

PLAYBOY

ENTERTAINMENT

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INTERVIEW MATT DAMON

"I played with dolls when I was a kid"

DEATH IN DETROIT

A family portrait

Time-traveling fiction by
T.C. BOYLE

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10 SEXIEST
BARTENDERS:
NUDE They make it hard to go home

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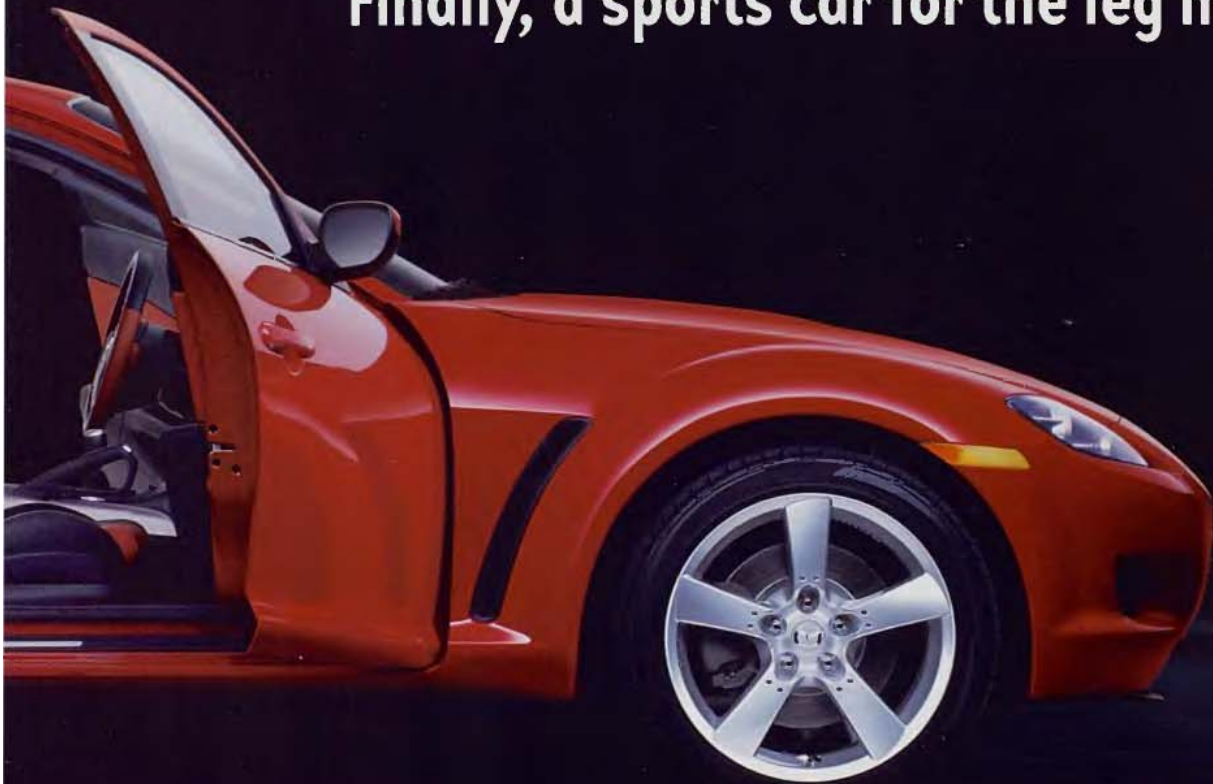


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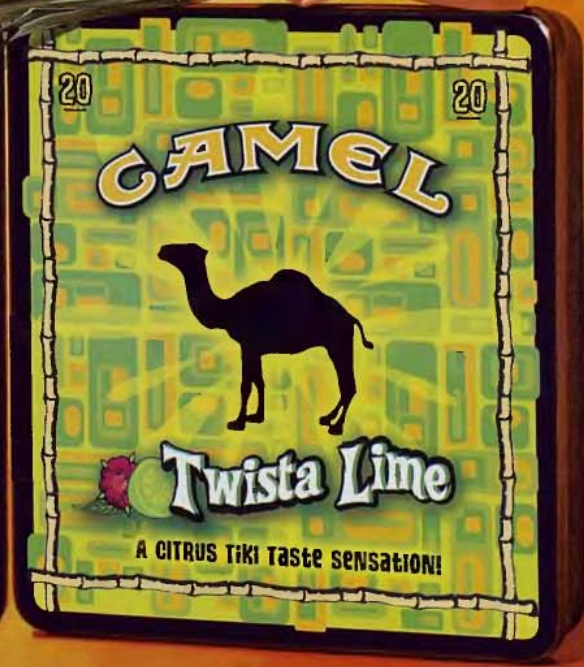
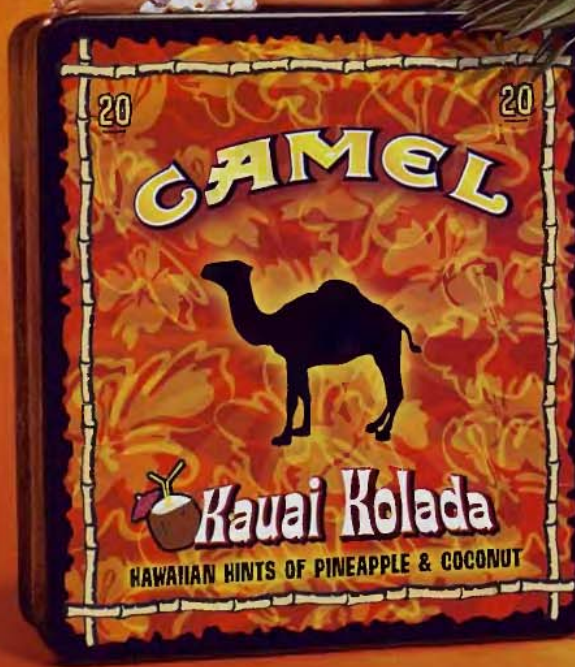
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Since her stint as the face—and chest—of Wonderbra, **Eva Herzigova** has been an instantly recognizable member of the world's elite modeling corps. Now bringing her star quality to a budding acting career, she's certainly a long way from the Czech Republic, where as a teen she was discovered soon after the fall of the Berlin Wall. "Eva has an amazing presence from the moment she walks into the studio," reports photographer **Mario Sorrenti**, who has also been working on a new fragrance commercial and a book detailing his latest exhibition. "Her personality is flirty, sweet and smart, and she makes things happen just by the way she moves and does things. She understood the image I was going for and helped create the photographs. As a result, the shoot was playful, erotic, relaxed and enchanting."



Frank Owen returns to our pages with *Detroit, Death City*, a meditation on crime in the Motor City and a tragedy that devastated his wife's family. "When I began writing this story," says Owen, "I was reminded of something Russell Simmons said to me while I was working on a piece for PLAYBOY about the death of Jam Master Jay: 'Young black men die all the time in the ghetto, and you in the media could care less.' For the most part that's been true. I started thinking about that in relation to Detroit, and that is how this piece came together."



"I've rarely done autobiographical stories," says **T.C. Boyle**, who wrote this month's fiction, *Up Against the Wall*. "Why bother when the world out there is so deliciously mad? But since I've said over and over that anything can make for a good story, why rule out my own small nuggets of experience? This piece grew out of my brooding over the period of the late 1960s while writing my previous novel, *Drop City*, and it contains at least some autobiographical elements. Aside from the tug of the storytelling, it may be interesting to those who know my work well, because it revisits characters and situations from the first story I ever published, 'The OD and Hepatitis Railroad or Bust.'"



Game Masters, by **John Bloom**, offers a rare glimpse at an important engine of casino growth—the eccentric inventors of new card games. "One problem I had is that as soon as these guys get excited enough to start really talking about their games, it becomes a blizzard of math, and I was always a terrible math student. They talk about tiny statistical nuances involving the house edge, the real odds, the practical odds, hands per hour, the win-per-table rate and the hold percentage, and you realize there are thousands of variations within a single game. It gave me a great deal of respect for what these guys do."

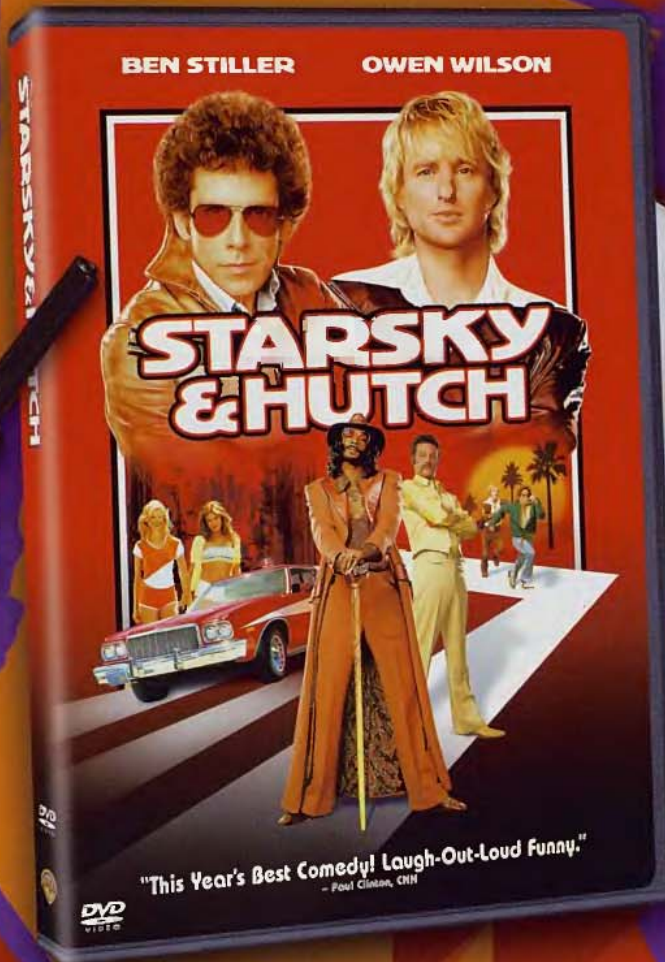


The illustration that accompanies *Game Masters* is by **Amy Guip**, whose photo-driven art has been used in ad campaigns by Hewlett-Packard and Negra Modelo. "The piece is based on a card design," she says. "Since there are two main characters in the story, I thought it would be interesting to do a card because it has a top and a bottom. It reflects the fact that there are two sides to the story: One person is successful, the other isn't. We put dollar signs where the numbers would be because it's about money."

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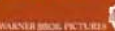
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PLAYBOY

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Widespread violence and poverty have turned the Motor City into an American horror story. Our reporter examines Detroit's sad tale from the perspective of one native family—his own. His father-in-law, a 1960s revolutionary, tried to reinvent the metropolis; his brother-in-law renounced black power for the lure of the streets.
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Casinos always need new games to entice jaded gamblers. And 7 Card Thrill and 2-2-1 are the newest card games being slotted into second-tier casinos in Las Vegas, Mississippi and Atlantic City. PLAYBOY tracks down their inventors—men who have staked their lives on the bet that the big casinos will adopt their games. Will they hit the jackpot? **BY JOHN BLOOM**
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cover story

In 1994 supermodel Eva Herzigova appeared on billboards across the world, modeling the Wonderbra. Soles of the push-up brassiere skyrocketed, and so did Eva's fame. Now she and photographer Mario Sorrenti open the gates to the Garden of Eva. Prepare to be tempted. Our Rabbit became unhooked at the sight of such beauty.



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HANGIN' WITH H&F



Out and about with Mr. Playboy: (1) Hef and his gorgeous girlfriends posing for *Paris Match* magazine. (2) With director Michael Bay at L.A.'s Bliss. (3) Centerfolds Stephanie Glasson and Hiromi Oshima with the party posse at Concorde. (4) Hef and Martin Landau at the Mansion. (5) Thora Birch and Gene Kelly's widow, Patricia. (6) Playmates Pennelope Jimenez, Marketa Janska, Divini Rae and Tiffany Taylor. (7) Carrie Stevens with NFL legend John Elway. (8) Miss May Nicole Whitehead. (9) With Alana Stewart at Spago. (10) Holly and Tia Carrere at the Playboy Golf Scramble. (11) At Playmate Victoria Fuller's pop art exhibit. (12) Congratulating members of the Super Bowl champion New England Patriots. (13) Ultimate fighter Tito Ortiz and Bunnies. (14) Everlast rocking the Mansion. (15) Dr. Garth Fisher and Brooke Burke. (16) Playmates Gillian Bonner and Shannon Stewart at Mr. Playboy's pad. (17) Rappers Method Man and Redman with the Original Man.

