You're lying," Rob says. "She doesn't find you attractive."

Vince turns to look at him. "Come again?"

"You're fat. You smell in the heat—like a dog. And you're coarse. Jen's put off by it. She says she can see the peasant in you. Grunting over a hunk of bread, wiping your snot on your sleeve."

This is half true. Vince is a heavyset man, a former athlete going softer each year. And his sweat does have a sharp, pungent odor to it. But the peasant comment: Here things grow more tangled.

Jen and Rob have a game they play, peasants and lords. They think of their friends and try to imagine what they might have been, centuries earlier. Most everyone falls into the peasant category, including themselves; it's so rare to meet a lord or a lady. They'd agreed that Vince would've worked in a country tavern, rolling giant barrels of mead across the dirt floor.

And then there's the untruth, the lie that Rob wants to be true: Jen has never expressed a revulsion for Vince.

"You're angry," Vince says. "Of course you are. It's natural. You want to lash out, cause some pain. I would too. But what you have to ask yourself is: Why

forefinger touching the tip of his thumb. "They're like this, aren't they?"

Rob falls silent, staring at the *O* Vince is making. It's the size of a silver dollar.

"And she's got a mole. A dark brown mole. On her right breast." He touches his own chest, poking it with his finger. "A tiny one, maybe a half inch above her nipple."

Rob waves this aside. "You've seen down her shirt."

"Your dick is bent. When it gets hard, it bends to the left. Like a hockey stick. In the beginning, she was freaked out by it. She had a hard time touching it. She asked if there was a way to get it fixed."

Rob doesn't answer. There's the feeling of static in his head.

"How would I know this, Rob? Seriously. Answer me that."

Static. Or steel wool. Steel wool giving off a shower of sparks.

"I was going to tell you anyway," Vince says. "I felt I ought to. Or get Jen to tell you. But this baby—it startled the news out of me."

Not static, not sparks: a wind. A wind rushing through his body.

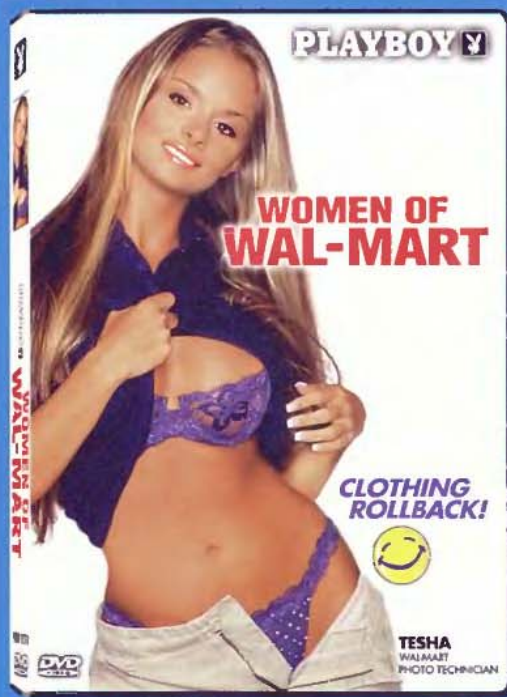
"There must be a test they can do, don't you think?" Vince is peering at him in the dim light. It's clear he can't sense the static, the sparks, the wind.

"DNA," he says. "Can they do a DNA test in the womb? If we catch it early...I assume you guys wouldn't want to...you know..."

The static, the sparks, the wind, whatever it is: It's growing more intense, filling Rob with panic. He reaches for the door, pushes it open. Cold air and a swirl of snow leap into the car. The sound of the traffic, too, the smell of exhaust. Rob has an image of himself running down the highway, bounding, deerlike, in the passing headlights, cars honking, but his seat belt is still on, and the door swings only five inches before it hits the low cement wall beside them. Both obstacles stop him, the seat belt jerking him back with a grunt, the door making a grinding thump as it hits the cement.

Perhaps it's not panic. Perhaps it's anger.

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would I make this up?"

"Because you're bored. Because your life is empty and you're trying to entertain yourself, to show how clever you are. Because you don't know the difference between a joke and the rest of life. Killing a dog—you think that's funny?"

Vince is staring at him, his mouth hanging partway open, lost. "What're you talking about?"

"You killed Rex."

"Rob—"

"To show how clever you are."

"Listen to me—"

"That dog's blood is on your fuck-
ing—"

"Jen's nipples." Vince raises his hand into the air between them, the tip of his

Rob starts to bang the door. He pulls it toward him, then slams it outward, with all his strength, again and again and again. There's static, sparks, wind and—above everything—the wonderful sound of cement scraping paint from metal.

He hears Vince's voice, far away: "Hey, watch the——" Then there's a hand on his shoulder, grabbing at him, pulling him back from the door.

Rob spins, swings at Vince: flailing, windmilling. Vince responds with an equal lack of grace. Both of them are still wearing their seat belts: They're like a pair of giant toddlers, strapped into a stroller, slapping at each other. Rob is making a noise that feels fury-filled and fiercely righteous but sounds closer to a wail. It's cut off, abruptly, by the back of Vince's hand, which smacks Rob in the mouth, the final blow in their brief combat and the only one to land with any effect. A sharp stab of pain, the sudden taste of blood, and Rob flinches backward, out of reach.

They sit side by side, struggling to catch their breath. The door is still hanging partway open, the car filling with cold, its dome light on, a steady chiming coming from the dashboard. Rob pulls the door shut. One of his front teeth has been knocked loose. He pushes at it with his tongue, and it wobbles in its socket, an arrow of pain shooting up toward his eyes.

"You boke my toof," he says.

"I'm sorry," Vince starts, "I didn't——"

"I don't care about the baby." If Rob concentrates, he can avoid the slurring: He just has to stop his tongue before it hits his tooth. "She can have it, she can abort it—it's not my problem. It's her problem. Know why?"

Vince just stares at him, rubbing the back of his hand.

"Because I'm leaving," Rob says. "Understand? I'm already gone. If Grace has any sense, she won't be far behind. I hope so. And know why? Because I don't like you, Vince. I don't think I've ever liked you. You're too pleased with yourself. You're a complacent fuck, and I wish you nothing but unhappiness. If I could make one wish, just one fucking wish, that's what it'd be. Pain and suffering and everything else bad that could possibly happen to a man. Now please take me home."

Vince doesn't move, doesn't put the car in gear, doesn't pull out onto the highway and take them home. Rob sits there, willing him to do it, but it doesn't happen. Three trucks go by in quick succession, buffeting the car, and then Vince does a surprising thing. He starts to laugh. There's a brief, explosive burst, followed by several seconds of clenched silence, while he bends over the steering wheel, gripping it with both hands, his body shaking in soundless mirth. Then he throws himself back against the seat, roaring, great snorts of laughter, uncontrollable, hiccups and chirps, slapping at the steering wheel, shaking his head, wip-

ing the tears from his face with his sleeve.

"I'm leaving," he says, his voice squeaky with held-back laughter. "Understand? I'm already——" But he can't finish; it's too much for him.

"You fucker," Rob says. It's all he can think of. "It's a joke?"

Vince nods, bobbing his body, laughing, eyes shut, his nose beginning to run. Rob watches him, smiling now: He even laughs a little, but hesitantly. "You made it up?"

More frantic nodding.

"You didn't fuck her?"

Vince shakes his head, hugging himself, struggling for breath, still rocking. Nearly a full minute passes before he finally begins to quiet. He wipes at the smear of snot beneath his nose. "Oh, god," he says. "Why didn't I film it?" The laughter threatens to resurface, and he has to fight it off with several deep, shaky breaths. "I was planning to, you know? But then, this baby thing—it just seemed like too good an opportunity. Oh, man." He shakes his head some more. "That was so fucking great."

"You broke my tooth," Rob says. He tries unsuccessfully to insert an appropriate amount of anger into the words. But it's relief he's feeling, and it seeps into his voice: It sounds as if he's thanking Vince.

"Let me see," Vince says. He reaches up, flicks on the dome light.

Rob leans toward him, opening his mouth.

Vince squints, tilting his head slightly, examining Rob's teeth. "Looks all right to me," he says. "Your lip's a little bloody, but——"

"It's loose." Rob pushes at the tooth with his tongue.

"They can save it—that's all I'm saying. A root canal, a little post—be good as new." He flicks off the light. "You were coming at me, you know? I had to fend you off."

Rob is silent. There's a thought in his head that he doesn't want to be there.

"I'll pay for it," Vince says. And then: "Want me to pay for it?"

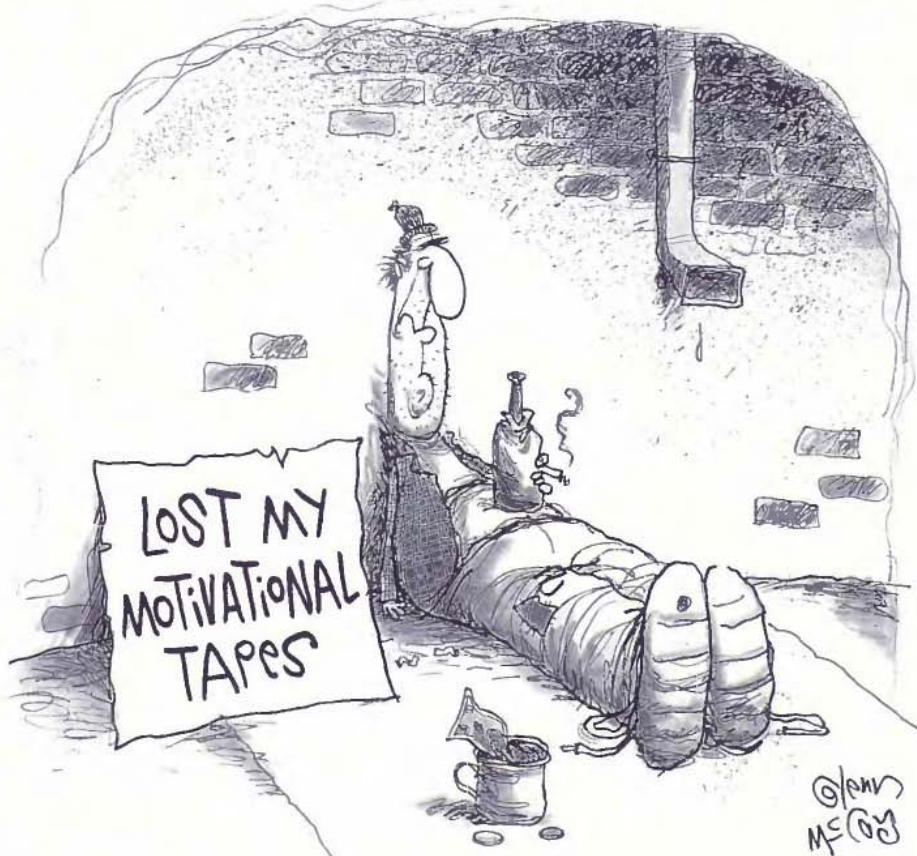
Rob shakes his head. The thought won't go away; it's there, and Rob has to speak it. "What about my dick? How did you know it's bent?"

Vince laughs, waves this aside. "Jen told Grace."

"And her nipples?"

Another wave of dismissal: "Like you said—I've seen down her shirt. She wears those loose blouses, you know? With no bra? Why does she do that? You should tell her everyone can see her breasts."

"But right after I told you she was pregnant, there was this long hesitation. I told you, and you went silent. It was like you were worried, like you were



trying to figure out what to do." Vince nods, looking pleased with himself. "That was smart, right? That's what made it seem so real."

"I don't know. It felt like you were——"

"I was debating, you know? Whether I should wait to film it or just do it right here, in the car."

"But——"

Vince throws up his hands, impatient. "What's your problem, Rob? I tell you I'm serious and you insist it's a joke. Then I admit it's a joke and you——"

"It's a joke then?"

"Of course it's a joke. Jesus. How can you——"

"It's just that you hesitated——"

"To make it real. That was part of the genius of the whole thing."

Rob lets this settle. He wants to believe; he's trying to believe. "I'm sorry I banged the door."

Vince smiles at him. "Kind of lost it, didn't you?"

"I'll pay for it—if it needs to be painted or something."

Vince makes a noncommittal gesture, neither refusal nor acceptance.

"And the other stuff—the names I called you. I didn't really——"

"Don't fucking worry about it, Rob. It was great. I mean it—really, really funny. I almost lost it a couple times." He gives Rob a wink. "A peasant, right? A fat, coarse, complacent peasant who you've never even liked."

Rob stares down at his lap, ashamed.

"That dog's blood is on your hands!" Vince shouts.

"I was angry——"

"No hard feelings. Us peasants have thick skins."

"Vince——"

"I'm just giving you shit, man. Okay? Water off a duck's back." He laughs, shakes his head. "Should've seen your expression when I said she pulled the sink out of the wall. Best sex I ever had! You looked like a fucking corpse. Your face, it just went slack." He mimics this for Rob, his mouth hanging open, eyes blank. Then he laughs again, reaching to turn on the wipers. "Can you really picture me and Jen fucking in a bathroom?"

The wipers clear the windshield, revealing the world outside, which has continued on its course, indifferent to their drama. The snow is still falling steadily. The traffic has grown thick now, and there are piles of dirty slush between the lanes.

Vince puts the car in gear, turns off his hazards, waits for an opening, then guns them out into the flow of traffic. He chuckles to himself as he drives, muttering some of Rob's more outrageous lines. "A peasant," he says. And: "You killed Rex." Then he laughs, throwing a wink toward Rob. The longer he goes

on, the more embarrassed Rob begins to feel—exposed and oddly guilty. The ease with which he'd accepted Jen's infidelity is starting to seem like a betrayal in its own right. He keeps poking at his tooth with his tongue as a way to distract himself from this thought.

The drive takes 10 minutes, and then they're slowing to a standstill outside Rob's house. Usually Vince turns into the driveway, but in snowy weather he always stops at the curb so that Rob won't have to struggle with the packed-down tire tracks when he comes out to shovel after dinner. Vince is like that sometimes—surprisingly thoughtful.

Lights are on in many of the houses up and down the block, including Rob's. Jen is already home, preparing dinner. It's quiet out, pretty, the snow falling steadily.

Rob can sense that Vince is waiting for him to climb out. Instead, he says softly, "Know what I think?" He waits for Vince to glance toward him, eyebrows raised. "I think you were serious. I think you fucked her. And then, when I said I was leaving, you got scared."

Vince just sits there, watching him.

"I'm not going to leave her. I was angry. I just...." He holds out a hand, beseeching. "Please, Vince."

Vince gives him a look of deep fatigue. "You're gonna keep picking at this, aren't you? You're not gonna let it go."

"The truth, Vince."

Vince sighs, shakes his head. "You're

so fucking anal. You know that? Everything always has to be worried over, probed at. It's not an attractive quality. It really isn't."

"You parked in the street to give yourself time, didn't you?"

This is clearly too big a leap for Vince to follow. He blinks at Rob. "What?"

"To call her."

"Call who?"

"Jen." Rob waves toward the house, the snow-covered driveway. "You need the extra time. As soon as I get out, you'll call her on your cell. You'll tell her to deny everything, to pretend she doesn't know what I'm talking about."

"Listen to yourself, will you? I always park in the street when it's——"

"Give me your cell."

"What?"

"I'll give it back in the morning."

"I'm not gonna give you my cell. I have to charge it tonight."

"Then come inside."

"Stop it, Rob."

"Right now. We'll——"

"Just stop, okay? Will you just fucking stop?"

Vince's voice is loud, with an edge of anger, and it has the intended effect: Rob falls silent. He can feel his pulse beating in his neck.

Vince lets the silence gather around them. He reaches, turns down the heater a notch. When he speaks, his voice is quiet again. "What do you want me to say?" he asks.



Restrooms at Dr. Phil's restaurant.

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 38, 47-48, 112-117 and 167, check the listings below to find the stores nearest you.



DKNY, dkny.com. *Fifty 24 SF*, 212-477-7350. *Gold Toe*, goldtoe.com. *Guess*, guess.com. *Hugo Hugo Boss*, hugo.com. *Jennifer Miller Jewelry*, jewelsbyjen.com. *J.M. Weston*, jmweston.com. *Kenneth Cole*, kennethcole.com. *Levi's Premium Outerwear*, levis.com. *Neil Barrett*, neilbarrett.com.

GAMES

Page 38: *Atari*, atari.com. *EA Sports*, ea.com. *Konami*, konamigaming.com. *Microsoft*, xbox.com. **Wired:** *Toshiba*, toshiba.com or sprintpcs.com.

MANTRACK

Pages 47-48: *Ectaco*, ectaco.com. *Fototreks*, fototreks.com. *Kawasaki*, kawasaki.com. *London Taxis North America*, ltna.com.

CLASSIC ROCK, CLASSIC STYLE

Pages 112-117: *Adidas*, adidas.com. *Alice Roi*, aliceroi.com. *Andrew Marc*, andrewmarc.com. *Avirex*, avirex.com. *Buckler*, bucklerjeans.com. *Calvin Klein Collection*, available at *Macy's*, macys.com. *Capezio*, capeziodance.com. *Casadei*, casadei.com. *D&G*, 212-965-8000. *Danskin*, danskin.com. *Diesel*, diesel.com.

NYBased, nybased.com. *Oris*, tourneau.com. *Parasuco*, parasuco.com. *Paul Smith*, paulsmith.co.uk. *Penguin*, [penguinclothing.com. *Perry Ellis*, \[perryellis.com\]\(http://perryellis.com\). *Polo Jeans*, \[polo.com\]\(http://polo.com\). *Prada*, \[prada.com\]\(http://prada.com\). *Rainbow Station*, 212-924-0591. *Randolph*, available at *Fabulous Fanny's*, 212-533-0637. *Schott*, \[schottnyc.com\]\(http://schottnyc.com\). *Stella McCartney*, \[stellamccartney.com\]\(http://stellamccartney.com\). *Stetson*, \[stetson.com\]\(http://stetson.com\). *Tommy Hilfiger*, \[tommy.com\]\(http://tommy.com\). *Toschi*, \[toschi.com\]\(http://toschi.com\). *USA Furs by George*, 212-643-1415. *XLarge*, \[xlarge.com\]\(http://xlarge.com\).](http://penguinclothing.com)

ON THE SCENE

Page 167: *Balanced Audio Technology*, balanced.com. *Martin Logan*, martinlogan.com. *Meridian*, meridian-audio.com. *Theta Digital*, thetadigital.com. *VPI*, vpiindustries.com.

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Rob shakes his head. "This is all so wrong. Can't you see that? How am I ever gonna know for sure?"

"Tell me what you want to hear. Okay? Just tell me."

"The truth. I want the truth."

Vince nods in understanding, in sympathy. But then he doesn't speak: He thinks. He's debating, deciding, choosing, and it takes too long. The truth is immediate; there's no need to think about it. "Just look at our fucking lives," he says.

Rob turns, startled. He isn't certain if he's heard correctly. "What?"

"You're right. I was bored. Trying to entertain myself. Not thinking about the repercussions. And maybe jealous, too—maybe you had a point there. Grace and I, you know, we've...." He sighs, shakes his head. "That's it—that's it exactly. Bored, jealous—guilty as charged. And I'm sorry, man. I really am."

"For what?"

"Everything. I'm sorry for everything."

Rob turns, glances out the window. It seems impossible that he has to climb out of this car, walk through the snow to his house, push open the front door, set down his briefcase, take off his jacket, kiss Jen hello. He doesn't see how he can do it.

Vince reaches across the seat, pats Rob's knee. "Let it go, okay? Can you do that? Just let it go?"

Rob lifts his hand, drops it back into his lap, a meaningless gesture, communicating nothing. He's still staring toward his house.

"And don't name her Yellow," Vince says. "Seriously. It's a stupid idea."

It takes Rob a moment to understand what Vince is saying. He turns to look at him—he's such a big man, slumped there behind the wheel. Yellow. Rob smiles. "It's a joke."

"That's right," Vince nods, with obvious relief. "A joke."

"No—I made it up."

Vince frowns at this: "You're not gonna call her Yellow?"

Rob shakes his head. "Jen's not pregnant. I just...it was a joke."

For an instant it seems as if Vince might smile, or even laugh, but the impulse collapses before it can gain any momentum. What emerges is a long, weary-sounding sigh. "Oh, Christ, Rob," he says. "Sometimes you're such a stupid fuck."

Rob can't think of a response to this; it seems fair enough, after all.

Vince flicks his hand. "Get out."

Rob doesn't move. "I—"

"Get out!" Vince says.

So that's what he does. He pushes open the door, steps out into the softly falling snow and begins the long walk up the driveway to his house.



DOUBLE EAGLE (continued from page 78)

The deal was set. All parties knew the gold coin was coming from England. But who was the mystery seller?

subject to seizure when their existence became known. 324-15 suggested we offer more than the \$1.5 million already made and was instructed not to offer any more money, not to charge any more for a fee and that if the deal could not be completed on January 24, 1996 at the Waldorf in NYC, the deal should be terminated."

Freriks thought he could control his informant. But Moore was better than that.

THE SIDE DEAL

Moore called Freriks back with a new side deal, a scheme to earn a commission that would not be confiscated. "What if I did this—and I think this would be legal if you think about it. I have a coin, a high-relief \$20 gold piece worth, conservatively, \$135,000 to \$150,000. What if I sell him that for an amount way over?"

Freriks liked the sound of it. "Whatever money you made that way would not be affected by this at all," he told Moore.

"He just paid too much for the coin," Moore agreed.

And so a clandestine agreement was reached between Moore and his Secret Service handler. Moore would make his cut through a sham coin sale to Parrino at an inflated price. What Moore did not tell anyone was that the coin he intended to use belonged to John Groendyke. "True collecting," David Redden is quoted as saying in biographer Robert Lacey's book *Sotheby's: Bidding for Class*, "is not about the actual possession of objects. With the greatest collectors—who may physically keep their things in bank vaults—the collection exists in their heads." Groendyke might have tracked his valuables in his head, but Moore had two safes in his garage and lockboxes at a company called Stout Safe Storage with Groendyke's coins inside. Moore, who began working for Groendyke Transport in 1962, had complete access to Groendyke's collection.

When Parrino balked at the size of Moore's commission, Moore raised the offer for the 1933 to \$1.65 million. Moore then drove his red GMC pickup 600 miles from Amarillo to Parrino's office, behind an unmarked door in the basement of the Mark Twain Bank, a nondescript institution off Route 70 in Independence, Missouri. Moore rang the bell and waited. He wasn't wearing a wire. An alarm buzzed and let him through the first of two doors. The second door opened. He found himself in an office full of safes. Several were stacked on the south wall, with a large one on the west wall. There were no dis-

play cases, no coins in view. Parrino was alone. They shook hands like old friends, and Moore handed over a 1907 proof coin from Groendyke's collection.

With the coin in his possession, Parrino believed he was simply fronting Moore his \$150,000 commission on the upcoming sale. The Texan had other plans. Moore returned home with \$50,000 in cash, two \$25,000 checks, some antique guns, 65 Krugerrands, two receipts and a story for Freriks. Parrino, he said, had offered him a job laundering \$10 million in Vegas every three months for \$100,000 a trip. The last guy to hold the job had been killed. Parrino had safe-deposit boxes overflowing with bullion and cash. The 1933 double eagle, he told Freriks, was "just the tip of the iceberg." Parrino recoils at these assertions, calling them ridiculous.

To Freriks, some of the story rang true, but the rest—like the part about Parrino being so antigovernment that he planned never to pay taxes and to fund the local militia—was clearly a snow job. "I couldn't have cared less, frankly," Freriks says today, "as long as Moore wasn't doing anything illegal, didn't lie to me and we got the coin. I didn't care about his separate coin dealings. It was totally unrelated, and I wanted to be able to say so in court."

So Moore took a coin he did not own, went on a trip he did not pay for, gave the coin to a man he did not like and wrangled a \$150,000 commission for a deal he knew would never go through. In other words, Parrino paid Moore to send him to prison.

"The guy had brass balls," says a retired FBI agent familiar with the case.

How could Moore give his friend John Groendyke's rare coin to Parrino, believing that Parrino was about to go to jail? Moore answers the question with a shrug. "Groendyke knew all about it," he says today. Groendyke, who later had his entire collection stolen by Jack Moore, has a different explanation. "He's a crook," he says of Moore.

The deal was set for February 8, 1996 at the Waldorf-Astoria. By now, all parties knew the 1933 double eagle was coming from England. But one question lingered in the minds of Dave Freriks, his bosses and Moore: Who was the mystery seller?

The answer lay in the coin's history. Fifty years ago only the richest and most well-connected collectors ever touched the coin, and the man flying to New York with the 1933 double eagle was no ordinary coin nut. He was the biggest player

in the U.K. coin world, the head of the British Numismatic Trade Association: London coin dealer Stephen Fenton.