Hef's MARDI GRAS MANSION MASH



Who needs Bourbon Street when you've got Hef, Centerfolds and Hollywood celebrities at a raucous Mardi Gras party at Playboy Mansion West? (1) Holly and four American idols: Hef, Simon Cowell, Randy Jackson and Ryan Seacrest. (2) Sharon Lawrence of *NYPD Blue* and Jonathan Silverman. (3) Playboy's notorious painted ladies. (4) Cyber Girl Tiffany Lang and Antonio Sabato Jr. (5) Bush singer Gavin Rossdale, Christa Adams and Nels Van Patten. (6) Stephen Dorff and Kristy Henny. (7) Emily Gigot and Archie Kao. (8) Nancy Tyler Le, our pick for best costume. (9) Miss June Hiromi Oshima and PMOY Carmella DeCesare with Hef. (10) Owen Wilson and Sherrie Rose. (11) Hef and 50th Anniversary Playmate Colleen Shannon. (12) Steve Bing and Heidi Fleiss. (13) Lakers owner Jerry Buss with a bevy of beauties. (14) Julie Strain and Kevin Eastman getting feisty. (15) Shane West and Renee Sloan. (16) Lisa Ligon and Jack Osbourne.



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MILE-HIGH PLAYMATE

Pilot and Centerfold Nicole Whitehead is terminally gorgeous (*Ready for Takeoff*, May).

Daniel Dudych
Des Plaines, Illinois

My heart skipped a beat when I saw Nicole in those high heels and stockings. Oh, those gams!

Frank Lewis
Akron, Ohio

I'm glad to see an Alabama girl represent our state so wonderfully. The South has the most beautiful women.

Lance Brannon
Sylacauga, Alabama



Readers enjoy Miss Moy's wild ride.

Nicole was gorgeous when she appeared as Cyber Girl of the Week in January 2002, and she's stunning now. How could it be, though, that she went from five-foot-five with a 34-inch chest to five-foot-four with a 32-inch chest?

Bill Linn
Phoenix, Arizona
People shrink as they get older, Bill.

I live next to Orlando Executive Airport. I hope that's where Nicole flies out of, because I'd love for an unexpected wind to bring her parachuting onto my front lawn.

Roch Vaillancourt
Orlando, Florida

ANABOLIC ATHLETES

I found Jonathan Littman's inside account of the BALCO steroids bust (*Gunning for the Big Guy*, May) interesting and informative. However, I take issue with the contention that "govern-

ment agencies have never considered steroids a priority." I am a special agent with the FBI. From 1990 to 1993 the FBI, along with the FDA and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, ran an undercover sting that targeted steroids dealers. Operation Equine resulted in the successful prosecution of more than 70 people and the seizure of 10 million dosage units of anabolic steroids (40 percent of which were counterfeit). The case generated significant media coverage at the time.

Greg Stejskal
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Although steroids may play a role, the home run increase could also be attributed to denser wood used in bats, livelier balls, hitter-friendly parks and a shrinking strike zone. Steroids do not improve vision or hand-eye coordination. Players must still hit a round ball traveling more than 90 miles an hour with a round bat in a little under a second.

Pat Toms
Tucson, Arizona

That's true, but evidence suggests that many BALCO clients ingested everything from human growth hormone, which sharpens eyesight and increases flexibility and muscle mass, to modafinil, which enhances wakefulness and vigilance. These drugs can help a batter select a pitch, see it, hit it and, with the help of steroids, slam it over the fence.

GOOD VIBRATIONS

Thank you for bringing back smarty-pants sexpert Anna David to test all those vibrators (*Sex Pistols*, May). The most exciting stimulation devices are brains like David's.

Hank Hosfield
Portland, Oregon

The photo of David with the jackhammer is the sexiest I have ever seen.

Jim Poore
Carver, Massachusetts

David notes that sex toys are illegal in six states. Which are they?

Miranda Jones
Vermilion, Ohio

The situation isn't as definitive as we made it sound. According to our legal department, only Georgia, Mississippi and Texas still have active laws specifically banning the sale or promotion (but not the possession or use) of sex toys, but some state statutes elsewhere could be interpreted to target vibrators. In Texas cautious sellers require buyers to sign a release stating they will use the toy only for educational pur-

poses, which the authors of the book Sex Toys 101 quip makes it "easier to buy a gun than a vibrator." If you can't find a buzz locally, go online—few sites that sell sex toys appear to have restrictions on where they will ship.

Anna David is the best-looking reporter I've ever seen. Any chance of getting her to pose for a pictorial?

Sam Reeves
Fort Worth, Texas

We called Anna to invite her back to the studio, but her phone just rang and rang.

I've searched high and low for the Itty Bitty Bump-N-Grind. Help! I've just gone through my fifth Pearl Butterfly in 10 months.

Missy Blankenship
Harrisonburg, Virginia

You can buy the Itty Bitty at goodvibes.com. Readers also asked about the Pure Bliss. That's at mypleasure.com.

THE DEPTHS OF DEPP

Thank you for your *Playboy Interview* with Johnny Depp (May). It provided an intimate look at a great actor.

Laura Lee
Hollywood, Florida

Depp is one of a kind: He rambled on for eight pages but said nothing.

Milan Simonich
Mount Lebanon, Pennsylvania



The best actor of his generation?

Great interview with Depp. You should have given him more pages—and a silk bathrobe. He is one of only a handful of truly gifted actors working today.

Evan Santos
Adelanto, California



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Cranberry Juice to taste

Combine ingredients in a shaker, mix well and serve in martini glass. Garnish with a twist of lime.



Appleton Exotic Bird

1 1/2 oz. Appleton Estate V/X Jamaica Rum
3 oz. Pineapple Juice
3 oz. Ginger Ale
1/2 Lime
1 tsp. Sugar

Cut up lime and mix with pineapple juice, rum, sugar and ice in a shaker. Strain into martini glass, top with ginger ale and garnish with pineapple.



Appleton Jamaican Ecstasy

1 1/2 oz. Appleton Estate V/X Jamaica Rum
2 1/2 oz. Cranberry Juice
3 1/2 oz. Orange Juice

In a highball glass, pour rum and cranberry juice over ice. Slowly add orange juice and garnish with an orange wedge.

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Appleton Estate V/X Jamaica Rum, 40% Alc. by Vol.
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A HALF CENTURY OF HUMOR

I was weaned on PLAYBOY humor. The cartoons collected in *Playboy 50 Years: The Cartoons* were my sexual Dr. Seuss. This book is proof positive that nothing is funnier than sex. The design, color and printing are gorgeous. Thank you, Hef.

Olivia
Malibu, California

MILITARY MURDER

I'd always been told that many men who come back from war are lost souls. But reading about the Iraq veteran whose platoon mates killed him on American soil (*Death and Dishonor*, May) drove that home. We train men to kill, but do we train them in how to live after they've killed?

Allie Huffman
Raleigh, North Carolina

You stabbed our troops in the back by publishing this article during a time of war. Whose side are you on?

Steve Brandon
Phoenix, Arizona

Those soldiers dishonored themselves and their country.

Eric Brokaw
Airman First Class
Moody AFB, Georgia

BARBIE VS. PLAYMATES

Mattel has ended Barbie and Ken's romance after 43 years. While Barbie isn't much of a thrill to me, Playmates sure are. Which Centerfolds' measurements are closest to Barbie's?

Brian Kettleman
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

By our calculations, a Barbie of average Playmate height (five-foot-six) would be 32-19-29. At least four Playmates have measured a more expansive 32-22-32. The most recent is Jennifer Walcott, August 2001.

MODERN ICON

Bravo to Pam Anderson (*Inside Pam*, May). Her heart is a thousand times more beautiful than her body.

Jennifer Ulery
Cleveland, Ohio

Another Pam pictorial? Been there, done that.

Steven Carl
Boston, Massachusetts

Is there a goof in the Pam Anderson pictorial? She has a tattoo on her left breast in some photos but not in others.

Jim McMahan
Castro Valley, California

Good eye. It was one of many temporary tattoos painted on during the shoot. Are you applying for the job?

We were impressed with Pam's knowledge of hepatitis C. But it's a common misconception that if you feel fine, the disease isn't active. Hepatitis C is a nasty virus that causes slow, hard-core damage to the liver. Pam, who is in an early stage of the disease, uses herbal medicines. People should know, however, that 61 percent of hepatitis C patients treated with a combination of prescription drugs that includes the latest version of interferon are virus-free.

Heather Guerrero
David Erickson
Texas Liver Coalition
Houston, Texas

MASTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Thank you for the touching tribute to Helmut Newton (*Remembering Helmut Newton*, May). He and his photos will be sorely missed, especially by people like me who are faithful subscribers to both PLAYBOY and *Vogue*.

Kristen Westfall
New Orleans, Louisiana

MARTINI MAVEN

After investigating various combinations of firewater (*Raising the Bar*, May), I believe I have created the ultimate martini. My recipe is two parts Tanqueray No. 10 gin, two parts Grey Goose vodka and one part Noilly Prat vermouth. Shake briefly with crushed ice and serve in a chilled glass with the garnish of your choice.

Bart Newell
New Bern, North Carolina

Your recipe resembles a martini that James Bond ordered in the first 007 book, Casino Royale, and named the vesper. It's three measures of Gordon's gin, one measure of vodka and half a measure of Lillet blonde.



PLAYBOY makes a lasting impression.

PERMANENT FAN

On my birthday this year I had an artist begin work on a tattoo of Hef with the word PLAYBOY on my right arm. It took 10 hours and three appointments. The tattoo artist said he had never seen anything like it. Everyone I meet compliments the likeness.

Greg Pepper
Knoxville, Tennessee





RUM. ALL GROWN UP.



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babe of the month

Lisa Ligon

This vixen makes country-music videos sizzle

If you think hip-hop videos have cornered the market on sexy rump shakers, you haven't seen Lisa Ligon gyrating as the main attraction in two recent clips for country superstar Trace Adkins. In the hit "Hot Mama" she plays a harried housewife who, in the blink of the singer's eye, transforms into a sprinkler-soaked sex bomb. "I got to play this beautiful girl with perfect hair and boobs pushed up to my chin," says the former Dallas Cowboys cheerleader. "One time these guys came up to me in an airport and said,

"I got to play this beautiful girl with boobs pushed up to my chin."

'Oh my gosh, you're Hot Mama. We love you.' Anytime someone recognizes me it makes me feel special." Lisa's appearance in Adkins's video for "Chrome" is also a fan favorite, and while her moves leave no doubt as to her flexibility, her performance as an aficionado of fast machines was no stretch—her dance troupe, the Purrfect Angelz, regularly appears at biker events across the country. "Anybody who is having a rally books us," she says. "I had a Harley-Davidson Sportster with Fatboy fenders and a teardrop tank that I drove everywhere in Texas. I'm a biker chick at heart—100 percent." It follows that Lisa craves excitement in all areas of her life. "I need a guy who keeps me on my toes. I love the shock factor. I'm not one of those girls you have to watch what you say around."



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barometer

IT'S AUGUST AND...



...your bar isn't complete without the Brazilian wonder spirit *caçaça*. Pour a couple ounces over ice, add lime and sugar, and—olé!—you're drinking a caipirinha. Your cookout is now a Brazilian feast, and the women look like Gisele. Damn, these things are strong.

...you're flicking switches with kid gloves.

Don't be the fool whose George Foreman grill brings down the Northeastern power grid. If it happens this year, be prepared: Maglite key chain, old-style phone jacked into the wall and a Speed Stick in the medicine cabinet.



...you'd like to get high, so you're heading to Cleveland's Voinovich Park for the final stop of the Red Bull Flütag Challenge tour, on August 14. Flütag is a competition among kooks who've built flying machines. The catch? They don't work. Pack your helmet.

...you're on the lookout for psycho killers.

Gory events of Augusts past include Lizzie Borden's whacks, Charles Whitman's shooting spree, the Tate-LaBianca murders and the Menendez boys' parricide. It's not the heat, say pathologists. It's the humidity.



...you'd like to see world-class air guitar. Last year American David "C-Diddy" Jung fended off international competition to win the World Air Guitar Championship. To watch him defend, you'll have to be in Finland August 25 to 27—we're guessing this won't be televised.

track and feel



GREEKS GONE WILD

THE ANCIENT OLYMPICS WERE PART LUSTY ROMP, PART PAGAN DEBAUCH

The modern Olympics don't have the spice of the original Games. The following are a few tidbits we learned from Tony Perrottet's book *The Naked Olympics*:

- The Greeks' insistence on playing sports in the nude was considered bizarre by other cultures, but not just because of all the twigs and

berries flopping about. Nudity was seen as an equalizer: Sans finery, the rich were indistinguishable from the poor.

- To achieve the ideal bronzed stage presence, athletes were slathered in olive oil at all times. The oil was stored in 40-gallon amphorae, and each athlete went through about a third of a pint a day.

- Some athletes, believing sexual release was detrimental to one's performance, slept with a lead slab over their privates. It was thought that the metal would stave off nocturnal emissions.

- The Olympics were a bonanza of first-class hookers. In tents nicknamed *kineteria* ("fuck factories"), average patrons went for girls, often Corinthian, known as *pornai*. The upper class sampled the *hetaerae*, cultured working girls comparable to the geisha of Japan.