THE TAKEDOWN

For an international dealer of Stephen Fenton's stature, traveling to New York on the Concorde was a necessary part of any big deal. The U.S. coin market defied supply-and-demand economics: The U.S. had the least history but also the greatest wealth; its coins were the most expensive in the world. At coin shows, American coins sold for thousands while ancient Roman coins were set out in dishes like jelly beans and sold for 15 bucks. The reason? Americans had invented a way to turn numismatic art into money: slabbing.

Slabbing—grading coins based on appearance and encasing them in small ultrasonically sealed plastic boxes—took the worry out of buying coins. Graded on a scale of one to 70, stamped and sealed, a slabbed coin was a commodity. It could be traded over the telephone like pork bellies or soy futures. And in America it was. With more people trading more often, slabbing had transformed coin collecting into coin investing, driving up the prices of American coins and attracting dealers from around the world.

Fenton had spent his life in the coin business. He dropped out of school at the age of 15, worked several years for the Mayfair Coin Company and then went off on his own. In 1980 he opened Knightsbridge Coins, a dimly lit shop down the street from Christie's, in a plush row of art galleries and rare-book dealers on Duke Street in the St. James's area of London. His shop was not designed for browsing. Customers were expected to know what they wanted. Now 43, Fenton was one of Europe's leading dealers, with American coins as his specialty.

The Englishman passed easily through U.S. Customs. On his forms he declared that he was carrying more than 100 coins whose total value was \$742,450.50. The coins, his documents pledged, ranged in date from 1830 to 1932.

On February 7, 1996 Fenton and a cousin he had brought along for the event took a room at the Hilton. At eight p.m. he called Parrino. They agreed to meet the next morning. Meanwhile Moore and Freriks had checked into the Kimberly, a few blocks from the Waldorf-Astoria. Moore also had a suite reserved in his name at the Waldorf, but it was occupied by Secret Service agents.

At eight the next morning, Freriks walked Moore to the Waldorf. Together with New York agents, he did sound checks on the room, arranged the furniture for a good picture and told Moore where to stand. Then the phone rang—Parrino and Fenton were in the lobby. The agents hurried next door, where they would observe the action via a hidden camera.

Late sleepers were just poking out of their doors for a newspaper when Parrino, Fenton and Fenton's cousin stepped out of the elevator on the Waldorf-Astoria's 22nd floor and walked to Moore's corner suite.

Before he got on the elevator Parrino had noticed a unique electronic device in one of the hotel lobby shops, a telephone that purported to tell you whether a person on the other end was lying. It was on his mind as he knocked on Moore's door.

"Hey, Jay," Moore said, welcoming his guests into a lavish suite with a sitting area and a view of New York. Agents had spread Moore's clothes about and had set out his damp toothbrush in the bathroom.

Parrino stepped inside, confident. Jack Moore, he knew, was typical of the profession—a one-client coin man who had read a few books. "They're big shits in their world," Parrino says today of most dealers. "They come to my world and they're nothing—and they're jealous." They eyed each other nervously through their greetings. Fenton was a few inches taller and several pounds heavier than Moore or Parrino. With thinning hair and dark, penetrating eyes, Fenton was a man who looked at you when you were not looking at him. Moore liked him.

"I have a little deal here I thought might help me," Moore said. He was wearing ostrich-skin cowboy boots, a gold-coin ring, a gold-coin necklace, a Western-style shirt, Wranglers and a Members Only jacket. "I have to be myself," he had told the agents.

He led the men to an electronic coin scale on an end table. A table lamp offered extra light. "The real one weighs 33.4 grams," Moore explained. Fenton

and Parrino burst into laughter. The real one. That was a good one. They laughed too hard, and they didn't stop. They were giddy. In the next room Secret Service technicians adjusted their headphones. Inside the table lamp was a microphone. Across the room, hidden in a clock radio, was a surveillance camera. Nearly a dozen agents now watched a monitor in the next room.

Moore took out a more common \$20 gold coin to test his scale. Fenton had brought a test coin too. So had Parrino. They laughed even harder.

Like a cocaine dealer, Moore placed his sample coin on the scale. Heartbeats raced as Fenton took out the 1933.

Moore took off his glasses. His eyes were bad, he explained. Everything was an apology. When he slipped and said "son of a bitch," he turned to Fenton. "Excuse my language," he said. "I'm from Texas, and I don't know any other way to talk."

It was pure Texas bullshit, and Fenton and Parrino ate it up.

In a sense Moore was slabbing the moment. He examined the 1933 double eagle with a 20-power glass. If the coin checked out, he was supposed to call his buyer waiting down the hall. Then they would wire \$1.65 million to London.

There are countless scams in the coin business—mint marks added or removed, dates altered or counterfeit coins made from cast impressions of a real coin. One famous counterfeiter was so proud of his skills that he signed his coins with a miniature omega.

Moore pretended to look for tooling around the date. In the early years Mint employees sometimes stole dies and struck their own coins. Even a few Treas-

ury secretaries and Mint directors were known to favor a shortcut to fill holes in their private collections. If Fenton's 1933 double eagle was a fake, chances were it was a 1932 double eagle with the 2 altered to look like a 3.

Though he would later say he "couldn't have shit a peanut," Moore comes across on tape as cucumber cool. He played the yokel. "I don't usually dress this nice," he deadpanned at one point, and Fenton and Parrino had to hold their bellies. It was the laughter of men who couldn't wait.

He was going to call the buyer, Moore said, moving to the phone. Then he paused. "Did you show him that proof?" he asked Parrino, nodding in Fenton's direction.

Parrino scoffed. For some reason Moore had insisted he bring with him to New York the 1907 coin used as collateral. Irritated, Parrino took the coin out of his pocket.

It didn't make sense for Moore to care so much about a 1907 coin with a 1933 in the room, and he knew it. So Moore did what anybody skating on the thin end of a lie does. He vamped. He praised the 1907 coin to Fenton. "I'm going to win five grand when this coin expert comes in," he laughed. And even though he'd been instructed not to stand in front of the surveillance camera, at that moment he did. In a flurry of activity hidden from the lens, he snatched the coin from Parrino as soon as he offered it.

It was a slick move. Moore had set up Parrino and Fenton, nabbed a buyer's fee and a Secret Service reward and pocketed his own collateral. Moore's total haul was now \$305,000—if he could get away with it.

He picked up the telephone. "You all might as well come up," he said. "It's here, and it's real."

Moments later an agent posing as Moore's buyer (dressed as a rich rancher, much in the style of John Groendyke) and another playing the part of his New York coin expert (dressed in a suit) walked into the room to close the transaction. As they pored over the coin and concluded that it was real, Moore cracked an in-joke to the expert: "Just make sure I get my five grand." In the five minutes it took to examine the coin, the agents in the surveillance room readied themselves for what they assumed would be an easy bust. But they saw on the monitor that Fenton's cousin was reaching under his jacket repeatedly, as if he were fingering a weapon. Outside in the hallway the agents were fired up to move swiftly.

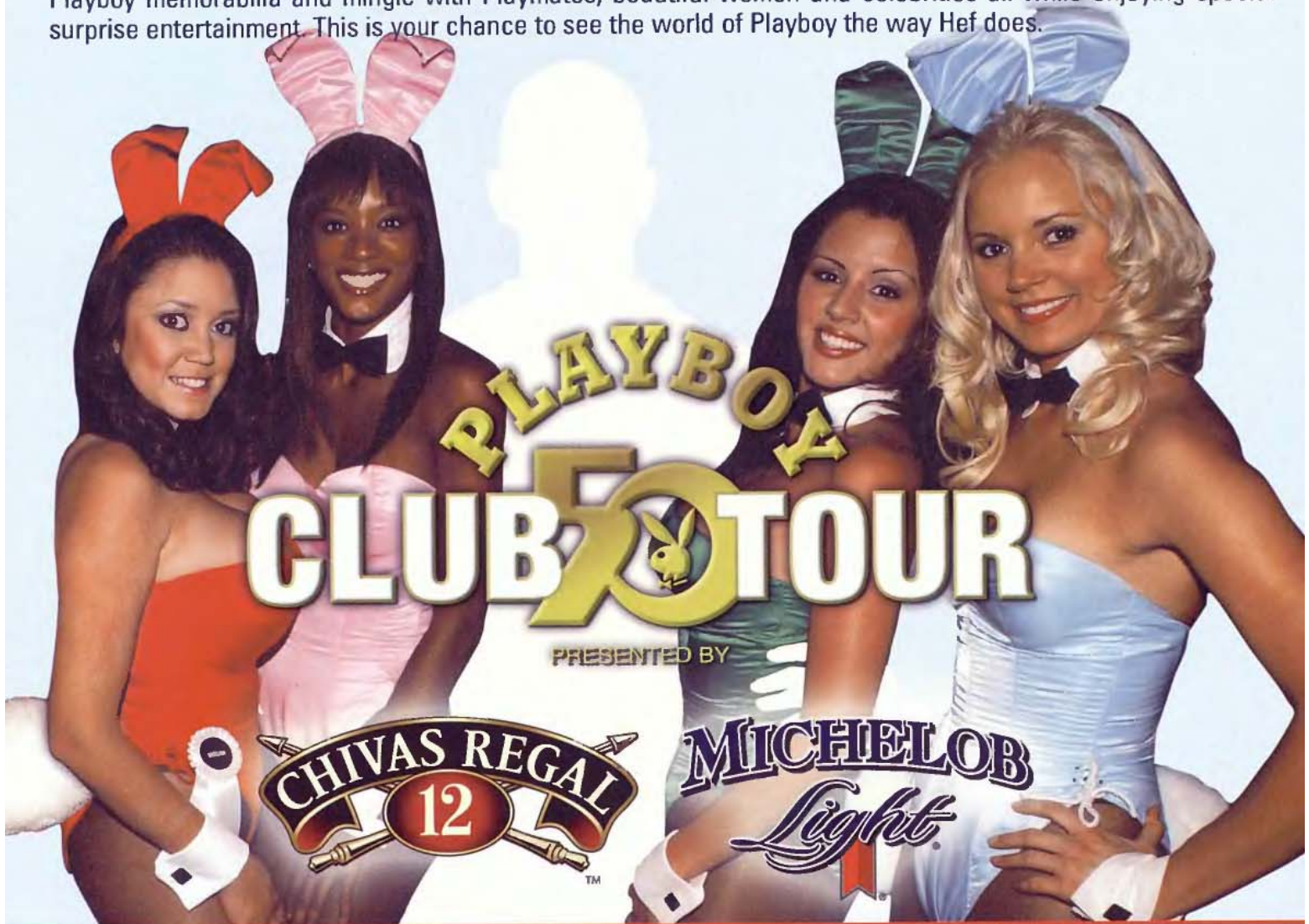
The door to the room slammed open, catching Parrino, Fenton and his cousin by complete surprise. Agents took them down hard, particularly Fenton's cousin. They slammed Parrino to the ground, too. According to Moore, "Parrino kept hollering at me, 'Don't say anything! Don't say anything!'" Freriks whisked Moore next door.



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2.26	Louisville, KY	100.5 THE FOX
3.2	New Orleans, LA	106.7 THE END
3.6	Las Vegas, NV	
3.10	Scottsdale, AZ	101.5 THE ZONE
3.11	San Diego, CA	ROCK 105.3
3.16	Oklahoma City, OK	100.5 THE KATT
3.17	Kansas City, MO	98.9 THE ROCK
3.18	St. Louis, MO	105.7 THE POINT
3.19	Memphis, TN	ROCK 103
3.23	Indianapolis, IN	X-103
3.24	Cincinnati, OH	102.7 WEBN
3.25	Chicago, IL	94.7 THE ZONE

DATE	CITY	RADIO
3.30	Cleveland, OH	WMMS 100.7
3.31	Pittsburgh, PA	105.9 THE X
4.1	Philadelphia, PA	94 WYSP
4.6	Tampa, FL	98 ROCK
4.7	Orlando, FL	REAL ROCK 101one
4.8	Miami, FL	WZTA 94.9
4.13	Richmond, VA	102.1 THE X
4.14	Baltimore, MD	98 ROCK
4.15	Washington, DC	OC 101
4.17	Atlantic City, NJ	WJSE 102.7
4.20	Charlotte, NC	KISS 95.1
4.21	Charleston, SC	96 WAVE
4.22	Atlanta, GA	99X
4.23	Jacksonville, FL	ROCK 105
4.26	New York, NY	KROCK

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4.27	Portland, ME	WCYY WCYI
4.28	Providence, RI	94 HJY
4.29	Virginia Beach, VA	FM 99
5.4	Long Island, NY	KROCK
5.5	Boston, MA	WBCN
5.6	Hartford, CT	WCCC THE ROCK
5.11	Dallas, TX	102.1 THE EDGE
5.12	Austin, TX	101X
5.13	Houston, TX	106.9 THE POINT
5.18	Minneapolis, MN	93X
5.19	Milwaukee, WI	LAZER 103
5.20	Detroit, MI	101 WRIF
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5.27	Denver, CO	106.7 KBPI
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6.3	Seattle, WA	KISW
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Agents arrested Parrino and Fenton. The charge: conspiracy to embezzle property of the United States.

THE CURSE

Freriks was pleased. He had Parrino on tape on January 3, 1996 saying that the seller would smuggle the coin "in a roll of common bullion pieces or put it in a set and mislabel it as a '32.'" Fenton had done exactly that. The asking price for the double eagle alone was twice the value of the coins Fenton had declared on his customs forms. To Freriks it added up to criminal intent.

Freriks had collared the two biggest names in the coin business and recovered a piece of American history. Everything had worked out perfectly. However, the storied coin would demonstrate that it had plenty of black magic left.

To the shock of agent Freriks, two months later the U.S. Attorney dropped criminal charges against both Parrino and Fenton. Prosecutors refuse to go on record, but conjecture in law enforcement circles ran that federal officials decided the conspiracy case would be too costly, too time-consuming, too difficult to win. But the feds quickly shifted their attention to a bigger prize: the double eagle itself.

The U.S. Attorney's office filed a civil forfeiture action to establish clear title to the coin. If Fenton

and made his reputation. His discretion, however, worked against him when Moore tagged him as a mob guy.

Today Parrino works out of an unmarked office in Blue Springs, Missouri. The windows are polarized; the doors have only a peephole. If you knock without an appointment, no one will answer. Jay Parrino does not do retail. By his own account, he has owned the finest examples of all but four of the 5,318 pieces listed in the Red Book. In 1999 he bought the famous \$10,000-bill collection of Binion's Horseshoe Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

Parrino paid a high price for his association with the 1933 double eagle. His

However, the record undercuts his story. "What would happen to the value if it were legalized?" he is heard asking Fenton on the surveillance tape.

"Double," Fenton replied.

Fenton also felt no remorse and fought to get his coin back. First the coin dealer's trade association, the Professional Numismatists Guild, eager to set precedent, confronted government lawyers with an unusual defense: A brief was filed on Fenton's behalf arguing not that the 1933 double eagle was legal but that it was just as illegal as the most important coins in numismatics. The world-record 1804 silver dollar, the 1913 Liberty head nickel, the 1894-S Barber dime, the 1943 copper

per cent—not one of the most celebrated coins in collecting was ever "issued" by the Mint. Mint employees stole dies, forced errors and, innocently or not, counterfeited many of these most important coins. A whole branch of collecting depends on unissued coins. If the 1933 double eagle was illegal, so were the top five most valuable U.S. coins.

Mint officials are loath to talk about the patchwork enforcement policy on unissued coins. Kenneth Gubin, former chief counsel and a consultant to the prosecution, refers to these as coins with "checkered backgrounds" or "unclear parentage." That coin collecting depends on these "scandalous" coins is part of what made the 1933 for-

feiture case so important. Gubin favored a settlement: "If you litigate, you might get a decision that impacts your ability to keep other coins off the market." One lawyer involved adds that a precedent in the coin case might extend to Stinger missiles or other stolen government property. To Gubin, "a bad decision was worse than a compromise."

Stephen Fenton's personal lawyers were even more aggressive than those representing the Numismatists Guild. They assembled an argument with a sensational twist. During discovery, prosecutors produced hundreds of pages of U.S. Mint and Secret Service records. Buried in those pages were documents showing that in 1944 King Farouk had requested

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wanted it back, the burden of proof was on him (not the government): He had to prove he was its rightful owner. Parrino was free to walk. He returned to Independence a bitter man.

"Ridiculous," Parrino says today of Moore's Mafia talk. "I have no relations, no ties to the mob. I've never taken, never stolen." Several competitors interviewed for this article complained of Parrino's arrogance but did not impugn his integrity. Parrino offers a more mundane reason for his wealth than mob money: He built his career by acquiring coins on behalf of institutional investors for retirement funds, IRAs and mutual funds. When the laws changed in the

1980s, he switched to personal collections voice shakes as he recounts the cost of his arrest: "I had the best tables at American Numismatist Association conventions. People are on waiting lists for years to get a table, and I had the best. They took them all away from me. I had full-page ads in *Coin World* and *Numismatic News*. I never ran one since. Two years of depression, family problems. I lost all kinds of customers. It virtually destroyed my life—in my business all a guy's got is his reputation."

He is not remorseful. "I did something I thought was perfectly okay," he says. "It was not illegal." He rattles off a number of ways the 1933 coin might have legally entered the market, saying, "The government's case was based on folklore."

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a red dress with white polka dots, is the central figure. She is holding a single red cherry over her bare chest with her right hand, while her left hand rests on her abdomen. The background is a blurred bar with warm lighting. In the foreground, there is a bar counter with a pitcher, a glass, a bottle, and a martini glass containing a drink with a cherry.

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and been granted an export license by the Treasury Department to take his 1933 double eagle out of the country. An illegal coin legally exported: The export license carried a whiff of legitimacy.

Fenton wasted no time. His was the Farouk coin, he said, and he could prove it. On January 18, 2000, at the U.S. Embassy in London, Andre de Clermont, a Middle Eastern coin expert and colleague of Fenton's, told U.S. federal prosecutors that he got Fenton the coin from a Cairo jeweler, who'd bought it from the children of a colonel who was close to Gamal Nasser, who himself had overthrown King Farouk. When asked for records as proof, De Clermont replied that sadly he had nothing but the man's word.

Was it likely that Parrino and Fenton had possessed King Farouk's coin, the coin with the greatest story of all the 1933 double eagles, and had kept the provenance hidden? Today Parrino declines to answer. In Moore's account neither Parrino nor Fenton ever mentioned Farouk. On the day of his arrest Fenton swore in a signed affidavit that he had bought his 1933 double eagle "anywhere from five to 10 years ago," mixed in with foreign and British coins.

De Clermont appears less sure of the alibi he gave to Fenton. "You've been to Cairo?" he asks during an interview in his cramped London office, a jumble of coin books and catalogs for women's "jelly coats" and plastic lingerie. "Remember, people construct all sorts of stories. People put out versions of what they want to say. You know what I mean?"

Fenton produced a wire transfer and a sales receipt for "U.S. gold coins," printed on his own stationery, dated October 3, 1995. The receipt was made out to a bank. This, he told prosecutors, included the 1933 double eagle. If his story was true, he had bought the world's most valuable coin from an unnamed source for less than \$220,000.

In January 2001 U.S. Mint director Jay Johnson signed a settlement agreement with Stephen Fenton. The Mint and Fenton agreed to sell the coin and split the pot. The government included in the language of the decision a warning to high-end coin collectors: "This settlement shall not be deemed to have any precedential significance or effect, legal or otherwise, on any other coin or property of the United States, including any other 1933 double eagle that may exist." Johnson was proud of his decision. "I had a chance to be historical, and I took it," he says today. He was not proud of what happened next. The Mint's associate marketing director, David Pickens, in consultation with Stephen Fenton, chose Sotheby's to auction the coin.

THE ENDGAME

By 2002, after more than \$300 million in criminal fines and civil class-action penal-

ties, Sotheby's was badly tarnished by a price-fixing scandal. The double eagle was just the kind of promotion it needed. Sotheby's would not only sell the government's coin, it would also sell the firm's own return to legitimacy.

On March 19, 2002 U.S. Mint director Henrietta Holsman Fore went on the *Today* show and said that 10 coins had escaped the Mint and that hers was the last one. On July 26, during a Boston radio program, Redden claimed that this was the King Farouk coin.

The 56-page Sotheby's catalog, the engine of the auction house's marketing campaign, overflowed with phrases such as "All but one; and therein lies a tale," as well as "And then there were 10." Photographs and biographical data on King Farouk filled several pages. Provenance charts detailed the history of the 10 coins. Even though the catalog concluded "we'll never know for sure," the "10 coins, one king, last chance" campaign had its desired effect.

Virtually every media outlet got the story wrong in a way that made the coin appear more valuable than it was. Ten

The real Farouk coin exists, an expert says. When the government changes the law to treat 1933 double eagles as other unissued coins, "the truth will come out."

coins were simply what the government had recovered over the years; Farouk was Fenton's courtroom defense. A lawyer involved in the case spoke off the record for this story and marveled at the way the media mistook Fenton's legal argument for fact. Even Fenton has admitted to PLAYBOY that not everything he said during his ordeal was true, but that's as far as he will go.

Does anyone in the coin world believe that only 10 1933 double eagles existed? Parrino was on tape talking about two others, and today he says several exist. "There have got to be others out there," David Tripp, the author of the Sotheby's catalog, admitted days after the auction. Israel Switt, the Philadelphia jeweler originally accused of fencing the coins, had boasted to a buyer that he had more than two dozen 1933s. One of the oldest, most respected names in numismatics calls the Sotheby's 1933 double eagle auction "a sham." The real Farouk coin exists, with title, and the expert knows its location quite well. When the government changes the law to treat 1933 double eagles as other unissued coins, the expert says, "the truth will come out." Two

lawyers involved in the Fenton settlement dismiss such talk, calling the 1933 "the Loch Ness monster of coins"—everyone has a sighting. During the investigation of this story, however, a noted numismatist offered PLAYBOY convincing evidence not only of another 1933 double eagle but of a coin whose story rivaled Fenton's claim to a Farouk provenance.

The Mint did not offer amnesty to all holders of double eagles. Instead it did what rulers do in fairy tales—it changed the law. It issued Fenton's 1933 double eagle. The Bureau of Engraving made up a special title document, which itself is a collectible. At the auction, the Mint charged the buyer an extra \$20, as if the year were actually 1933 and he was stepping up to the window for a new coin. "The guy who bought the coin paid for the paper," says a Philadelphia coin dealer. "In five years another coin will come out, and it's gonna be another bullshit story." For the same reason, Parrino says he refused to represent several clients interested in bidding on the coin. He calls the Sotheby's auction "a complete, total and utter farce." Monetizing their 1933 double eagle was a touch that Pickens and Redden joked about. Like kings of old, they made their property legal and outlawed the rest.

They also made their partner Stephen Fenton a very rich man. He took home \$3.465 million. The Mint regards the payout as a finder's fee. The Mint also earned \$3,465,020, less expenses it has not disclosed. Sotheby's and the coin dealer Stack's took less than their 15 percent buyer's commission. They split \$660,000.

U.S. Secret Service agent Freriks retired to his home in Lubbock with an acknowledgment for his role in bringing in the double eagle, and he remains disgusted at how the criminal case turned out. "He got all that money," he says of Fenton, "and I got a letter I threw away." On May 21, 1996, barely a month after criminal charges against him were dropped, Jay Parrino paid \$1.485 million for a 1913 Liberty head nickel. Two years later Parrino sued Jack Moore for breach of contract and fraud during the 1933 double eagle sting. Moore settled for \$140,000, but as Moore's attorney said, "Texas is a debtor's haven."

In 1999 John Groendyke discovered that his coins had been sold by Moore, who kept the money. Groendyke sued and was awarded \$1.2 million from Moore. According to Groendyke, he has recovered only a small fraction of the money and does not know where his coin collection is. Jack Moore, living outside Amarillo in a modest home he does not own, offers no explanation. "I have coins in different places around the country," he says.

At press time, the identity of the new owner of the 1933 double eagle remained a mystery.



OPEN SEASON (continued from page 124)

The Braves are as reliable as locusts. Every year they win the NL East and collapse in the postseason.

NL EAST

1. Philadelphia Phillies

Last season: 86–76. In the final two weeks the Phils dropped four of five to the Marlins, losing a playoff bid and a good chunk of dignity. **Scouting report:** GM Ed Wade has breathed new life into the club, adding scary closer Billy Wagner (105 strikeouts in 86 innings, 100-plus mph fastball) and veteran setup man Tim Worrell. Kevin Millwood anchors a deep, if not spectacular, starting staff. At the plate last year Jim Thome (47 homers, 131 RBI) proved once again that he's one of baseball's best power hitters. Pat Burrell hit .209 in 2003, the lowest of any regular in baseball. He's way too talented to be that shitty again.