- A hardworking prostitute at the Olympics could make in five days what she'd otherwise earn in a year. Elite *hetaerae*, called the *megalomisthoi*, could make enough at a single Olympics to buy a house.

spot the bunny

OUR FAVORITE MARTIAN

SOMETHING'S BUNNY ON MARS

In March this Rabbit showed up on an image sent back by Mars Rover Opportunity. Is it a cry for help? Does Mars really, as proposed by the sci-fi classic, need women? Or is the red planet just another heavenly body vying for our attention? Neither, it seems. NASA eggheads concluded that the five-centimeter object actually came from the rover itself. That's our Rabbit—always breaking away.



occidental tourist



I'm Gonna Nurse You has the standard *bishoujo* characters: the demure girl, the sassy one, the silly one and the sex-crazed older woman. As usual, two of them are almost family—in this case, your foster mother and sister. Although it's mostly a nurse-fetish game, the creators have thrown in a horny nun to keep things interesting.

Transfer Student takes place in a "junior college," where the girls happen to wear high school uniforms. Here you ogle the coeds (who aren't in high school) until your "excite score" rises, then pleasure yourself in the bathroom while dreaming up elaborate fantasies involving the new girl, the sexy senior and your stepmother. Get too excited without release and you end up in the nurse's office with a bloody nose. Don't worry—she's hot too.

In *Tottemo Pheromone* you've gone to live with a woman named Silk, who turns out to be a naked witch from another dimension. When Silk's younger self appears in the living room, you need to send her home by collecting the sexual power stored in women's bodies. This, then, is your mission: Hump every chick you find, then return to young Silk and shoot her full of power.

In *Divi-Dead*, the masterpiece of Japanese adult games, you're sent to a boarding school to investigate strange student behavior. Soon you're waist deep in sorcery, violence and occult rituals. You dream of a girl being groped by an octopus. Ghosts want to have sex with you. And the busty nurse, God bless her, can't keep her clothes on.

LUST IN TRANSLATION

WHAT THE HELL KIND OF VIDEO GAMES ARE THE JAPANESE PLAYING?

In Japan, horny video gamers go for the popular *bishoujo*, or "pretty girl" games. The object of these choose-your-own-adventure-style cartoons, in which actual gameplay is minimal, is to seduce or coerce women into sex—hard-core, graphically illustrated sex.

zero hour



GENETICALLY MODIFIED DOUGHNUTS

BARGOERS GET LOOPY AFTER CLOSING TIME

Doughnuts—they're not just for breakfast anymore. In Portland, Oregon, two entrepreneurs are turning the cop's carb bomb into the ultimate late-night pick-me-up (and munchies cure). Veteran scenesters Tres Shannon and Kenneth Pogson are the proprietors of Voodoo Doughnuts, a hip doughnuteria that's open from 10 P.M. to 10 A.M. For reasons we don't understand, the feds reportedly busted one of the shop's offerings, ordering Voodoo to cease and desist producing a NyQuil-glazed doughnut filled with Pepto-Bismol and topped with crumbled cherry Tums. Still-available doughnuts include the Coffee-a-Go-Go, which is laced with

caffeine; the Dirt, covered with vanilla glaze and Oreo bits; and the Triple Chocolate Penetration. The eponymous Voodoo doughnut is doll-shaped and comes with "pins" (usually pretzel sticks)—perfect for exacting revenge on the hot blonde who passed on your closing-time advances. If you do manage to find a lady friend for the evening, feed her the none too subtle Cock and Balls, a phallic treat with her name written on the shaft. And then there's the Blazer, a spliff-shaped cruller that pays tribute to the NBA's Trail Blazers (several of whom have been arrested for marijuana possession). Expect the DEA to investigate.

NEW



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shrink rap



MARK MATCHO

PHYSICAL THERAPY
HONESTY CAMP MAKES EXECS TELL THE NUDE TRUTH

Who's a Freud of getting naked? Psychologist Brad Blanton thinks everyone should tell the truth, and he has a tough-love plan to make you quit your lying ways: Strip. Since 1986 he's been holding Radical Honesty seminars at his Virginia ranch, where for \$2,400 apiece a group of 16 liars embarks on an eight-day quest for honesty. "On the third day everyone gets naked, and individuals have to get in front of the group and tell their complete sexual history," Blanton explains. "What they're proud of, what they're ashamed of. Get people to be totally honest about the most intimate parts of their lives, and the rest is easy." The seminars have become popular with managers and executives who want a more honest workplace. Tony Robbins it ain't—just ask graduate Anne Bryer. "When I realized I had to get naked I started hyperventilating," she says. "I stood up with my knees trembling and my hands covering my breasts. I wept." The anxiety rarely lasts long, says Blanton. "People have trouble with it at first, but then you have trouble getting them to keep their clothes on."

super fly

FLIGHT OF FANTASY
NEXT TRIP, PACK A POCKETFUL OF TURBULENCE

Inspired by the exclusive order of jet-setters who've managed the airborne score, the Mile High Kit is a traveler's portable case of kink. Now you won't be caught unprepared on a plane, train or boat—like Batman with his utility belt, you'll be ready for action, be it a quickie with a stranger en route or a marathon of honeymoon lovemaking. Why settle for condoms in the Dopp kit when you can take her higher with a tickler, a pleasure ring and a battery-powered massager? Go to milehighkit.com.



employee of the month



HOT SHOT
L.A. SPARKS PLUGGER HEATHER
LA BELLA GOES ONE-ON-ONE

PLAYBOY: What's your job title?

HEATHER: I'm the director of tactical marketing for the Los Angeles Sparks basketball team. I develop business relationships and find ways to increase ticket sales and the fan base.

PLAYBOY: Have you been there long?

HEATHER: This is my third season with the Sparks. But I've been in the WNBA since 2000—I used to be a statistician for the Indiana Fever.

PLAYBOY: Are you a baller yourself?

HEATHER: I've been into sports my whole life. I'm from Indiana—Bobby Knight country—so I've always been a big basketball fan. I was rough; I played with all the boys. I'd go for the rebounds and throw elbows.

PLAYBOY: Ever bring the heat off the court?

HEATHER: I definitely use my athleticism in the bedroom. Let's just say I'm very aggressive on and off the court.



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.

R A W D A T A

SIGNIFICA, INSIGNIFICA, STATS AND FACTS

Book of Pointless Records



Most Consecutive Days Spent Surfing

10,407, by Californian Dale Webster, who on Sunday, February 29, 1976 vowed to surf every day until February 29 fell on a Sunday again—a span of **28 years**.

Energy Surplus

Men today consume on average **168** more calories a day than they did in the early 1970s. Women consume **335** more calories than they did then.

Excesscargot

The French eat **500 million** snails each year.



The Long Road Home

According to the Census Bureau, the time commuters spend traveling to work each day, by location:



Wichita
16.5
minutes

Tulsa
16.8
minutes

National average
24.4
minutes

Chicago
32.7
minutes

New York
38.4
minutes

The Bottom Five

Worst Olympic Performance by a Host Country

Home field advantage usually gives a nation an edge in the Games—the host country has led the medal count in nine of the 24 modern summer Olympics, including in 1904, when the U.S. won **86.4%** of the hardware because virtually nobody else showed up. This year's host, Greece, has been on an athletic skid for about a century and has a good shot at setting a new low.

20. Finland, 1952	22 of 447 medals	4.9%
21. Korea, 1988	33 of 711 medals	4.6%
22. Spain, 1992	22 of 771 medals	2.8%
23. Canada, 1976	11 of 594 medals	1.8%
24. Mexico, 1968	9 of 516 medals	1.7%

Worth the Weight

The typical D-cup breast weighs about **8 pounds**.



Price Check

Drive, He Said

\$58,000 Fare paid by Japanese actor Gitan Otsuro for a cab ride from Patagonia, Argentina to New York City.

Desperadas

The North American city with the highest female-to-male ratio, **5 to 1**, is Tehuan-tepec, Mexico.



Pop Dollar

Merchandise sales at Britney Spears's March 8 L.A. concert totaled **\$180,000**. In less than five years Britney-themed baby tees, posters and other merch have brought in more than **\$30 million**.

Bombay Sapphire Martini
by Vladimir Kagan

SAPPHIRE INSPIRED



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R E V I E W S

m o v i e s



movie of the month

[THE VILLAGE]

M. Night Shyamalan is back doing the twist

Just when too many summer horror thrillers turn up packing more laughs than scares, along comes *The Village*, the latest from director M. Night Shyamalan, famed for *The Sixth Sense* and *Signs*. The movie, set in an isolated Pennsylvania valley settlement in 1897, gets seriously creepy once villager Joaquin Phoenix upsets an uneasy truce with a race of mythical creatures that inhabit the surrounding forest. Why did Shyamalan head into the woods, dragging along with him cast members Adrien Brody, William Hurt and Sigourney Weaver? "Longing for a simpler life," he explains, "especially as mine gets more complicated with every movie, led me originally to write a love story like *Wuthering Heights*, set in a time when people said things without irony, and emotions were felt to the nth degree. Then I thought, What if there was something scary and terrible just beyond the little house on the prairie? Audiences come to my movies with expectations, like, "Wow, that last one was great—what have you come up with this time?" In this movie it's the idea that if there were newly discovered monsters in the ocean or forest, that would create a feeling of magic, a sense that the world is not as bland and black-and-white as we thought. It makes you feel like a kid." Make that a scared kid. (July 30)

"The world is not as black-and-white as we thought."

—Stephen Rebello

now showing

BUZZ

I, Robot

(Will Smith, Bridget Moynahan, Chi McBride) In this humans-versus-cyborgs action epic set in 2035 and based on the Isaac Asimov tales, robotophobic cop Smith and robot-behavior psychologist Moynahan uncover the rise of the machines while investigating a murder linked to a rebel cyborg.

Our call: We've been saturated with futuristic movies such as *Minority Report*, so unless director Alex Proyas amps up the smarts and the flashy hardware, Asimov fans may revolt.



Catwoman

(Halle Berry, Sharon Stone, Lambert Wilson, Benjamin Bratt) Berry does double duty in this *Batman* one-off, playing a neurotic graphic designer bumped off by the evil owners (Stone and Wilson) of a cosmetics firm, only to be reincarnated as a sexy masked avenger.

Our call: We can't forget Michelle Pfeiffer's raging Catwoman in *Batman Returns*, and we're hoping Berry's superheroine will be the cat's meow. So why are we smelling kitty litter?



Collateral

(Tom Cruise, Jamie Foxx, Mark Ruffalo) Cruise makes an all-out effort to go badass in this thriller about a twisted hit man who forces Foxx, an L.A. cabbie and failed sitcom writer, to drive him from kill to kill. The screws tighten when Foxx tries to stop the carnage while cop Ruffalo closes in on Cruise.

Our call: Our money's on *The Insider* director Michael Mann to make this one a tense, scary ride and help put Cruise back in the driver's seat after a couple of recent near misses.



Alien vs. Predator

(Sanaa Lathan, Raoul Bova, Lance Henriksen) Archaeologists, led by greedy billionaire Henriksen, get way more than they bargained for while drilling into the ruins of ancient temples below Antarctica and find themselves serving as lunch meat for two of the baddest species in creature-feature history.

Our call: Our fingers are crossed that this Sigourney Weaver and Arnold Schwarzenegger-free prequel isn't another *Freddy vs. Jason*. Is it too much to ask that we get scared witless?



critical mass

[THE RACE TO YOUR DVD PLAYER]

Films are moving from screen to disc faster than ever before

That stars turned up at a Playboy Mansion premiere party for Quentin Tarantino's *Kill Bill* isn't surprising. What may seem odd is that they were celebrating the DVD release of *Vol. 1* while the movie was still playing in theaters. Welcome to the new reality of the movie business: DVDs, once the Rodney Dangerfield of the studio machine, have become the most important part of a film's release cycle.

Back in the old days of Blockbuster and Hollywood Video, patient fans would wait up to nine months after a movie left theaters to rent—not buy—a videotape. Now a hit such as *Big Fish* shows up on DVD a mere four months after it opens in theaters. *Hellboy* appeared on the big screen in April; by July it was for sale on DVD at Best Buy, and *The Alamo* will likely break that speed record.

"You used to put a movie on 1,000 screens and leave it there for two months," says New Line Home Entertainment president Stephen Einhorn. "Now you get two or three weeks on 3,000 screens. The benefit is that you can come out much earlier with a DVD without infringing on the theatrical leg. The closer you are, the more you can take advantage of the audience awareness that comes with the \$50 million that studios often pay to market theatrical releases."

The early availability of DVDs has resulted in significant profits and turned out to be a promotional boon. Harvey Weinstein's decision to issue *Kill Bill* in two parts was widely scorned. But by releasing *Vol. 1* on

disc three days before the second installment opened in theaters, Weinstein hit pay dirt. He sold \$47 million in DVDs the first week and boosted *Vol. 2*'s opening-weekend box office to \$25 million. (And happy studios get to keep 80 percent of the sale price of a DVD, compared with 50 percent of theatrical grosses.)



Perhaps no film benefited from DVDs more than *Seabiscuit*, a summer release that wound up with a best picture nomination partly because of a well-marketed DVD launch.

"We were up against *Lord of the Rings*, *Master and Commander* and others that had just been in theaters and spending millions of dollars," says director Gary Ross. "Without our DVD I think we would have been completely forgotten." —Michael Fleming

art house



Garden State

Scrubs star Zach Braff pulls triple duty as a writer, director and leading man with this tale of an aspiring actor who returns to New Jersey from L.A. for his mother's funeral and comes to terms with his past. It isn't the most original movie, but Braff's creativity and fine supporting work by Natalie Portman make most of the flaws forgivable. —Andrew Johnston

SCORE CARD

Capsule close-ups of recent films
By Leonard Maltin

SEEING OTHER PEOPLE Jay Mohr and Julianne Nicholson star in a fresh, funny comedy about a couple who have lived in harmony for five years. Now that they're about to get married, she decides they ought to sleep with other people first. ★★★

TROY Brad Pitt stars as Achilles in Wolfgang Petersen's epic dramatization of Homer's *Iliad*. Eric Bana is great as Hector, Peter O'Toole is majestic as Priam, and the battle scenes are terrific. Diane Kruger makes a beautiful Helen of Troy. ★★★½

THE DOOR IN THE FLOOR Jeff Bridges and his on-screen wife, Kim Basinger, are reeling from a family tragedy when a young man comes to work as an assistant. He soon learns that his duties extend beyond ordinary chores to helping both wounded parties. ★★★

DEAR FRANKIE A single mother has raised her son to believe that his dad is off at sea, someday to return. Now she has to find someone to pose as the father just for a day. A sweet, well-observed film starring the gifted Emily Mortimer. ★★★

BRIGHT YOUNG THINGS British actor Stephen Fry makes his directorial debut with this adaptation of Evelyn Waugh's *Vile Bodies*, a caustic look at hedonism, which bears more than a passing resemblance to our current culture of celebrity. ★★★

MARIA FULL OF GRACE Dissatisfied with her life in Colombia, a teenage girl takes a job as a mule smuggling drugs into the U.S., little dreaming what lies in store. It's heartbreakingly real. No wonder it was a hit at this year's Sundance Festival. ★★★½

COFFEE AND CIGARETTES A collection of black-and-white shorts by Jim Jarmusch about unlikely encounters in coffeehouses—some of it is deadeningly dull, some of it quite fun. With Cate Blanchett (in a dual role), Bill Murray, Tom Waits and Steve Buscemi, it picks up after a slow start. ★★★

THE BEST OF YOUTH Talk about blockbusters: This Italian import runs six hours (shown in two parts), but the time slips by as we become engrossed in the lives of a family experiencing the social changes of the past four decades. These characters truly live and breathe. ★★★½

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

dvd of the month

[STARSKY & HUTCH]

Stiller and Wilson breathe some laughs into a camp classic

Ben Stiller and Owen Wilson cement their status as a classic comedy duo in this big-screen spin on the 1970s TV action hit, a concept-driven pop-culture vehicle that manages to roll where similar retreads go flat. Plotwise it's little more than a special episode of the original show, as odd-couple cops Stiller and Wilson chase after cocaine kingpin Vince Vaughn, roaring through the Bay City streets in Starksy's cherry-red Gran Torino. Like the Stiller-Wilson hit *Zoolander*, *Starsky & Hutch* plays out like a series of sketches, and the funny bits pile up. Director Todd Phillips coaxes a goofy cameo from Will Ferrell as a hot-for-Hutch con, helps Snoop Dogg find his inner Huggy Bear—who appears to be baked—and displays the charms of Carmen Electra and Brande Roderick as cheerleaders. **Extras:** A fair bunch, including deleted scenes, commentary by Phillips, and a Snoop Dogg-hosted segment titled "Fashion Fa Shizzle Wit Huggy Bizzle." **☆☆☆** —Gregory P. Fagan



THE LADYKILLERS (2004) Five goofball burglars dig a tunnel into a Mississippi casino's counting room from a nearby boardinghouse. When the little old landlady (Irma P. Hall) catches them red-handed, they agree she has to go. The plot from the 1955 British classic endures in this minor gem from Ethan and Joel Coen. Instead of Alec Guinness, though, we get the always likable Tom Hanks drawing his way over the top as the ringleader, professor Goldthwait Higginson Dorr III.

It's a Colonel Sanders-meets-Foghorn Leghorn performance that didn't work on the big screen but will attain a legend all its own via DVD replays. **Extras:** No Coen commentary, but it's otherwise generous, including a "Combat Theater Master Class" with the ass-whopping Ms. Hall. **☆☆** —G.F.



KILL BILL VOL. 2 (2004) Quentin Tarantino manages to deliver more in *Vol. 2* than viewers of *Vol. 1* may expect. The director trades a bit of viscera for a lot more verbiage and adds context to the Bride's vengeance-driven tear through her hit list. *Vol. 2* is still an eye-popping delight—literally, at one gooey point. But Uma Thurman's mission of mercilessness gathers steam as she deals with Budd (Michael Madsen), Elle Driver (Daryl Hannah) and Bill (David Carradine), who are all more interesting than *Vol. 1*'s victims. **Extras:** Not exactly killer—just a making-of featurette and a deleted scene. Miramax is clearly holding back for the complete *Kill Bill* collection. **☆☆☆** —G.F.



HELLBOY (2004) He's big, red and horny, and he's one hell of a good time. *Hellboy* is so faithful to its comic book origins, you almost feel you should be turning pages while you watch it. But director Guillermo del Toro does it for you, composing each frame with graphic-novel noir touches that add depth to the delirium. Ron Perlman is ideal as the cigar-chomping Beast to Selma Blair's troubled Beauty, with real acting going on in the eyes and voice. Still need a plot? Okay, Rasputin rises from the dead and brings slimy monsters back from "the other side." **Extras:** Two discs, lots of commentary and behind-the-scenes details; come Christmas, look for a hellish three-disc special edition. **☆☆☆**



—Buzz McClain

tease frame



Oh that every woman could age as elegantly as long-limbed **Sigourney Weaver**. She looks as if she even smells good—like French skin cream and faint cologne. And she seems to be someone we could, you know, talk to, because she's smart and everything. We get to see her anew this month in M. Night Shyamalan's *The Village*, but we keep a copy of 1986's *Half Moon Street* handy if for no other reason than the memorable scene in which Weaver, playing a foreign-affairs academician turned escort, rides an exercise bike topless.

the library

The Manchurian Candidate

Why would Jonathan Demme remake John Frankenheimer's 1962 masterpiece? Had he been hypnotized? Did he think he could improve on this candidate for the best-ever political satire and espionage thriller? Snap out of it! Yeah, it was filmed in black-and-white, but that's part of its charm, and this DVD from MGM includes an interview about the movie with the Chairman himself, star Frank Sinatra. It doesn't get much cooler than that.



cd of the month

[THE HONG KONG * ROCK THE FACES]

What's New York about the New York scene?

Over the past few years people have talked about the New York music scene as if it were homogeneous—and as if it had something identifiably New York about it. But since the retro-fixated Strokes exhumed the likes of Television, Johnny Thunders and Richard Hell, most of the scene's big bands—the Walkmen, Interpol, the Rapture, the Yeah Yeah Yeahs—have pumped out such disparate sounds that they can be linked only by their zip codes. The Hong Kong, however, takes the Strokes' approach to the city's musical history: The band fixes on a New York City predecessor—in this case, Blondie—and pays homage. And like the Strokes, the Hong Kong does a great job. Catherine Culpepper sings over a new-wave pulse that is, like the best of Blondie's work, tight, understated and anthemic. The band proves there is nothing wrong with wearing your heart on your sleeve—as long as it's a heart of glass. (*Etherdrag*) **YYY½** —*Timothy Mohr*



TOMMY STINSON • Village Gorilla Head Stinson has spent the better part of his career playing alongside revered rock drama kings (Paul Westerberg in the Replacements, Axl Rose in Guns n' Roses). If he were ever to write a memoir, it would have plenty of muck. For now we're lucky to have Stinson's first solo record, an ambitious, soulful outpouring that's more Replacements than G n' Fuckin' R. Beginning and ending with tearjerkers ("Without a View" and "Someday"), it brims with emotion. Guests include Josh Freese and Dizzy Reed. And because Stinson made it with his own money before shopping it to labels, it's one of the most genuine things we've heard all year. (*Sanctuary*) **YYY**—*Alison Prato*



THE MOONEY SUZUKI
Alive & Amplified

Garage rockers around the world nearly jumped out of their leather jackets when the Mooney Suzuki announced that the Matrix, the production team behind Avril Lavigne and Hilary Duff, would work on *Alive & Amplified*. The pop spit shine cleared a bit of the fuzz out of the guitars and lifted singer Sammy James Jr.'s vocals out of the gutter, but the band's riffs are still gritty, especially on "Primitive Condition" and the Kiss-style rocker "New York Girls." Only when they recycle the riff from "Legal High" for the final track, "Love Bus," do we start to wonder what they're trying to pull. (*Columbia*) **YYY** —*Jason Buhrmester*



SLUM VILLAGE

Detroit Deli (A Taste of Detroit)

Hip-hop has been in a rut for the past several years. With few exceptions it has been either mind-numbingly reiterative or naively idealistic. Slum Village has always been different. Socially conscious without being moralistic or stupid, these Motor City rappers owe more to Kanye West than they do to Eminem. Young R.J.'s production captures some of Detroit's dusty soul groove, but as always with Slum Village, the lyrics carry the

day. Astute and original, the writing avoids most hip-hop clichés while dealing with real concerns. This is a damn good CD as a whole, but the best track is "Reunion," with former member Jay Dee. Slum Village is clearly a better band with Jay. Why not go all out with a full reunion? (*Capitol*) **YYY** —*Leopold Froehlich*



jacki-o turns up the heat

Jacki-O (born Angela Kohn) first turned our heads with her provocative single "Pussy (Real Good)." Her sharp debut album, *Poe Little Rich Girl*, sets a new standard for female hip-hop.

PLAYBOY: What would your namesake, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, have thought of "Pussy"?

JACKI-O: Oh God, a woman like that? I'm sure she thought her pussy was good, too. She got Onassis, the richest man, so she had to be doing her thing. Every woman better think her pussy is good.

PLAYBOY: So sex is kind of important?

JACKI-O: I love sex. Sex is like 80 percent of a relationship. Go where the sex is good. Don't hold back.

PLAYBOY: Your album is so personal. Are you giving too much away?

JACKI-O: I give just enough, never everything. It's like when you're on a first date. Give him everything and he may not come back. Show a little thigh, a little cleavage, then on the next date he may get the blow job.

PLAYBOY: Is it hard being a girl in rap?

JACKI-O: I love it. There are 3 billion men and not many females. At first you're like, How do I get respect? Focus and work hard, that's how.

PLAYBOY: Are you into drugs?

JACKI-O: Nothing hard-core. I like to party. I like to drink. I've smoked a little weed before, yeah.

PLAYBOY: Who else would you like to work with?

JACKI-O: Dr. Dre, Jay-Z—the greats. I mean, I *am* working with the greats, but a girl ain't ever satisfied. —*A.P.*



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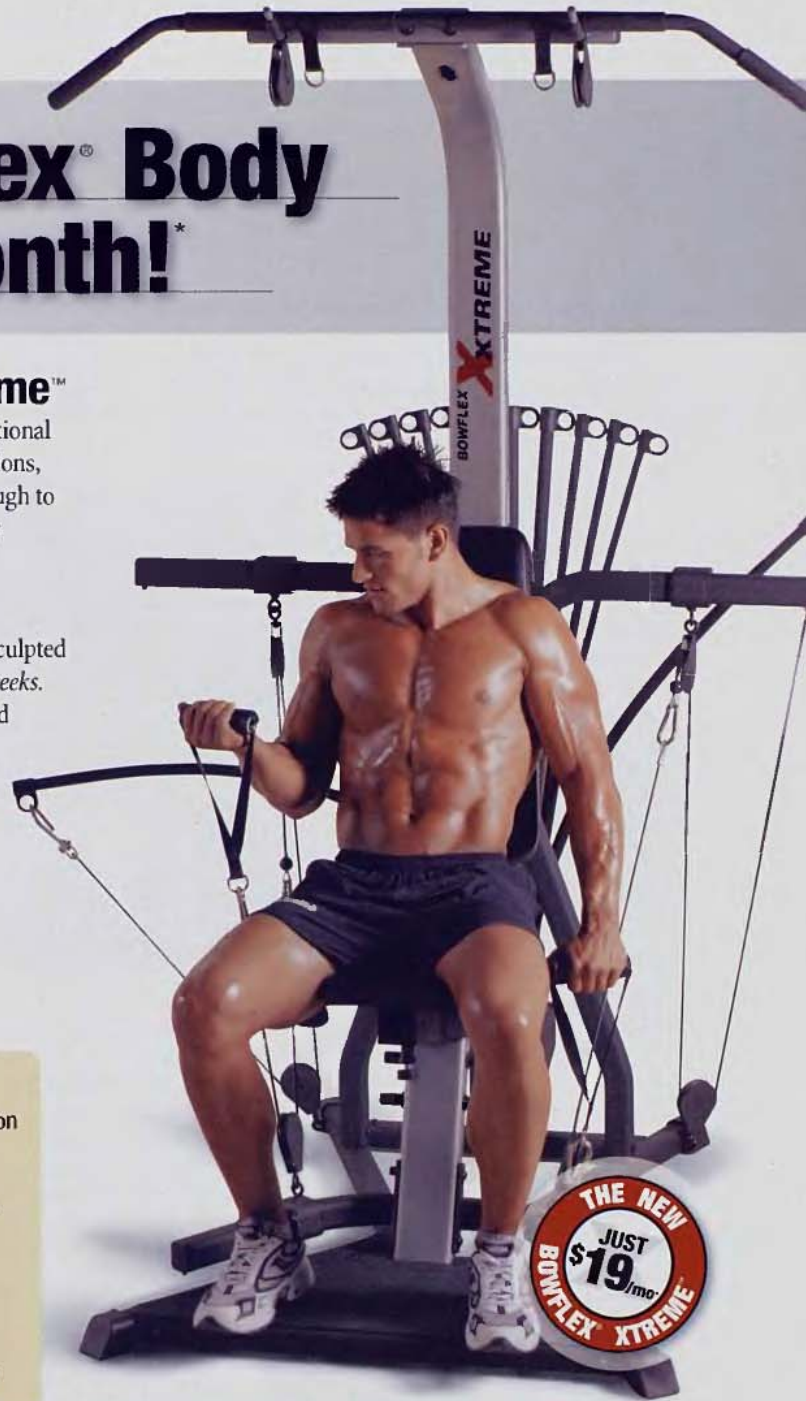
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game of the month