X factor: All four of the teams that have moved into a new stadium since 2000 have had losing seasons in their first year. Can Philly buck the trend?

Prediction: The cranky Larry Bowa knows it's win or else. The Phils will either snag the division or implode like Veterans Stadium. Either way it should be fun to watch.

2. Florida Marlins

Last season: 91–71. It's been said that anything can happen. Last year two unlikely forces proved that dictum: Governor Schwarzenegger and the Marlins. Both made us laugh and cry in equal parts.

Scouting report: The Marlins cut costs in the off-season, though not to the extent of the fire sale that followed their first title in 1997. Still, the pitching staff

is solid. Josh Beckett will be a perennial Cy Young contender (that is, if skipper Jack McKeon doesn't wear out Beckett's arm). Dontrelle Willis (14–6, 3.30 ERA) has filthy stuff (that's good), A.J. Burnett (an NL-best five shutouts in 2002) should return from arm surgery, and Carl Pavano has been seen canoodling with Alyssa Milano. At the plate, 21-year-old outfielder Miguel Cabrera is set to shine, and Mike Lowell (32 homers, 105 RBI) has signed on for the long haul.

X factor: Brad Penny (4.22 career ERA) went 2–0 with a 2.19 ERA in the World Series against the Yankees' big bats. Was this a turning point for the erratic righty or a mere tease?

Prediction: If the pitching stays healthy, the Marlins will contend again.

3. Atlanta Braves

Last season: 101–61. The Braves are as reliable as locusts.

Every year they win the NL East—the last time they didn't finish at the top of the division, the other George Bush was president—and every year they collapse in the postseason.

Scouting report: Manager Bobby Cox hasn't had a losing record in a full season since 1982. But this year the Braves are without future Hall of Famers Gary Sheffield (.330, 39 homers) and Greg Maddux (289 career wins), and All-Star catcher Javy Lopez (.328, 43 homers). A nervous Cox will rely on the Jones boys—Andruw and Chipper—to drive in runs. If pitching guru Leo Mazzone can continue to work his magic with cast-off starters Russ Ortiz (21–7) and Mike Hampton (14–8), John Smoltz will

collect a ton of saves again. The acquisition of setup man Antonio Alfonseca can only help.

X factor: Atlanta has dropped six of its last seven playoff series. Can a team that's suffered that kind of humiliation keep coming back for more?

Prediction: The Braves' run of NL East titles will come to an end at 12.

4. New York Mets

Last season: 66–95. Another year, another bunch of expensive free agents, another disaster. And this time they didn't have Bobby Valentine to blame.

Scouting report: The Mets are baseball's most notorious shopaholics. Mo Vaughn for only \$15 million? Where's the MasterCard? (Fat Mo has apparently quit the game, but he'll get paid for 2004.) Management flirted in a big way with Vladimir Guerrero, but the team ultimately picked up only two high-priced players—center fielder Mike Cameron (.253, \$4 million) and Japanese shortstop Kaz Matsui (\$5 million). A slightly pissed-off Mike Piazza will begin the shift to first base. He'll probably hold a news conference to talk about it. In terms of pitching, forget it. If you've got an arm, you might as well show up for spring training. Both Al Leiter and Tom Glavine will turn 38. At least the Mets still have John Franco, 43, who signed on for another year.

X factor: Does Matsui have the goods? **Prediction:** Art Howe's Mets will actually flirt with first place early in the summer before injuries do them in.

5. Montreal Expos

Last season: 83–79. *Les 'Spas* compiled their second consecutive winning campaign. Pretty impressive considering the low payroll. **Scouting report:** Montreal couldn't find a buyer before its best young players



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reached pay-up-or-shut-up time. The result: The club didn't have the dough to keep superstar Vlad "the Impaler" Guerrero (.323 over eight seasons) in town. He walked without so much as a draft pick as compensation. The Expos will also miss their top pitcher of 2003, Javier Vazquez, who fled to the Bronx. On the plus side, GM Omar Minaya resigned shortstop Orlando Cabrera (.297, 80 RBI), who started every game last year, and picked up free agents Carl Everett and Tony Batista (26 dingers). Nick Johnson, acquired from the Yankees in the Vazquez deal, could put up Todd Helton (on-the-road) numbers. Don't look for help from the farm system, though—Minaya traded away most of his prospects in a misguided attempt to contend in 2002.

X factor: Jose Vidro might be the most underrated player in baseball. He hits for average (.310) and is competent in the field, à la Robbie Alomar in his prime. But how long will he remain an Expo?

Prediction: A homeless team simply can't contend.

NL CENTRAL



1. Chicago Cubs

Last season: 88–74. Avert your eyes, Cubs fans. Five outs away from their first World Series since the Truman administration and it all fell to pieces.

Scouting report: The Cubs have more quality arms than Donald Rumsfeld, with Kerry Wood (14–11, 3.20 ERA), Mark Prior (18–6, 2.43 ERA), Matt Clement (14–12, 4.11 ERA) and Carl Zambrano (a 3.57 career ERA that belies his 18–21 record). This staff will win games if it stays healthy (Dusty Baker rode his young arms too hard last year, running pitch counts above 120 a major-league-high 26 times). At the plate, Baker added Derrek Lee (31 homers) and Todd Walker, a much-needed lefty hitter. A cork-free Sammy Sosa will continue his Cooperstown run.

X factor: LaTroy Hawkins arrives to compete for the closer role, an area in which

the Cubs could use some help. As a set-up guy for the Twins, Hawkins was 15–3 with an ERA of 2.00 over the past two seasons. But prior to that he had seven mediocre years. With the pressure on, the real Hawkins is about to step forward. **Prediction:** Last year's team played deep into October, and this season's version is even better. Security alert: If the Cubs take it all, the fans will go apeshit.



2. Houston Astros

Last season: 87–75. The 'Stros challenged for the Central title, then lost six of their last nine games. Oops.

Scouting report: Houston's pitching staff looks tough to beat. Though closer Billy Wagner is gone, fireballer Octavio Dotel (97 strikeouts in 87 innings in 2003) should fill his shoes capably. The starting rotation features four potential Cy Young contenders—Roy Oswalt (10–5, 2.97 ERA), Wade Miller (14–13 but 31–12 in 2001 and 2002) and Yankees exports Roger Clemens (17–9) and Andy Pettitte (21–8). Pettitte may miss New York more than he'll let on. The Yankees scored 7.04 runs per game for him last year, the second-best run support in baseball. That said, the Astros can put runs on the board too. More than half of last year's starting lineup hit more than 20 homers, though mainstays Craig Biggio (.264) and Jeff Bagwell (.278) are on the decline.

X factor: The entire Lone Star state will be focused on Oswalt's groin. That might make the 26-year-old uncomfortable in more ways than one. He had surgery down there after making three trips to the disabled list last season.

Prediction: The Astros have never won a playoff series, but this could be the year.



3. St. Louis Cardinals

Last season: 85–77. The Cardinals scored runs aplenty (876, second in the NL). Problem was, they gave up a few as well (796, 11th). **Scouting report:** St. Louis picked up spare parts from around the league, but



Did Steve Bartman cast the Cubs the pennant? Get real!

it will mostly rely on last year's talent. Albert Pujols is the best pure hitter on this or any other planet (a league-best .359 average, not to mention 43 homers and 124 RBI). Meanwhile Edgar Renteria emerged as a poor man's Derek Jeter, batting .330 with 47 doubles. Too bad these guys can't pitch, too. While the Cards have a couple of good starters in Woody Williams (18-9) and Matt Morris (11-8), there's no true ace.

X factor: This team's fate may rest with the newly acquired pitchers, none of whom is a proven commodity—Jeff Suppan (13-11, 4.19 ERA), who'll eat up innings, and former Braves Adam Wainwright and Jason Marquis.

Prediction: Like the Rams, the Cardinals will jazz St. Louis fans for much of the season, but it won't end well.

4. Pittsburgh Pirates



Last season: 75-87. A fresh new lineup yielded the same old results, as the Pirates registered their 11th straight losing season.

Scouting report: Pittsburgh fans have probably already started drinking their blues away. After all, twice the Pirates have set up a five-year rebuilding plan, and twice the plan has failed. They're starting over once again. Last year they traded arguably their best player, Brian Giles (.299). They've also unloaded some deadwood (Reggie Sanders, Kenny Lofton), all to begin focusing on young talent such as Jason Bay and Oliver Perez, acquired in the Giles trade. A pivotal off-season move was the re-signing of Kip Wells (10-9, 3.28 ERA), an ace in the making.

X factor: Despite the Pirates' new luxury ballpark, owner Kevin McClatchy is crying poverty again, promising to slash the team's \$54 million 2003 payroll to \$35 million. Yep, that should help the rebuilding program.

Prediction: In perhaps any other division, this team would reside in the basement. Not in the NL Central.

5. Cincinnati Reds



Last season: 69-93. The Reds christened the new Great American Ball Park with a 10-1 loss, and it was downhill from there. In midseason, only days after GM Jim Bowden got the boot, the Reds dealt a bunch of good players in a series of salary dumps, leaving new GM Dan O'Brien in the lurch.

Scouting report: Cincinnati hadn't made any significant pickups at press time, but the team could get better just by staying healthy for manager Dave Miley. Ken Griffey Jr. did two long stints on the disabled list, and Austin Kearns, Adam Dunn and Barry Larkin all finished the season on the shelf. And the team suffered a serious blow in the off-season when promising young outfielder

Dernell Stenson was killed in an apparent carjacking. Reds pitchers yielded a 5.09 ERA last season, 27th out of 30 teams. One bright spot: Closer of the future Ryan Wagner posted a 1.66 ERA.

X factor: Left fielder Dunn, 24, slugged 27 homers in only 381 at bats. The bad news: He batted a pathetic .215.

Prediction: Cincinnati may be big and red, but so is a canker sore.

6. Milwaukee Brewers



Last season: 68-94. Like Pittsburgh, Milwaukee put up its 11th losing season in a row.

The upside: Win or lose, it's always Miller time at Miller Park.

Scouting report: The club's board of directors agreed to cut payroll by 25 percent, to a major league low of \$30 million. Derek Jeter picks up dinner tabs for more than that. The biggest loss: slugger Richie Sexson (45 homers, 124 RBI). Outfielder Ben Grieve, a former Rookie of the Year, will be a welcome addition, but he's no savior. Some of last year's talent remains, notably Scott Podsednik (.314) and Geoff Jenkins (95 RBI). Brooks Kieschnick is a homeless man's Babe Ruth. He hit .300 in 69 games as a designated hitter and pitched 53 innings of mediocre (5.26 ERA) relief, the first player to pull off that kind of double duty since 1964.

X factor: The hell with it. There isn't one, not for this club. Did someone say Miller time?

Prediction: With a little luck—bad luck, that is—the Brewers could be the Tigers of the National League.

AL WEST

1. Seattle Mariners



Last season: 93-69. The Mariners broke from the gate quickly but couldn't top Oakland in the end.

Scouting report: With 41-year-old lefty Jamie Moyer anchoring the rotation, 41-year-old Edgar Martinez as arguably its best hitter, and 35-year-olds Bret Boone and John Olerud toiling in the infield, call this team the *ancient* Mariners. But combine all that experience with the superstud youth on the mound—Joel Pineiro (16-11), Gil Meche (15-13) and relievers Rafael Soriano (1.53 ERA) and Julio Mateo (the oldest among this list at 26)—and you've got a team with potential. Though lacking a dominant closer, the bullpen was the AL's best last year, holding opposing hitters to a meager .311 on-base percentage. And never underestimate Ichiro, a true talent.

X factor: You have to wonder if the geriatrics will get weary in August when the divisional race literally heats up. Screw the Gatorade; serve up some Geritol.

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Prediction: With money to spend (they were second in American League attendance in 2003) and a win-now attitude, the Mariners will take the AL West.



2. Texas Rangers

Last season: 71-91. The Rangers had the league's best player. And they were still lousy. **Scouting report:** With baseball's most powerful infield (Alex Rodriguez, Hank Blalock and Mark Teixeira slugged 102 homers among them in 2003), the

Rangers will score. But their pitching has been coyote ugly. The solution could be the young arms of Colby Lewis, Juan Dominguez and Joaquin Benoit, who were wrangled by Grady Fuson, the scout who drafted Barry Zito, Mark Mulder and Tim Hudson in Oakland. Pricey starting pitcher Chan Ho Park should return from a back injury. Key player: First baseman Teixeira (pronounced tuh-CHER-a) is a hitting machine. His 26 homers and 84 RBI as a rookie last year sent Rafael Palmeiro packing. **X factor:** Buck Showalter is his own

worst enemy. After micromanaging himself out of gigs in New York and Arizona, he alienated A-Rod in Texas with the near trade to Boston. **Prediction:** The Rangers second in the division? That's right. Got a problem with that?



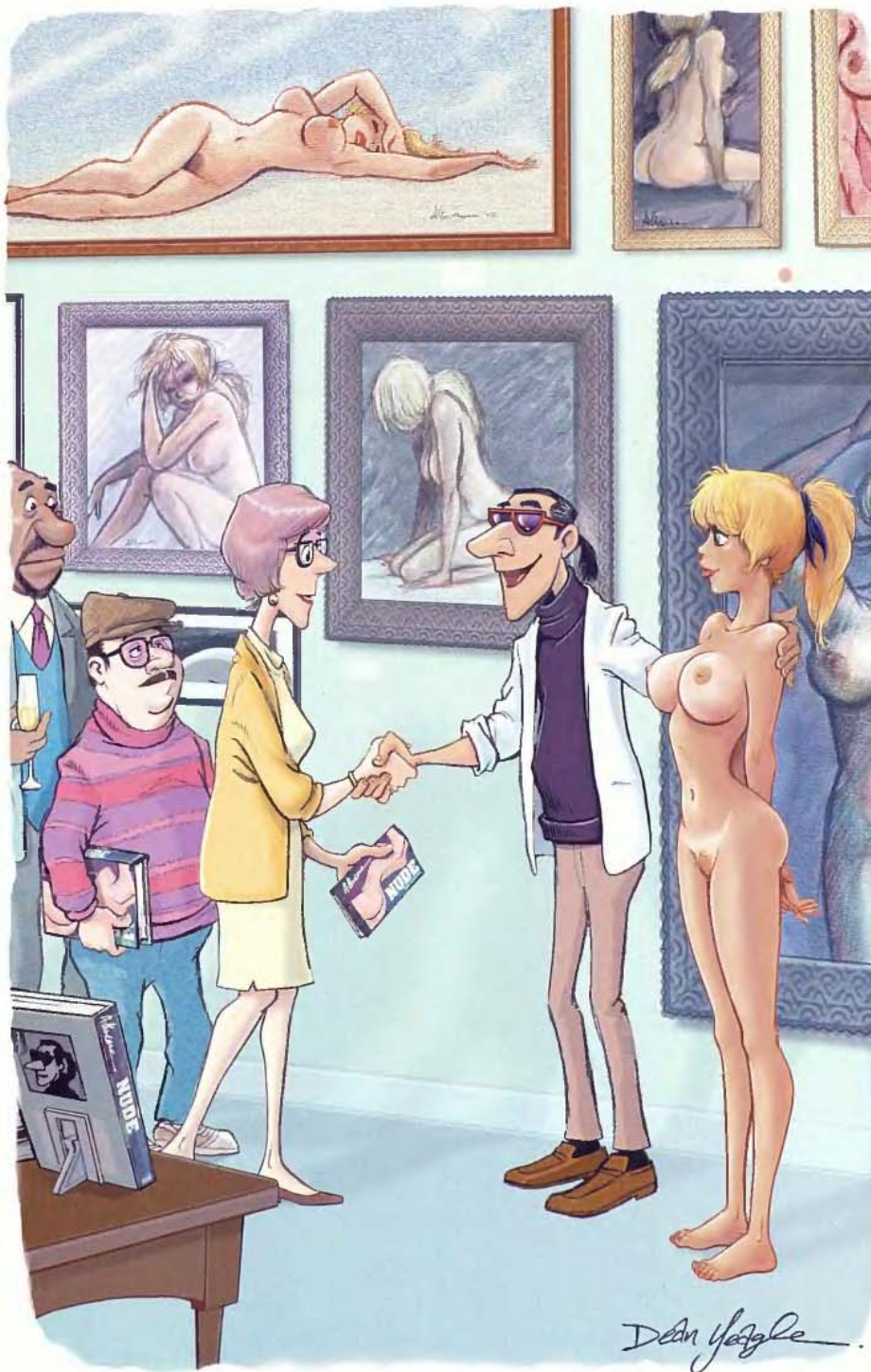
3. Oakland A's

Last season: 96-66. The A's have morphed into a left coast version of the Braves. They start slow, sizzle in the summer and then choke spectacularly in the playoffs. Anybody know the Heimlich? **Scouting report:** Closer Keith Foulke and 2002 MVP Miguel Tejada are gone, so the A's will lean even more heavily on their big guns—Barry Zito, Mark Mulder and Tim Hudson, the finest one-two-three punch in the majors (3.03 ERA among them in 2003). They'll get help from newcomers Mark Redman (14-9 with the Marlins) and Arthur Rhodes (4.17 ERA as a reliever with the Mariners). Despite stat geek GM Billy Beane's emphasis on bringing in hitters who can get on base, the A's posted a paltry .327 on-base percentage in 2003, 21st in baseball. He'll try to strengthen the attack with a new center fielder and lead-off hitter, Mark Kotsay. Great, but in production terms he's no Jason Giambi. **X factor:** After the Raiders' dismal season, Oakland desperately needs a winner. Can the A's handle the pressure? **Prediction:** They lost some serious talent, but if the pitching stays healthy, the A's won't fall far.



4. Anaheim Angels

Last season: 77-85. The club's batting average fell from .282 to .268, and its ERA rose from 3.69 to 4.28. So much for an Angels dynasty. **Scouting report:** Billboard billionaire Arturo Moreno became the first Hispanic owner when he bought the team from Disney in May for a reported \$184 million. The hope was that the Angels would gain an edge in recruiting Latin players. Sure enough, free agent superstar Vlad Guerrero signed in the off-season. On the mound, young guns Jarrod Washburn, John Lackey and Ramon Ortiz—36-44 collectively in 2003—haven't lived up to their promise. New arrival Kelvim Escobar and nasty setup man Francisco Rodriguez (.172 batting average against) help anchor a badass bullpen. **X factor:** Free agent starter Bartolo Colon has a primo arm, but with a four-year, \$51 million contract in his back pocket, will the 240-pounder balloon into a Ruben Studdard look-alike? (That would make him an Angel flying without wings.) **Prediction:** Lightning never strikes twice in the same place.



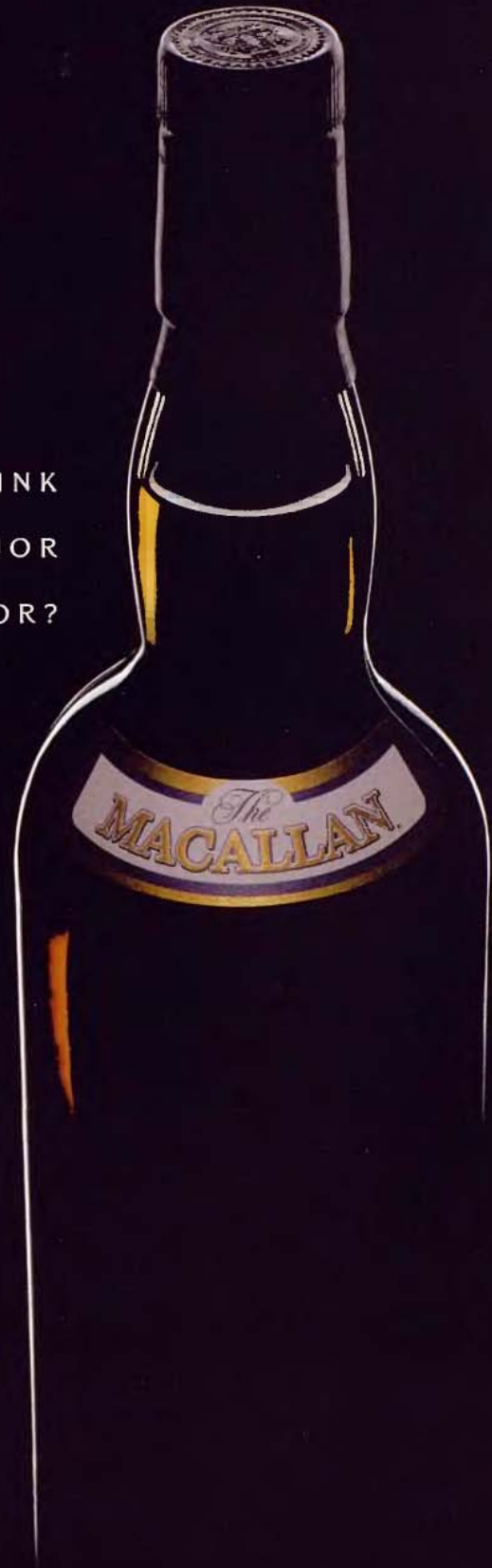
Dean Jaggle

"...And this, of course, is Miss Jeffers, my model...."



The Macallan 12-year-old Single Malt

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THE LOCKS ON LIQUOR
CABINETS WERE FOR?



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PLAYMATE NEWS



PAM RADIO

The phrase "a face for radio" hardly applies to Pamela Anderson, but the multi-tasking Playmate, who lobbies on behalf of PETA, writes a column for *Jane* magazine, juggles relationships with Tommy Lee and Kid Rock (pictured at right) and raises two young sons, has racked up another gig: hosting a talk show on Sirius satellite radio. We've always liked Pam's willingness to talk about her personal life on, say, *Howard Stern*, so we're not surprised that she's taken to the airwaves to participate in live, intimate question-and-answer sessions with callers. Wondering how to suggest a threesome to your girlfriend? Is that burning sensation normal? Ask Pam on the air or at clubpamradio.com and (if you're lucky) she'll answer. Why the need to help other people's relationships? "Call me an addict," Pam wrote recently in *Jane*. "Addicted to love. Who isn't really? When did women decide they had something to hide? The love and the sex, the heart—these are why we're all here." Even if you aren't a Sirius subscriber, you definitely haven't heard the last of Pam—she recently signed a multibook deal with Simon and Schuster.



I'm totally Sirius!



Fram top: Pam and Kid; Carmen Electra, Dave Navarro, photog David LaChapelle and Pammy.

25 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

If you've watched Brian De Palma's 1981 classic thriller *Blow Out*, you've seen Miss April 1979, Missy Cleveland, getting sliced with a



butcher knife in the film's famous shower scene. Three years before Missy served as soaped-up psycho bait, her mother had talked her into auditioning for the Great Playmate Hunt. (Thanks, Missy's mom!)

LOOSE LIPS

"Being in *PLAYBOY* will be something fun to look back on in 20 years. I'm a good asset in that I'm an intelligent, natural girl—proving that Playmates aren't just artificial people with no brains. At work I wear my hair pulled back in a bun. I'd rather not be recognized."—Colleen Marie

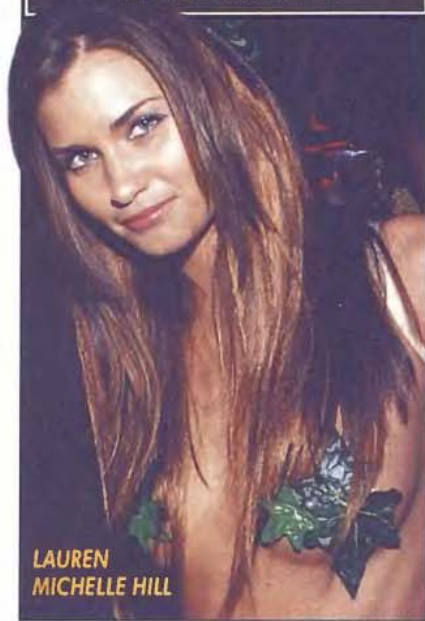
RED CARPET RABBITS



Centerfolds are out on the town and wowing the paparazzi. From far left: Nicole Narain at the *Vibe* Awards; Morena Corwin at a West Coast calendar-release party; Michele Rogers at the grand opening of MediSpa in Los Angeles; Carmella DeCesare Grotto-side at the Mansion, where Bally Gaming was unveiling the new *Playboy* video slot machines; Rhanda Adams arriving at *Models Night Out*, *CRU* magazine's fashion show for Goa.