[SPIDER-MAN 2]

Everyone's favorite swinger spins a tangled web in his second outing

As fun as it is to watch Sam Raimi and his effects wizards bring Spidey to life on the big screen, nothing beats slipping on the spandex yourself. The first movie had a decent game tie-in, but this time you get to do the Spidey thing *Grand Theft Auto*-style, and the results are spectacular. The new *Spider-Man 2* (Activision, PS2, Xbox, GameCube) puts you in control of the game's pace. Depending on your mood, you can fight petty crime on the streets (save Granny from that purse snatcher); tackle bigger foes such as Mysterio, Black Cat and Dr. Octopus; or take a sightseeing trip atop a taxi or swinging from a moving helicopter. Accurate web slinging lets you swoop down for street-hugging intersection rushes, while flawless controls and a detailed fighting system make pummeling villains a treat. Open gameplay and more than 100 side missions provide near endless replay value. All in all, it's a much larger adventure than the movie. **★★★★** —John Gaudiosi



CRIMSON TEARS (Capcom, PS2) The only thing better than scantily clad ass-kicking anime femmes from the future is being in control of their scantily clad asses. This sci-fi brawler allows you to play as sword-wielding Amber, bomb-happy Kadie or a gun-toting dude named Tokio to put down a host of weird bad guys. Cel-shaded graphics and slick CG movie sequences push the story along, while the role-playing elements add replayability to this sexy, stylized tale. **★★★**
—Marc Saltzman



ATHENS 2004 (989 Sports, PS2) Less video game than virtual workout, this official Olympics sim proves that the clean and jerk isn't just for frustrated teens. International superstars compete in more than 25 events; if watching them run, jump and lift is inspirational, you can grab a dance mat and court real-life heatstroke. While it's an enjoyable way to get into the Games, some repetitious play may make you consider trying an actual discus throw. **★★**
—Scott Steinberg



WORLD OF WARCRAFT (Blizzard Entertainment, PC, Mac) Between the orcs and the dorks, the first massively multiplayer take on Blizzard's best-selling real-time strategy franchise is full of fantasy role-playing clichés. This time around, the emphasis is on adventure over strategy as you battle and quest your way through the world of Azeroth with thousands of others online. The real surprise? Excellent execution makes the sword-and-sorcery antics actually seem pretty damn cool. **★★★★**
—S.S.



TERMINATOR 3: THE REDEMPTION (Atari, Xbox, PS2, GameCube) Redemption indeed. Atari has twice made a mess of the *Terminator* games, but in this third effort, being a cyborg killing machine is as much fun as we always knew it could be. Running, driving and flying levels keep the time-traveling story moving, and blasting at Hunter Killers from the back of a pickup truck while steering through the wasteland of 2032 is exactly the kind of thrill that's missing from the first two games. **★★★**
—J.G.



pixel profile

[JAIL TIME]

In *Riddick*, Xzibit puts death row on lockdown



Hip-hop honcho Xzibit takes a break from albums and concerts to play sadistic prison guard Abbott in the new game *The Chronicles of Riddick: Escape From Butcher Bay* (Vivendi, Xbox). We caught up with him for a tour of what it's like deep inside death row:

Q: What's your connection to Abbott?

A: We're both badasses. He's the warden who keeps all the dudes in check and puts the strong-arm on them. It's just like me and the rap game.

Q: What qualifies you to play such a mean motherfucker?

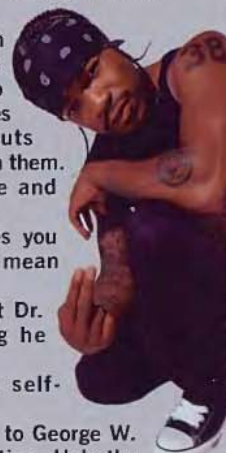
A: Shit, I taught Dr. Evil everything he knows.

Q: So this is a self-portrait?

A: Nah. I looked to George W. Bush for inspiration. He's the most evil dude I know.

Q: Any advice for folks who are keen on ending your reign of terror?

A: Stock up on ammo before trying. And keep moving—you better hope I don't get my hands on you first. —S.S.



wired

Nokia N-Gage QD Game Deck (\$99 with contract, \$179 without). Nokia's original N-Gage was laughably ill-conceived, but its sequel is no prank caller. Improvements to the hybrid mobile phone and gaming system include enhanced controls, a brighter screen, longer battery life, easier cartridge loading and a simplified multi-player setup. Reach out and ream someone today. —S.S.

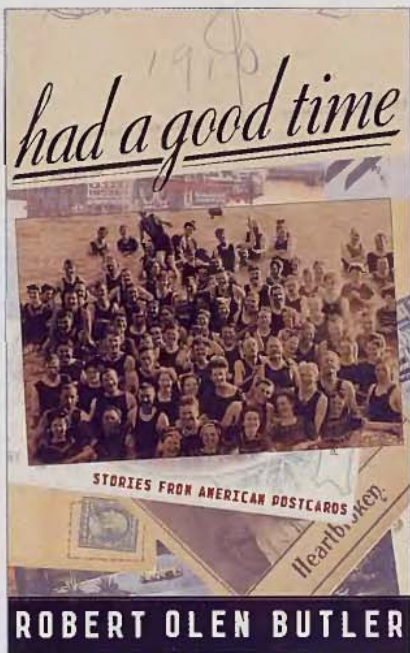


book of the month

[HAD A GOOD TIME • ROBERT OLEN BUTLER]

Postcards tell forgotten tales

This series of short stories by the Pulitzer Prize-winning author was inspired by his collection of American postcards from the early 20th century. The 15 tales run alongside reproductions of the postcards, which feature biplanes, women in lawn dresses, couples canoodling on benches and a hotel for visitors who have "more money than brains." Each image recalls a nation filled with genteel optimism about its future despite tuberculosis and trench warfare. Butler takes the sometimes cryptic, sometimes painful messages on the back of the cards and dreams up stories about the people who wrote them: a mother crossing the Atlantic to visit her soldier son, an ironworker dating a girl with a wooden leg, a wife who fears she'll never see her dying husband again, an immigrant overjoyed to arrive in America. Sincere and un-sentimental, these stories show that while America's face has changed, its spirit hasn't. (Grove) ★★★½—*Jessica Riddle*



MY OLD MAN • Amy Sohn

PLAYBOY contributor Sohn also writes provocative columns for *New York* magazine about a familiar topic: sex and the city. Her first novel, *Run Catch Kiss*, was smart and kinky—the literary equivalent of Manolo Blahnik stilettos. In *My Old Man*, Sohn delves into the world of Rachel, a rabbinical-school dropout who suffers a "quarter-life crisis" after a man she counseled dies. Rachel gets a job as a bartender, begins meeting an older Christian man

for afternoon trysts and suspects her father is having his own affair as her mother goes through menopause. Both writer and protagonist are attractive, self-deprecating broads from Brooklyn, and Sohn tells the story with humor and universal appeal. Can an HBO series be far behind? (Simon & Schuster) ★★★ —*Alison Prato*



NUDITY • Ruth Barcan

Don't expect to find steamy stories or lurid pictures in this thoroughly researched look at one of society's more volatile issues. Nudity has both good and bad connotations. Taking a shower without clothes is normal, but sunbathing naked is typically illegal. Babies in diapers are cute, but old people in diapers are repugnant. And while some people detest images of naked women, others find them empowering. Despite Barcan's interviews with strippers and morticians, the book retains its scholarly tone. And though the academic references don't exactly make for beach reading, the book may make you feel smarter the next time you wear your Speedo. (St. Martin's) ★★ —*Emily Little*



I, FATTY • Jerry Stahl

Most people believe that comedian Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle raped and smothered Virginia Rappe to death in a hotel room in 1921. This fictional memoir aims to set the record straight. According to Stahl, Arbuckle suffered from erectile dysfunction and was merely trying to wake up a passed-out Rappe by holding a champagne bottle against her vulva. After three trials a jury finally believed him. But it was too late. Fatty was ruined, and he had developed a heroin habit. If you can look past Stahl's annoying turns of phrase (such as "The St. Francis was la cramp de la cramp of hotels"), you'll feel nothing but sympathy for Hollywood's first comic fat man. (Bloomsbury) ★★★ —*Patty Lambert*



the erotic eye



WOMEN • Stefan May

Can't wait for the next issue of *PLAYBOY* to arrive? This collection of erotic black-and-white photographs of naked women will help fill your time. As he proved in his 2002 book, *Couples*, photographer May excels at capturing the beauty and grace of the female form. The best images in this book are those in which the models weren't obviously posed by the photographer but seem to have been candidly snapped as they brush their hair, laugh with one another or swim in a lake. (TeNeues) ★★★ —*P.L.*



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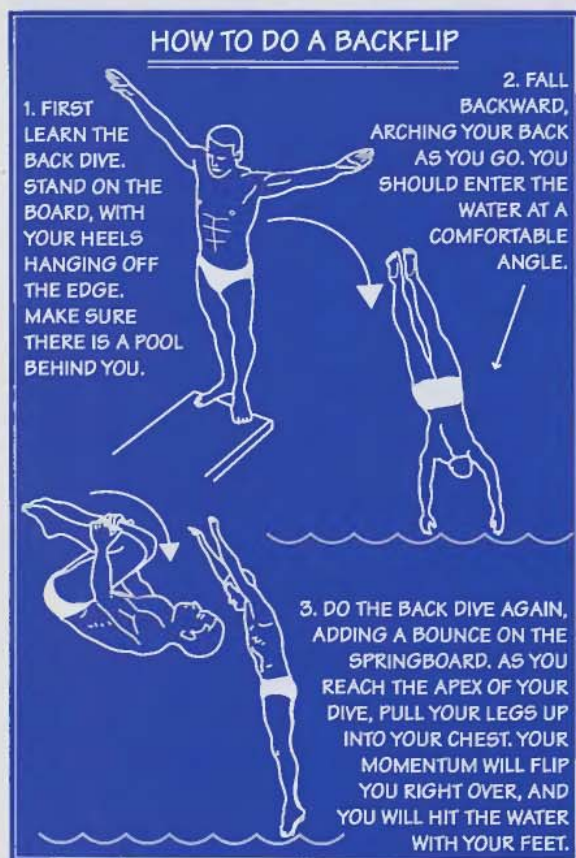
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Moving Pictures

Four years ago MP3 players changed the way we buy, record and listen to music. The players coming out this fall don't stop with tunes: LCD screens are sloped across their faces so you can entertain yourself with TV shows, video clips and movies while you're stuck in rush hour traffic. These Personal Video Players fit snugly in a briefcase, allowing your entertainment (our female friend above, for example) to go where you go. Downloading works the same as on an MP3 player: Plug it into your computer and let the files flow. (Some also let you record directly from TV or DVD.) In the future, partnerships with content companies will make it easier for you to choose from a library of hot stuff. From left: iRiver's PMP-120 (\$500, iriver.com) comes with 20 gigabytes of memory onboard, enough for 35 hours of video or 300 hours of audio tracks; Creative's Zen Portable Media Center (\$500, creative.com) runs on Microsoft's Media Center software and also has 20 gigs; the Archos AV380 (\$800, orchos.com), which debuted last fall, is the granddaddy of the bunch. This beauty has 80 gigs of memory, with 20- and 40-gig versions also available. All these come with a 3.5-inch screen and a metric ton of tech cred.