HOT SHOT



LAUREN
MICHELLE HILL

THREE THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT SERRIA TAWAN

1. Her favorite recent vacation? "I flew first class to Europe and sat near Sidney Poitier."



Serria Tawan
revealed.

2. She's ready to act. "I had to turn down my first feature film because of a conflict," she says. "They had a tight schedule and couldn't let me go.

There'll be more."

3. She won't be the next reality-TV personality. "I enjoy watching television, but you won't catch me on there censoring what I say."

POP QUESTIONS: DEVIN DE VASQUEZ

Q: Your new beauty and skin care line, Devin's Beauty, is available at devinsbeauty.com. Why did you go into the cosmetics business?

A: When I tell people my age, they're like, "You are *not* 40! I want to do what you're doing." I still get carded. I decided to share my beauty secrets with the world.

Q: Do people remember you from PLAYBOY?

A: Of course. And also from *Can't Buy Me Love*. I believe in beauty without surgery. I take good care of myself. Hopefully, when I'm 50 I'll still look 40.



MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

By Evan Handler

"My favorite Centerfold? It's definitely a process of elimination. **Reneé Tenison** (below)—she is one of the finalists.



Olo Roy was in Michael Jackson's *Thriller* video, so I'll take her, too. I think the singer Jewel is cute, but that doesn't help us, because she hasn't posed for the magazine yet.

Hmm.... Do you think you can get her to?"

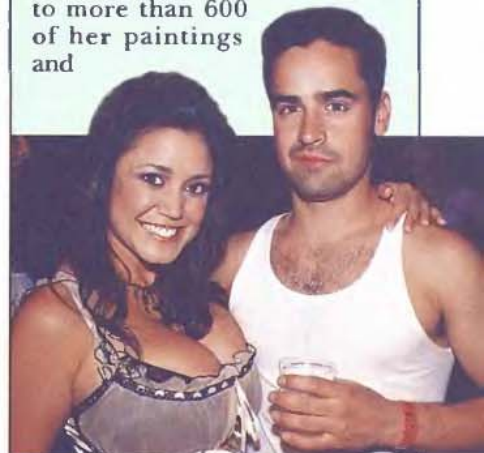
PLAYMATE GOSSIP

"I can't believe I'm a model again," says **Bebe Buell**, who is represented by the IMG modeling agency. "It's cracking me up!" Bees appeared with daughter **Liv Tyler** on *The E! True Hollywood Story: Rock Star Daughters* and (along with Playmate **Marcy Hanson**) in *Rod's Girls*, a documentary about the women who've dated **Rod Stewart**.... **Ava Fabian** (below) and her



Ava Fabian: Bunny hopping.

Playmate pals entertained guests by dancing on a giant birthday cake at PLAYBOY's 50th anniversary party in New York City.... **Shauna Sand's** ex, **Lorenzo Lamas**, is dating **Barbara Moore**, while **Barbara's** father is dating **Miss March 1954, Dolores Del Monte**.... **Karla Conway Sachi** is offering the rights to more than 600 of her paintings and



We wish we had Jesse's girl.

sculptures, as well as movie rights and access to her archives for \$1 million. "I believe it's worth way more than that," she says. For more info call 800-500-4486.... Who's the lucky guy shown above? *Swimsfan* actor **Jesse Bradford**, who hung out with **Miriam Gonzales** at the Mansion.

THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING ANNA

It's been fun watching the rise and fall of **Anna Nicole Smith's** career—and jeans size. The newly svelte star has major shrinkage under her belt, and now she's shilling for **TrimSpo**, the weight-loss pill that she says helped her go from husky (above, at a Friars Club roast) to hot (right, at the launch party for *The Anna Nicole Show: Season One DVD*).



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PLAYBOY

on the scene

WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHERE IT'S HAPPENING AND WHO'S MAKING IT HAPPEN

DREAM ON

Say you had \$100,000 cash in your pocket and you were standing in a high-end stereo shop, feeling pretty good because you had just licked four martinis out of a gorgeous girl's navel. What would you do? Yeah, that's what we would do, too. In fact, that's just about exactly what we did.

To honor our annual music issue, we put together a stereo

system worthy of a king—true audio that focuses not just on your home theater but on playing "Sympathy for the Devil" as it ought to sound. Our only guideline: The gear should be flexible enough to tackle new formats and have an aesthetic as outrageous as the price. Total cost: \$52,000. That'll leave you just enough to cover the noise-pollution citations.

—JAMES K. WILLCOX

Left and right: Martin Logan's Odyssey speakers (\$10,495) project high- and mid-range sound electrostatically. (An ultra-thin charged membrane vibrates between two rigid panels. That's all you need to know.) Each five-foot-plus speaker also has a pair of woofers in the base for low-end frequencies. An extra \$8,000 gets you the surround sound system, including a 400-watt subwoofer, a center channel and two rear speakers.

Below: Meridian's 861 Surround Processor Version 4 (\$15,700) uses sound cards that can be added or replaced to handle new audio formats. No matter what new technology is on the horizon (Dolby 10.0?), you'll never need to purchase another processor.



Above: High-quality turntables spin at more constant speeds, resist vibration better and use quieter motors than cheaper models. The result: sound quality that stereo purists will argue is better than anything a CD player could ever produce. The HR-X turntable by VPI (\$10,000) uses two ultra-low-powered motors to drive the flywheel, and the peripheral ring clamp minimizes the effects of warping, which lessens the chance of skipping. The suspension system ensures you'll hear zero vibration and distortion.

Right: The Compli disc player by Theta Digital (\$4,500) tackles every format, including recordable DVD, DVD-Audio and SACD. **Bottom:** Balanced Audio Technology's VK-6200 amplifier (\$10,995) accepts 200-watt modules to expand from two to six channels. In other words, it's six amps in one. The power (read: volume) is simply awesome.

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 152.

JAMES IMBROGNO



Grapevine

A Squeeze of Lima

Brazil's ADRIANA LIMA started her career by placing second in the Ford Supermodel of the World contest and has since posed for Guess and, at right, Victoria's Secret. As if she's not angelic enough, she—no joke—works with orphans in her spare time.



JAG/© KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE.COM

KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE.COM



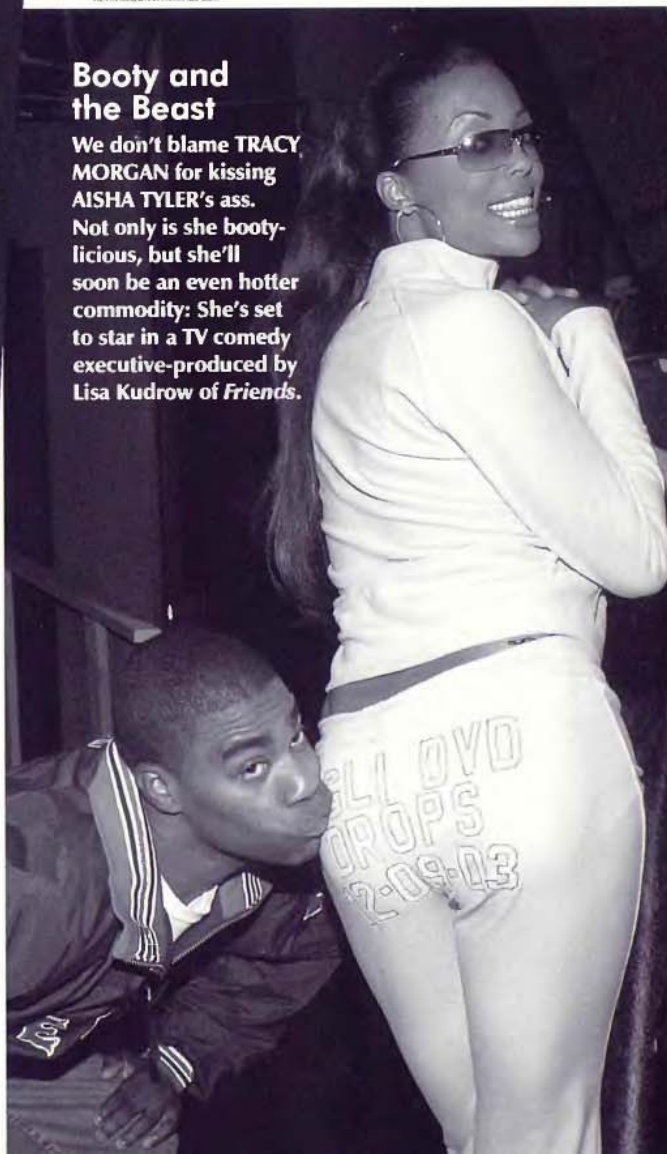
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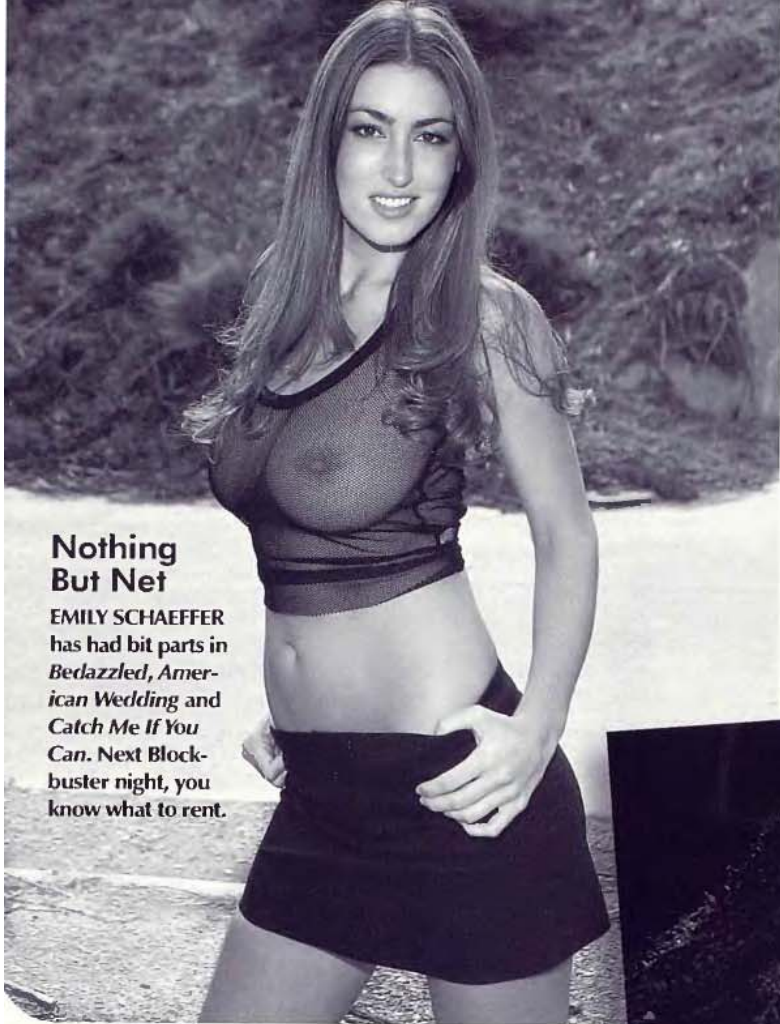
Gwen Solo!

No doubt this will be a banner year for GWEN STEFANI: Her first solo CD features OutKast and Missy Elliott, and in *The Aviator* she plays Jean Harlow to Leo DiCaprio's Howard Hughes.

Booty and the Beast

We don't blame TRACY MORGAN for kissing AISHA TYLER's ass. Not only is she bootylicious, but she'll soon be an even hotter commodity: She's set to star in a TV comedy executive-produced by Lisa Kudrow of *Friends*.





Nothing But Net

EMILY SCHAEFFER has had bit parts in *Bedazzled*, *American Wedding* and *Catch Me If You Can*. Next Blockbuster night, you know what to rent.

Roselyn Blooms

We fell for former Miss Puerto Rico Petite ROSELYN SANCHEZ in *Rush Hour 2*, and now her red-carpet looks have the paparazzi on her trail. See more of her this year in *The Underclassman*.



MICHAEL GEMMAN/UP/LANDOV

Tickled Keys

Avoiding the sophomore slump is one thing, but ALICIA KEYS went further: Her second album, *The Diary of Alicia Keys*, entered the *Billboard* chart at number one by selling 618,325 copies in its first week.



MICHAEL GEMMAN/UP/LANDOV

Thataway, Hathaway!

When Garry Marshall directed ANNE HATHAWAY in *The Princess Diaries*, he called her a combination of Julia Roberts and Audrey Hepburn. Next up? *Ella Enchanted*, a modern-day fairy tale with Cary Elwes.