HOW TO DO A BACKFLIP

1. FIRST LEARN THE BACK DIVE. STAND ON THE BOARD, WITH YOUR HEELS HANGING OFF THE EDGE. MAKE SURE THERE IS A POOL BEHIND YOU.

2. FALL BACKWARD, ARCHING YOUR BACK AS YOU GO. YOU SHOULD ENTER THE WATER AT A COMFORTABLE ANGLE.

3. DO THE BACK DIVE AGAIN, ADDING A BOUNCE ON THE SPRINGBOARD. AS YOU REACH THE APEX OF YOUR DIVE, PULL YOUR LEGS UP INTO YOUR CHEST. YOUR MOMENTUM WILL FLIP YOU RIGHT OVER, AND YOU WILL HIT THE WATER WITH YOUR FEET.

A Cut Above the Rest

The way we see it, if you have to scrape the stubble off your face every morning, you might as well make an event out of it. You'll find that nothing wakes you up faster than a straight razor at your throat. Dovo's Bergischer Lowe (\$140, classicshaving.com) is an heirloom in the making, with a buffalo-horn handle and hand-sharpened Swedish steel. The back of the blade is gold-plated, and the front is etched with a gold-plated coat of arms. The Ceci Est un Pipe Pure Badger Shave Brush from eShave (\$87, eshave.com) is every bit a piece of sculpture. The brush is stainless steel with real badger hair. Use it to cool your face with Mario Badescu's Shaving Cream (\$20, mariobadescu.com), which may be the slickest substance on earth. Badescu also has you covered before and after. The deep-blue pre shave conditioner (\$24) softens hairs and reduces irritation, and the luxe aftershave moisturizer (\$14) will shave 10 years off your skin. And she'll love the scent of the moisturizer, which is lightly laced with lavender extract.



MANTRACK



Got Wood?

Look closely at the speaker cones on JVC's gorgeous EX-A1 shelf system (\$550, jvc.com). They're made of wood. Why? For the same reason guitars and violins are made of the stuff: It provides quick sound propagation and wide-frequency response. Techs have been trying to create wooden speaker cones for decades but have been stymied by wood's tendency to crack. Toshikatsu Kuwahata, one of JVC's designers, worked on the problem for 20 years before having the breakthrough idea of soaking the wood in sake first—bizarre but effective. The speakers are paired with a fantastic digital amp and integrated CD and DVD Audio. It all adds up to a sound that's warmer and cleaner than it has any business being at this price or size.

Overnight Sensation

No other city in the world is quite like Monte Carlo—home to the most famous Grand Prix race, the most luxurious casino ever built and some of Europe's longest legs. The Renaissance-era roads are just wide enough to accommodate the parade of mint Ferraris. But don't drive too far or you'll end up in the sapphire Mediterranean. The big news this summer: the renovated and recently reopened Hotel Metropole, a 146-room pleasure palace. Master French chef Joël Robuchon created the hotel restaurant's menu, and designer Jacques Garcia dreamed up the interior. Still not sold? Book the 1,300-square-foot penthouse and you can dine on the terrace overlooking Casino Square (view pictured below). Rooms start at \$422 a night, the penthouse at \$4,450 a night.



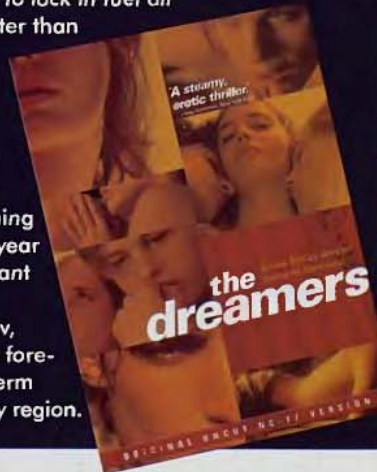
Clothesline: Mark Burnett

Burnett is so busy cranking out hit reality shows—he's the mastermind behind *Survivor*, *The Restaurant*, *The Apprentice* and *The Casino*—it's hard to believe he has time to shop. But shop he does. "All British guys like to buy clothes," he insists. "They're different from Americans in that way. In the States I'm called a metrosexual, but at home I'm just a normal person. I prefer to shop in New York City, specifically in the West Village. And I know what I like. I basically wear two different outfits. There's my casual one, which consists of my True Religion jeans with Proda shoes, my old Versace blazer and a striped Paul Smith shirt. Then there's my dressy outfit, which is a suit by Dolce & Gabbano or Paul Smith. I make the best boyfriend because I love to shop." Which begs the question: Whose boyfriend is he these days? "Roma Downey's. We're cut from the same cloth. We think alike. And guess what: We both like to shop."



The Perfect Time...

- **To rent a video:** On Tuesdays at around one P.M. Most new films are released that day, so you'll have a good shot at beating the crowd to the newest flicks. Plus, you can take advantage of the midweek deals that video stores sometimes offer to boost traffic between the weekend mobs. The selection is best at midday because late-night and morning returns have been reshuffled and customers who work nine to five haven't yet arrived to pick over the assortment.
- **To put on sunscreen:** 15 to 30 minutes before exposure. Sunscreen takes that long to absorb fully into the skin and start working. And chances are you're not slathering on enough. According to the American Academy of Dermatology, the average person needs an ounce—about enough to fill a shot glass—to cover the body entirely. Sunscreen may be slimy, but it's better than skin cancer.
- **To lock in fuel oil prices for the winter:** No later than August 31. Oil prices, which have been sky-high this year, usually start climbing in September as colder weather approaches. Makes sense, right? If you heat with oil, consider signing a fixed-rate contract for a year or more. Not sure if you want to bet on the direction of prices? Consult eia.doe.gov, where government experts forecast short-term and long-term energy prices by fuel and by region.



skinny dip



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 1-866-276-1193 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

The Playboy Advisor

My girlfriend and I have been together off and on for three years. Six months ago, while we were broken up, another of her exes stayed at her place. As she slept, he videotaped her with one hand while masturbating with the other. She found out about it but continues to hang out with the guy. Months later, after we were back together, she told me what had happened. I was outraged and told her I couldn't trust him around her any longer. She said I couldn't tell her who to be friends with. I love this girl, but she refuses to see that this guy is a psycho who violated her. We've broken up again over this. What do you think?—B.W., Portland, Oregon

Sounds as if they're meant for each other. Don't be surprised if tapes exist in which your ex-girlfriend isn't asleep.

I was having sex with an escort, and she asked me to perform CPR on her. I asked if she was okay, and she said she was fine but that having a guy pump gently on her chest and give her mouth-to-mouth turned her on. Later she told me that six months earlier she had had a heart attack and been zapped back to life. Have you ever heard of anything like this?—A.A., Brooks, Alberta

It's unusual. Simulated CPR is part of a medical fetish that includes people—overwhelmingly guys—who like to listen to heartbeats or give fake injections (check out the site medicaltoys.com for a taste of the variety). Did you at least get a discount?

I smoke one or two joints a day. Should I stop so that my wife and I have a better chance of conceiving?—M.L., Pasadena, California

Yes. It's well established that long-term, regular use of weed leads to decreased sperm production. A study released last year of 22 men who smoked at least twice a day for five years also found that their sperm swam too fast too soon and had trouble attaching to the egg. Researchers believe it could take four to six clean months for things to return to normal. Here's a possible antidote: A study of 750 Brazilians suggests that guys who drink coffee have more energetic sperm.

My husband is a hardworking guy who provides for his family and so on, but when it comes to fun and romance he's at a loss. He's 30 years old but acts as though he's 50. He works all the time and stresses about the house, bills, money and everyone else's problems. How can I help him lighten up, enjoy his family and live life while he's young (and still has a wife)? I've begun to do almost everything without him.—C.S., Portland, Oregon

You need to tell your husband that his work habits are not working for you. We can



*anticipate his response: As do most workaholics, he sees his family's pleas for affection and attention not as a sign that he is loved and needed but as an intrusion or an interruption. Many men struggle with this. They feel immense pressure to provide, which can make them crabby and distant. They prefer the controlled environment of work to the chaos of a home with children. Changing these habits is difficult. Usually it requires a close friend to lead by example. That's what happened to literary agent Jonathon Lazear, who wrote a book about his experience, *The Man Who Mistook His Job for a Life*. He told us, "Too many men abandon their families, and for what? Is there a financial crisis? Most likely no. They're probably doing as their father did. Men need to remember that they're less productive when they overwork; they make mistakes. A wife may have to say, 'We're out of here unless you examine what you want. You can find a balance—and we'll help you.'" With any luck your husband won't join the legions of men who realize only later what they missed, especially in the lives of their children.*

What's the deal with duty-free shops at airports? I've never found the booze prices enticing. Is there some other advantage to shopping at them?—N.R., Miami, Florida

A lot depends on where you are and what you're buying. If you're flying home from Portugal, for example, you won't find better values on ports. Besides savings, duty-free shops offer two advantages: (1) Distilleries use them for market tests, so you can buy products that aren't available at liquor stores (be careful—sometimes only the packaging is different); and (2) the alcohol content can be higher in duty-free booze, which may im-

prove taste. A common misconception is that duty-free means the consumer doesn't pay tax. In fact, with some exceptions, travelers entering the U.S. are allowed to bring in only one liter of booze tax-free, no matter where it was purchased.

My fiancée, whom I've been dating for two years, thinks she can do whatever she wants without consulting me. It started with small things, such as assuming I would clean the house. Then she bought a \$4,200 wedding ring. Then she revealed that she had declared bankruptcy a few years ago. Yesterday I called her at work, and a co-worker told me she was on a smoke break—I had no idea she smoked. How can I rectify this situation and move on with the relationship?—G.F., Tulsa, Oklahoma

You should move on, but without the relationship. The trust isn't there.

Whenver I watch porn I play with my nipples. I sometimes attach binder clips to get them hard. Is there any risk to this?—J.T., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Besides not having anything to hold your documents together? There's little danger unless you're wearing the clips for hours at a time. The interesting thing about nipple clips is that they pinch when you put them on and ache while they're there, but the real pain doesn't come until you take them off and the blood rushes into the crushed flesh.

Do exotic dancers ever connect with customers, or is it always just business?—R.G., Albuquerque, New Mexico

A dancer may find you attractive, but she's not looking for a date. We keep our head at strip clubs by pretending the women are very attractive used-car dealers.

I'd like to upgrade the power strips I use with my hi-fi equipment. Can you offer guidance?—N.N., Dallas, Texas

Most people will find that a \$30 to \$50 strip with surge protection is sufficient—look for the Underwriters Laboratories mark on both the box and the product, as well as the words "transient voltage." Keep in mind that many strips have only a single metal-oxide varistor, which is what provides the protection, and it's a kamikaze—if there's a surge or a spike, it sacrifices itself. Once that happens, the strip may continue to work but not protect against energy bursts. Some strips have MOV indicator lights, but even those can't always be trusted. The point is, don't assume that a strip with surge protection will last forever. If you're daring, try the Wiremold L10320, which is popular among audiophiles who feel that the switches, fuses, circuit breakers and noise filters found on most strips diminish system performance. Naim, which makes high-end equipment,

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recommends connecting all your components to the same strip, with the amp plugged into the outlet closest to the cord, followed by the sources. The theory is that different grounds in a house can vary a bit; on high-end audio, that may cause noise. Naim also suggests having your power and source cords flow separately and "as gracefully as possible," because "electricity does not travel efficiently around sharp corners and bends." If you just paid \$5,100 for a Naim CD player, that advice is comforting.

My best friend's sister says she can't date me because I'm close to her brother. Should this be a problem, and if so, how can I get her to see past it?—C.P., Fort Collins, Colorado

The bigger problem is she's not interested.

You recently ran a letter about a guy whose fiancée disinvited his friends to the wedding because they had allowed him to "touch a whore" at his bachelor party. I don't think you put much effort into your answer, Advisor. You can't blame just the girl. If the guy knew it could be a problem, he should have prevented it. For example, they could have had a mixed bachelor-and-bachelorette party, which is all the rage. They could also have set down rules, such as "I won't touch tits if you don't grab cock." When my husband and I had our parties, I told him I didn't want him near naked women because I knew his friends might set him up. I was right: They tried to pay a streetwalker to pose with him. Just because I don't want him around that sort of thing doesn't make me a controlling bitch. And it doesn't mean this girl was, either. She has the right to invite whomever she wants—it's her day. The problem is his being afraid to grow up and realize that real men listen to the women they love and try to see the woman's point of view.—A.T., Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Real women get over themselves. Your advice is all good—couples should talk—but to suggest that the woman had a right to disinvite her fiancé's friends is just incorrect.

My husband has a fantasy that turns me off. He wants the two of us to perform fellatio on another man at the same time. The thought of my dear husband going down on another guy is too much for me. We tried fantasizing about it during sex, but it shuts me down. How can he enjoy this without my doing it or hearing about it?—A.T., Sudbury, Ontario

We find it interesting, first, that your husband, knowing the reaction most women would have, had the confidence to tell you this fantasy and, second, that you didn't ask if we think he's gay. We don't necessarily—many people aren't so easily labeled. But both observations tell us you have a relationship that is stronger than most. So we suggest this: Let your husband go down on you—while you're wearing a harness and a dildo. That way he's not sucking another

guy's dick—he's sucking yours. (Then you can fuck him up the ass. Seriously. Start with your fingers, and use lots of lube.) The idea is to make this fantasy less about what your husband does and more about your playing the man. That may help you past the initial shock. Or it may just be beyond you. That's okay, too. At the least you may pick up some new techniques.

I know a guy who knows a guy who once got a speeding ticket and instead of pleading guilty mailed the court a check for \$1 more than the fine. He received a \$1 refund check but never cashed it. That kept the process suspended, so the ticket stayed off his record. He supposedly has a drawer of \$1 checks and a clean driving record. Is this possible?—J.R., Portland, Oregon

Not in this universe. It may have worked for someone once, but this is an urban legend that appears to have originated in Australia.

Whenver my wife and I have a heart-to-heart talk (with no sexual implications), I get an erection. Why does this happen? We've been together for 27 years, so it's weird.—D.F., Fort Calhoun, Nebraska

It's not that weird. A heart-to-heart implies great intimacy and trust. For many people that sort of closeness is as arousing as physical touch. We'd suggest you have your next talk in bed, but it may affect your listening skills.

In your April response to a question about Super Audio CD, you should have made it clear that SACDs won't play on standard CD players unless the discs are hybrids, a.k.a. dual-layer—and even then you won't get the sharper sound unless you have an SACD player.—M.L., Wauconda, Illinois

Thanks for the clarification.

While drunk, my girlfriend admitted to her best female friend and me that she had a dream in which her friend and I were having sex and she didn't care. After she sobered up I asked her if she actually would care. She said, "Not really." I think her friend may like me. Would it be okay to have sex with her?—M.T., Shippensburg, Pennsylvania

Sorry, but that wasn't enough of a yes—and we have pretty low standards. But you have a good line on a threesome.

A gentleman wrote in May asking to get in touch with five readers who had written about their fantasies. I laughed at your answer: "There's no more room in the hot tub." But shy readers may take it the wrong way—there are many hot tubs out there. People interested in meeting liberal friends should join a social group that encourages fantasy. The Black Rose in the D.C. area is sexually explicit. Strictly social groups such as the Society for Creative Anachronism also mix fantasy and fun. I've found that women



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who spend their weekends dressed as musketeers are more accepting of unusual desires. Granted, these groups all require interpersonal skills. Asking the first lady you see to sleep with you may introduce you to the sharp end of four feet of steel.—W.B., Springfield, Virginia

In that particular situation—with a female musketeer—we'd have steel of our own.

A reader asked in May about a friend who would not tip on the alcohol portion of a restaurant meal. You didn't address the larger issue, which is why we're expected to tip on meals at all. We need to stop looking down on people who are willing to pay only the price on the menu.—J.S., Vermillion, South Dakota

You can pay the price on the menu, but who's going to bring you the food? Skipping out on a tip might have worked in the Middle Ages, when leaving extra was done solely in gratitude. But like it or not, tipping is now a form of compensation. Early Americans considered it undemocratic, but that changed in the late 19th century after wealthy Americans saw that it was done in Europe. Hotel and restaurant owners encouraged the practice because it allowed them to reduce wages and supervision of their staff. So many workers became dependent on tips that customers who held out paid for their insolence: Bellmen made chalk marks on the bags of nontippers so they would remember which ones to drop; in Chicago in 1918 police arrested 100 waiters for spoiling the meals of repeat customers who refused to tip. Tipping can be confusing. Our advice is to trust your instincts. If it feels as if you should tip, make sure you do. If it feels as if you should give a little more, then do that, too.

A final word on tipping: I've heard people justify not tipping on alcohol by asking why they should tip the server when the bartender prepares the drinks. In most restaurants, the servers tip the bartenders based on the value of the drinks prepared. So this creep's bar tips are being paid by the waitstaff. Educate the man!—K.L., Hanson, Massachusetts

We'll do our best.

When is the best time to break up with someone?—K.J., Chicago, Illinois

Right after they've won the lottery, so they know you're serious. Actually, we prefer daylight hours, early in the week. But there's no good time for the person getting dumped.

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

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AT NEWSSTANDS NOW



THE PLAYBOY FORUM

COURTING DISASTER

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE SUPREME COURT
IF GEORGE BUSH REMAINS PRESIDENT?

BY EDWARD LAZARUS

If President Bush wins the election, he is almost certain to be able to make the Supreme Court list to the right for a decade or more after he has left office. Because the current Court has split five to four on almost every charged issue, replacing even one justice could have a dramatic effect. The time is ripe. No justice has retired in the past 10 years—the longest stretch without a new face since 1824. Age is catching up with the Court, much as it did in the early 1990s when William Brennan, Thurgood Marshall, Byron White and Harry Blackmun—for whom I served as a clerk—all retired.

The three justices most likely to leave are John Paul Stevens, Sandra Day O'Connor and William Rehnquist. The chief justice, who turns 80 in October, is almost certain to step down if Bush wins. A staunch conservative, he has strongly hinted that he wants a Republican to select his replacement. O'Connor, 74, is more moderate but has hinted at the same thing.

The X factor is Stevens, who is 84 and the most liberal justice on the Court. Although he would surely prefer that someone other than Bush appoint his successor, it's hard to imagine that he would forgo retirement for another four years. He already spends a good part of the winter in Florida, and his wife is said to be pushing him to leave.



Supremes Rehnquist, O'Connor and Stevens—"And away we go...."

Rehnquist's retirement raises fewer issues of balance. It's hard to believe that the president could find anyone more conservative to replace him. That's not the case if Stevens leaves. And if he and O'Connor both go, Bush could shift what would have been five-to-four votes to seven-to-two. Although O'Connor usually votes conservative, she put the brakes on the effort to overturn *Roe v. Wade* and keeps the right-leaning Court from becoming reactionary.

Should the Court go further to the right, we'll see dramatic change on high-profile issues such as abortion and the separation of church and state. But the most profound shift will be

in the balance between federal and state powers. A Bush-driven Court would likely cut back severely on the ability of the federal government to act in the public interest, leaving more of these issues to the states. That would threaten worker health and safety, the environment and a range of civil rights.

A Bush Court would also have vital consequences on how judges respond to the threat of terrorism. In coming years the Court will be asked to decide how much information the government can collect about us and how far it can go to get that information. If Bush wins, these decisions are more likely to be made by justices who are comfortable deferring

SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO? LEAVING THE SUPREME COURT IS NEVER EASY

John Marshall Harlan (died 1911). In *Leaving the Bench: Supreme Court Justices at the End*, David Atkinson recounts the story of a clerk who brought an emergency order to the sickly Harlan, who was running his chambers from a hospital bed. The justice bent over to sign the order, but when he returned it to the clerk, it had no signature. Harlan had signed the bedsheets.

William Howard Taft (retired 1930). In 1909, as president, Taft observed, "The condition of the Court is pitiable, and yet those old fools hold on with a tenacity that is most discouraging." Within the next two years, five of the Court's nine justices had died. In 1921 Taft joined the Court himself. He later wrote, "The only hope we have of keeping a consistent declaration of constitutional law is for us to live as long as we can." He served until a month before his death.

William O. Douglas (retired 1975). In 1974 Douglas, who had served a record 35 years, suffered a stroke.



He held on because he didn't want President Ford—who as a congressman in 1970 had tried to have Douglas impeached—to select his replacement. "Even if I'm half alive, I can still cast a liberal vote," he said. Doctors changed his mind. After he retired Douglas insisted he be allowed to vote on cases that had been argued while he was still on the Court, but his former colleagues ignored him.

Potter Stewart (retired 1981). Still healthy at 66, Stewart said, "It is better to leave too soon than to stay too long." He worked part-time in lower courts but said it was "no fun to play in the minors after a career in the majors." Some friends believed boredom contributed to his death in 1985. **Lewis Powell** (retired 1987). Powell, who was 79 when he left, suggested that the founders should have forced justices to retire at 75. **Thurgood Marshall** (pictured left, retired 1991). Marshall vowed to stay until death but could barely hear, see or walk. He survived his retirement by a year.

TAX ME, I'M RICH

THE SOFTWARE MOGUL'S FATHER EXPLAINS
WHY HE LOVES THE ESTATE TAX

BY BILL GATES SR.

to claims that anything goes in the name of "national security."

The trick for Bush would be to select a nominee he can navigate through a sharply divided Senate. That's why his first choice would probably be a Latino, for the same reason LBJ selected Marshall as the first black justice and Ronald Reagan nominated O'Connor as the first woman. Historic firsts are tougher for opponents to push aside, and Latinos are a key Democratic constituency.

The most likely nominee is Alberto Gonzales, a former Texas Supreme Court justice who is now White House counsel. Some Republicans oppose him because they fear he may waver from the party line. The last thing they want is another David Souter, whom the first president Bush thought would be a solid right-winger. Instead he morphed into a reliable liberal, at least by the standards of today's Court. Politically, Gonzales's problem is the occasional moderation he showed on the Texas court and, in particular, a vote he cast allowing a minor to obtain an abortion. Conservatives also express concern that Gonzales, who acknowledges the value of diversity, would be soft in opposing affirmative action. But even if he shifted left, he would remain far more conservative than Stevens and at least as conservative as O'Connor.

If Bush wanted a more established Latino conservative, the choice would be Emilio Garza, a federal appeals judge hearing cases in the South. Garza doesn't have the intellectual firepower of Gonzales, and at the age of 57 he is almost a decade older, meaning his influence may not last as long.

Each of Bush's second-tier options would face tough Democratic opposition. If O'Connor retires first, a conservative female nominee may be a possibility. The usual suspects are two other federal judges from the South—Edith Jones, who supports the death penalty without question, and Priscilla Owen, a staunch opponent of *Roe v. Wade*. As for white men, there are dozens.

It's possible, as all things are possible, that we will go another four years without any of the nine justices leaving or passing away. A seat on the Court, with all its majesty, is a tough job to give up. Yet the vast majority of modern justices who retired didn't stay past their early 80s. That's worth remembering in the voting booth.

Lazarus, a former prosecutor, is the author of Closed Chambers, a history of the modern Court, and is currently working on Self-Inflicted Wounds, about the Court's worst decisions.

The federal estate tax is not dead. It only appears to be. Since the early 1990s some of America's wealthiest families—not including my own—have financed a campaign to eliminate the tax. They argue that a tax that affects only multimillionaires is a bad thing. They deride it as a "death tax," playing on the idea that you can never escape the IRS.

In 2001 these affluent Americans persuaded Congress to phase out the tax. By 2009 the amount exempted will rise from \$1.5 million to \$3.5 million (\$7 million for couples) before the tax is repealed entirely in 2010. Unless Congress amends the law, which seems likely, the tax will return in 2011. This quirk creates a perverse incentive for elderly rich people to die in 2010.

No one is happy with these changes. Many critics of the tax argue that it should be abandoned. I believe we should keep it but with major reforms, such as an increase in the amount exempted so we can maintain the tax on truly enormous fortunes while eliminating the need for many smaller estates and enterprises to be concerned about it. Given that my children and grandchildren may someday be hit with this sort of tax, my position may seem counterintuitive. But my family agrees with my stance. Here's why:

The reason Congress created the estate tax in 1916 was to slow the buildup of concentrations of wealth and power. Proponents of the tax felt this would protect democracy and the idea of America as a land of opportunity for every citizen. At the same time, the tax would generate substantial revenue for the Treasury from those most able to pay—that is, recently deceased multimillionaires and billionaires. It has done just that. Last year the tax generated nearly

\$30 billion. It's estimated that over the next five decades the tax will generate between \$150 billion and \$700 billion a year. That's big money, especially for a government that is running up huge deficits.

The estate tax is also an incentive for charitable giving. Evidence suggests that without it charitable giving would decline by as much as \$8 billion a year, with the largest decrease coming from the largest estates.

Critics charge that the estate tax is double taxation, but that isn't true. The bulk of wealth in taxable estates consists of appreciated stocks and real

estate that have never been taxed. And the claim that the tax destroys family farms is also a canard. The pro-repeal American Farm Bureau has yet to produce an example of a farm lost because of the tax.

The way I see it, the estate tax is a reasonable repayment of a debt to society. Families that accumulate wealth, including the Gates family of Seattle, have disproportionately benefited from the system of



public investment that we, as taxpayers and charitable givers, have put in place. Our economy thrives overall because we have order, stability, a predictable system of rules for investing and mechanisms to resolve disputes. Without public investment in research, we would have no microprocessors, no Internet and few wonder drugs. Further, we would see none of the business activity these innovations produce. Preserving the tax will ensure that our society values an individual's inherent—rather than inherited—worth.

Gates is a leader of Responsible Wealth (responsiblewealth.org) and the co-author, with Chuck Collins, of Wealth and Our Commonwealth: Why America Should Tax Accumulated Fortunes.