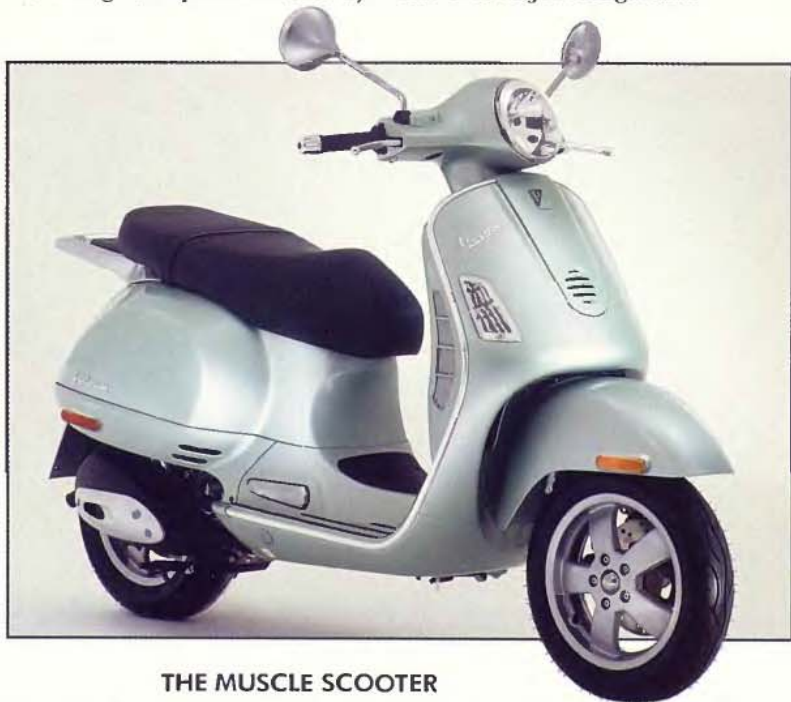
MICHAEL GEMMAN/UP/LANDOV

Potpourri



EYE CANDY

If you're mildly perverted, as a man should be, you may have heard of Michele Smith Designs, which makes G-strings with exotic stones that run up a woman's butt. Smith's latest: Edible Sweet G's, embroidered mesh fabric panties with candy-string backs. Yep, it's the age-old edible-underwear concept, made with a touch of class and some riboflavin. "It was like discovering a fifth food group," notes our tester. "My girlfriend found them ticklish—in a good way." They're \$25 a pair, plus \$20 for two strings of replacement candy. Head over to jeweledgs.com.



THE MUSCLE SCOOTER

Speeding a scooter through congested city traffic is thrilling and dangerous enough to qualify as an extreme sport. Especially when you consider the new Vespa Granturismo (\$4,899), the company's fastest, most adrenaline-fueled ride ever. The 200cc scooter is the first Vespa to feature a four-stroke, four-valve engine, so you'll have that extra juice to gun it around an open car door. Top speed is a nervy 70 mph, but the scooter's 12-inch wheels should keep you upright over the nastiest of potholes. A compartment under the seat stores a full-size helmet. We suggest you wear it. Available in steel gray, black and vintage green. Visit vespausa.com for a dealer near you.

AX TO THE MAX

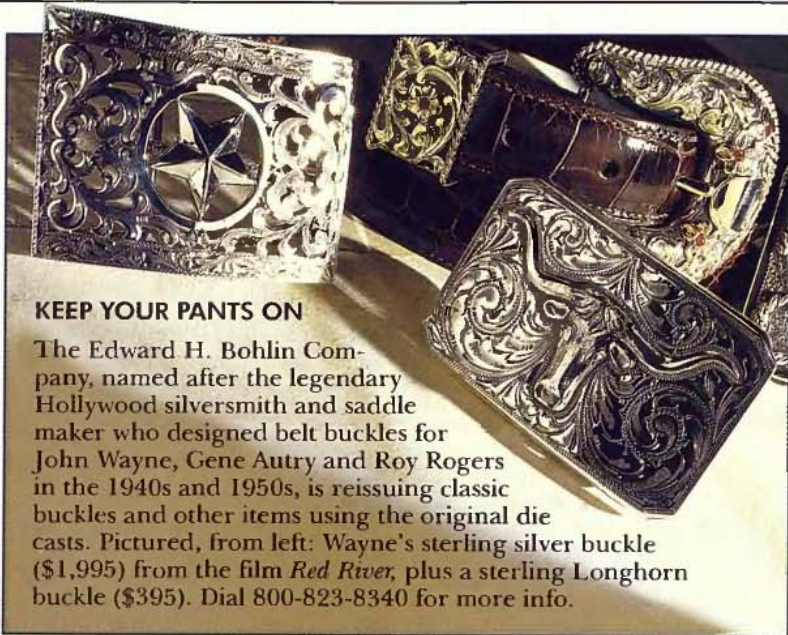
Want to lighten the load of gear you're lugging to gigs? The Variax 700 (\$2,000), by Line 6, can reproduce the sounds of a Guitar Center's worth of well-known electric and acoustic beauties. Among the 25 choices you can dial in using the selector knob: Gibson Les Pauls (for Zeppelin solos), Fender Telecasters (for Springsteen covers) and even an electric sitar (for "Paint It, Black"). Available at line6.com.



SMOKE ME

Eminent cigar maker Nick Perdomo made a heroic escape from Castro's Cuba in the 1960s and reestablished his company in Nicaragua, where he continued to make Cuban-seed tobaccos. Now his son, Nick Perdomo Jr., has released the Edicion de Silvio, made the old-fashioned way in his father's honor. Three sizes are available (Robusto, Double Corona and Number 2 Torpedo), from \$17 to \$25 a smoke. Check perdomocigars.net.



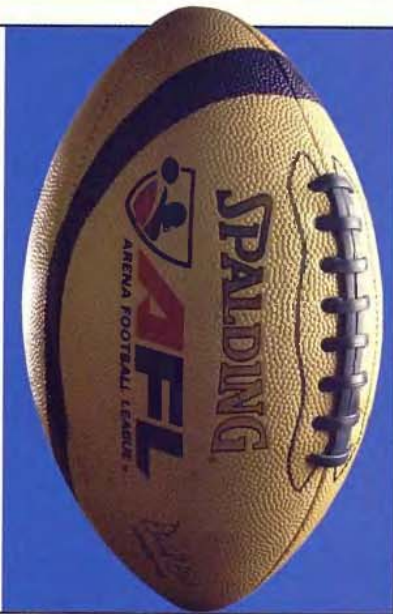


KEEP YOUR PANTS ON

The Edward H. Bohlin Company, named after the legendary Hollywood silversmith and saddle maker who designed belt buckles for John Wayne, Gene Autry and Roy Rogers in the 1940s and 1950s, is reissuing classic buckles and other items using the original die casts. Pictured, from left: Wayne's sterling silver buckle (\$1,995) from the film *Red River*, plus a sterling Longhorn buckle (\$395). Dial 800-823-8340 for more info.

GET A GRIP

Rabid fans of the Arena Football League—all eight of them—have noticed something different about this, the AFL's 18th season. The league has three new teams (go VooDoo!) and a new official ball, courtesy of Spalding (\$80). Like your favorite liquor bottle, the ball fits snugly in your hand. And it features blue crosshairs and stripes on off-white leather, like some haute couture pigskin. Don't sweat the April showers—this sucker's made to be hurled indoors. Pick one up at a sports shop near you.



SOME LIKE THEIR PENS HOT

Hef knew what he was doing when he put Marilyn Monroe on *PLAYBOY*'s first cover. Now Krone is releasing a luxury Monroe fountain pen (\$5,500) that features an actual sample of the late actress's red lipstick in the diamond-studded cap. Squint into the pen's gold-filigreed peephole and you'll find a photo of Norma Jean, luscious cleavage and all. The limited-edition pen (only 288 were made) is also engraved with her signature. Available at penperfecto.com.



DRINKS ARE SERVED

Unlike any other spirit on earth, vodka can be made anywhere out of anything—beets, wheat, grapes, potatoes, shoe leather. Emerald Vodka (\$25), new from Canada, is distilled from winter wheat and baby spring corn. Absolut's entry in the superpremium category, Level (\$30), is distilled in Sweden from winter wheat. Amazon Rainforest Vodka (\$30) comes from Brazil and is brewed from sugarcane; purchase a bottle and you save 5,000 feet of Amazon rain forest. All three are available in stores now.



WHAT A HAM!

If you're planning to bake an Easter ham, save your energy. Nueske's will send you a six- to seven-pound honey-glazed, apple-wood-smoked ham (\$60), and all you have to do is heat it up. Each hog is smoked for 24 hours (the same recipe since 1882), so the meat is more tender than one of our Playmates. Try their smoked and peppered bacon, too (\$21 for two pounds). Check the menu at nueske.com.



Next Month



OH COME, OH COME, EMMANUELLE!



THE PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: DEREK JETER IS GAME.



FASHION: GOIN' BACK TO CALI.



MISS MAY NEEDS SOME HELP WITH HER TOP.

FRIENDLY FIRE—TWO DAYS AFTER RETURNING HOME FROM THE FRONT LINES OF IRAQ, A U.S. INFANTRYMAN DISAPPEARED FROM HIS POST AT FORT BENNING IN GEORGIA AND WAS DECLARED AWOL. FOUR MONTHS LATER HE WAS FOUND DEAD, ALLEGEDLY KILLED BY MEMBERS OF HIS PLATOON AFTER A NIGHT AT A STRIP CLUB. NOW HIS FATHER WANTS TO KNOW WHY HE DIED. BY **MARK BOAL**

DEREK JETER—AT 29, THE YANKEES SHORTSTOP IS ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL ATHLETES IN ALL OF SPORTS. WE GO TO BAT WITH HIM ABOUT HIS FAMOUS EXES (**MARIAH CAREY, JORDANA BREWSTER**), HIS NOTORIOUS PARTYING HABITS, HIS HALL OF FAME FUTURE, BEING A ROLE MODEL AND WHY HE'S CONSTANTLY TRYING TO IMPROVE HIMSELF. *PLAYBOY INTERVIEW* BY **DIANE K. SHAH**

VIBRATORS—FOR 10 DAYS OUR PLUGGED-IN REPORTER TESTED EVERY BUZZING ORGIZMO AVAILABLE TO WOMAN. SHE EVEN WENT TO A VIBRATOR FACTORY TO SEE HOW THE THINGS ARE MADE. THEN SHE AND HER FRIENDS (HOW'S THIS FOR A VISUAL?) TURNED ON, TUNED IN AND PICKED THE BEST TOYS FOR YOU AND YOUR FAVORITE PARTNER. THE NEXT BIG O IS ON US. BY **ANNA DAVID**

NATASJA VERMEER—WHO HASN'T SPENT MANY A NIGHT WATCHING EMMANUELLE, THE EROTIC CABLE MOVIE GODDESS. EMBARK ON SKINEMATIC ADVENTURES TO BANGKOK, TO AFRICA, EVEN TO PRISON? MEET THE NEXT INCARNATION OF THE SEXY SCREEN SIREN. YES, SHE'S NAKED.

DRESSING THE PART—FIVE UP-AND-COMING ACTORS—**SAMUEL BALL, DWAYNE ADWAY, ALAN TUDYK, ALEXI YULISH** AND **MATTHEW CAREY**—MINGLE WITH LEADING LADIES (AND SHOW OFF THE LATEST CALI-COOL FASHION). YOU CAN SAY YOU KNEW THEM WHEN.

SEE YOU IN PARADISE—ONE MAN'S FANTASY—DATING THE BOSS'S DAUGHTER—TURNS INTO FANTASY ISLAND (MINUS TATTOO). WHY IS HE BEING FORCED TO SIT AROUND WAITING FOR THE PHONE TO RING ALL DAY? AND WHO ARE ALL THESE OTHER GUYS AFTER THE SAME WOMAN? FICTION BY **J. ROBERT LENNON**

PLUS: WE COUNT DOWN HOLLYWOOD'S HOTTEST SEX STARS, A PREFAB ROOFTOP BACHELOR PAD, **SCOTT TUROW** ON FIVE WAYS TO FIX THE DEATH PENALTY, THE WORLD'S BEST BARTENDERS, IN THE BEDROOM WITH CENTERFOLD **CHARLOTTE KEMP**, AND MISS MAY, **NICOLE WHITEHEAD**