FREE SPEECH IS NOT DEAD

THE PLAYBOY FOUNDATION HONORS ITS FIRST AMENDMENT WINNERS

In 1979 the Playboy Foundation introduced the Hugh M. Hefner First Amendment Awards to recognize those who defend our right to free speech. Each of this year's winners or set of winners received \$5,000: Steven Aftergood directs the Project on Government Secrecy for the Federation of American Scientists (fas.org) and edits *Secrecy News*. His 1997 suit against the CIA led to the declassification of the agency's budget for the first time in 50 years. Nate Blakeslee, a reporter for *The Texas Observer*, broke the story of the Tulia drug scandal, in which a single detective's lies led to the convictions of 46 innocent people. Talia Buford, editor of the student newspaper at Hampton University in Virginia, had been ordered to print a memo from the school president on the front page. When Buford refused, the school had the papers destroyed. Buford reprinted them with the memo but added a disclaimer.



The confrontation led to a task force that affirmed Hampton students' right to free speech and forbade administrators from confiscating future issues. David Cole, a Georgetown University law professor and author of *Enemy Aliens: Double Standards and Constitutional Freedoms in the War on Terrorism*, has defended dozens of immigrants accused of vague crimes such as being "advocates of world communism."

David Skover and Ronald Collins, co-authors of *The Trials of Lenny Bruce*, successfully petitioned New York governor George Pataki to grant a posthumous pardon to the comedian for a 1964 obscenity conviction. Molly Ivins, a syndicated columnist based in Texas, received a Lifetime Achievement Award for her muckraking journalism. Her most recent book, with Lou Dubose, is *Bushwhacked: Life in George W. Bush's America*. Trina Magi and Linda Ramsdell of Vermont led a campaign to persuade Congress to rescind a provision of the USA Patriot Act that allowed the FBI to obtain secret warrants to view the records of bookstores and libraries. Magi is a librarian; Ramsdell owns a bookstore. Bill Maher, host of HBO's *Real Time With Bill Maher*, was honored for eloquently defending free speech during a time when Americans have been encouraged to abandon it in exchange for a false sense of security.

MARGINALIA



FROM A POLICE VIDEO posted at papersplease.org. On May 21, 2000 Dudley Hiibel had a fight with his teenage daughter, Mimi, while she drove the family pickup near Winnemucca, Nevada. After she punched him in the shoulder, he told her to pull over. Deputy Lee Dove of the Humboldt County Sheriff's Department responded to a report of domestic violence: DOVE: I have a report that there's some fighting going on between you two. HIIBEL: I don't know about that. DOVE: You got any identification? HIIBEL: Why should I have an ID? DOVE: We're conducting an investigation, so I need to see some ID. HIIBEL: Nah, I'm—just take me to jail. DOVE: I need to see some ID. HIIBEL: Why? DOVE: Because I'm conducting an investigation. HIIBEL: Investigating what? DOVE: I'm investigating. HIIBEL: Am I illegally parked? I want to know what I'm charged with. DOVE: You're not being charged. HIIBEL: What do you want with me? DOVE: I'm conducting an investigation. HIIBEL: Why? DOVE: Because I want to find out who you are, and I want to find out what I got going on here. Let me see some identification. HIIBEL: No. DOVE: Show me your identification. HIIBEL: Go ahead and cuff me. DOVE: Let me see your ID. HIIBEL: I'm being cooperative. DOVE: Let me see some identification. HIIBEL: Cuff me and take me to jail. DOVE: Let me see some identification and we'll talk, okay? HIIBEL: I don't want to talk. I broke no laws. Take me to jail. I don't care. DOVE: Why would I take you to jail if you haven't done anything? HIIBEL: Because you want to. I'm not illegally parked. I'm not doing nothing. DOVE: Let me see some identification. HIIBEL: Why? DOVE: Because. HIIBEL: Why? DOVE: You're not going to cooperate? HIIBEL: Because I've done nothing. DOVE: Okay. Put your hands behind your back.



Dudley Hiibel.

Hiibel was fined for "obstructing/delaying a peace officer." The Supreme Court, which heard the case in March, was asked to decide whether a citizen can be arrested simply for refusing to identify himself.

FROM AN APPLICATION by ICM Registry of Jupiter, Florida to ICANN, which governs top-level domains, to create a new .xxx identifier: "Although other strings were considered, such as .sex, .adult and .porn, our research demonstrated that they lacked broad geographic recognition and were

(continued on page 47)

THE DEBUNKER

MYTH:

ONLY GUILTY PEOPLE CONFESS

REALITY: At least 135 people who confessed to crimes were later exonerated by DNA or other evidence. Most people assume that anyone falsely accused would deny everything and ask for a lawyer. In fact, typically only experienced felons invoke their Miranda rights. The innocent man asks himself, Why should I stay silent? I have nothing to hide. He is unprepared for the psychological rigors of a professional interrogation. The detectives who conduct it are trained to convince the suspect that his situation is hopeless. Nothing prevents police from lying to get this done. They may tell a suspect he can go home if he confesses. Or they may claim to have evidence—including DNA and witnesses—that doesn't exist. Sociologist Richard Ofshe, who specializes in identifying false confessions, has reviewed interrogations in which officers told suspects that their crime had

been recorded by satellite, that cops had lifted a "penis print" or that DNA tests had been completed within an hour. Although it's illegal, coercion may also be used. Detectives may promise to get the charges reduced ("I'll talk to the judge"). They may tell a juvenile or an accused sex offender that he will be dropped into the prison population to be raped. A confession is rarely beaten out of a suspect, Ofshe says—psychological pressure is usually



A teen confesses to killing his younger sister. It wasn't true.

enough. Anxious and despairing, a suspect won't question why the police, if they have all this evidence, would need a statement. The detective offers a way out: "Here's what I think happened," he'll say, recasting the crime as self-defense or an act that requires counseling, not prison time. If a suspect is frustrated and exhausted and believes there is strong evidence despite his innocence, a confession sounds like a great deal. After hours of pressure he comes to believe that he'll be convicted with or without a confession but that cooperating will mean leniency. Ofshe argues, as do others, that police should be required to tape not just the confessions but the questioning. "The police argue against it, citing expense and other nonsense," he says. "But they just don't want to give up the right to break the law in the interrogation room when they decide it's necessary."

READER RESPONSE

TO EACH HIS OWN

Wendell Berry nicely explains the dangers of extremism on both the left and the right ("The Perils of Foolish Use," May). But it bothers me when he writes that individualists behave "as if there were no God." The millions of people who don't believe in gods aren't living their life as if anything goes. The recognition that this life and this world are not just for us individually but for everyone does not require the threat of an after-life genocide imposed by supernatural



The rugged individualist, hard at work.

Nazis. It requires only empathy. The world would have been better off if the storytellers had had Moses come down the mountain with just one commandment: "Keep thy religion to thyself."

Lowell Cooper and Sarah Prescott
New Castle, Indiana

Berry's commonsense writing on localized life and economics is a refreshing counterbalance to the din of globalism. The inclusion of his work adds to PLAYBOY'S history of intellectual gravitas.

Gary Parsons
Boca Raton, Florida

WISE USE, REDEFINED

Ron Arnold, of the so-called wise-use movement ("Guru of Wise Use," May), advocates cutting down the remaining old-growth forests, drilling for oil and gas on public lands, disrupting wildlife migration routes, constructing roads into wilderness areas and overturning the Endangered Species Act. Sounds more like stupid use to me.

John Brennan
Oakdale, California

The problem with wise use is that it easily becomes "using it up." The U.S. Forest Service has allowed and even subsidized the strip-mining, clear-cutting and logging of 40 million acres of

national forests—some of the very lands that Teddy Roosevelt protected from dishonest logging corporations a century ago. Both he and FDR referred to the logging industry as liars, cheats and thieves. Yet under the false claims of restoration, forest fires and forest health, these corporate and agency liars still cut down the most valuable trees and cathedral forests. You can see aerial photos of wise-use destruction at forestcouncil.org.

Tim Hermach
Native Forest Council
Eugene, Oregon

Arnold's agenda and that of the Bush administration is exploitation of the environment no matter what the consequences. The president describes himself as a faithful Christian. So why is he destroying God's land?

Bryan Mootz
Carpinteria, California

PLAYBOY would better serve its readers by publishing the views of environmental scientists or at least someone with intelligence who isn't spewing propaganda.

Fred Breukelman
Dover, Delaware

Applying wise use to ATVs is a laugh. I've watched them plow through fences, chase animals and destroy flora and fauna and historic sights. Instead of destroying the arctic wilderness, why aren't we searching for other sources of energy? We know that fuels and lubricants can be made from corn, soy and even industrial hemp. But until those in power can control these materials, the rest of us won't be allowed to have non-polluting, renewable energy.

Ed Clemensen
Desert Hot Springs, California

WE CAN'T ALL EAT CAKE

I am 80 years old, have seen much of the world, have fought in a war and have a lot of education. I realize that people believe in different things and everyone has his own bag. However, some things are logically, scientifically and factually stupid. In May John Passacantando of Greenpeace wrote you to list five ways the Bush administration is harming the environment. He said one way to solve the problem would be for people to vote, implying that people should vote for John Kerry. If Passacan-

tando believes Kerry is going to do anything different, he's living in la-la land. No administration has ever done anything about these concerns, possibly because nothing can be done. I worked in a California plant that created electricity by burning garbage. The plant was environmentally pure. Even the rainwater was washed before it went into the sewer. These things are possible but at great cost—companies will take their business elsewhere. We will have clean air, but that may be all we have. Tree huggers and liberals would like to live in a world where everyone eats cake. That's not the way life works.

John Waugen
Anaheim, California

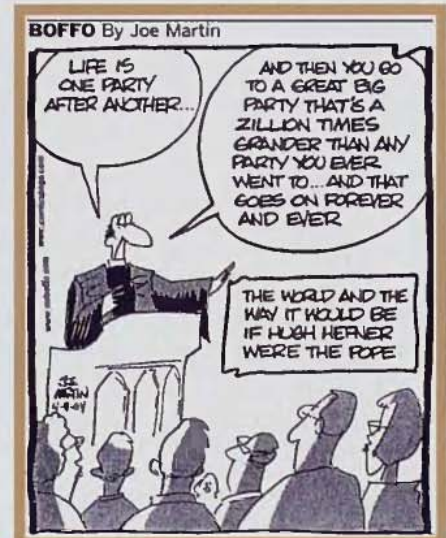
DEATH PENALTY SOLUTION

Scott Turow didn't need to come up with "Five Ways to Fix the Death Penalty" (May). There's only one fix: Eliminate it. Refusing to kill as vindication is the ultimate act of morality.

Wallace Pugh
Mansfield, Ohio

OBSCENE MISTAKE

In "The Bird Is the Word" (May), Chip Rowe states that Jimmie Wayne Jeffers gave the warden the finger from



Arizona's electric chair. I'm a prisoner on death row, and I can assure you that the state has never used the chair.

Robert Murray
Florence, Arizona

You're right. Jeffers flipped the warden the bird while being given a lethal injection. The result was the same.

NEWSFRONT



Adult actor Carmen Luvana gets tested as a precaution.

Chasing the Porn Bug

LOS ANGELES—This past spring, routine testing revealed that a male porn performer had contracted HIV. According to the Adult Industry Medical Health Care Foundation, which reviewed porn tapes, the man had had on-screen sex with 13 women since his last negative test, and those women had intercourse with 30 other performers. A total of 53 performers at risk were publicly identified and asked to voluntarily stop working until they could be cleared. Most production also shut down for months while performers waited for test results. As of early May, three of the 13 female performers had tested positive. County health officials called for mandatory condom usage on sets and seized AIM health records, saying they wanted to make sure that the personal partners of actors exposed to HIV had been notified.

Stripped of Her Claim

ATLANTA—In 1997 Vanessa Steele-Inman was eliminated from the Miss Nude World International pageant. She says she retrieved trashed ballots that showed she should not have been booted. She sued, claiming she had been black-listed for refusing to allow a promoter to lick whipped cream off her breasts. She also says an organizer loudly accused her of cheating—a slander she believes ended her career in nude competition. A jury awarded her \$2.5 million, which an appeals court reduced to \$3,500. It reasoned that even if an organizer had accused her, it wasn't slander but a "privileged conversation" between business partners.

A Crime of Self-Abuse

LATROBE, PENNSYLVANIA—Police charged a 15-year-old girl with creating and distributing child pornography—photos she took of herself undressing and masturbating and sent to men online. Authorities are hunting for the men.

The Right to Party

CHICAGO—Two daughters of Minnesota's attorney general partied hard at a club, and the night ended badly. The older sister, 22, lost her cool after a guy grabbed her ass, so bouncers took her outside. There she allegedly took a swing at a cop, who moved her across the street. A friend followed, using his cell phone to record the encounter. The woman is heard saying, "I have rights!" to which a voice identified as the officer's responds, "You got none right now, bitch." Police charged both sisters with resisting arrest.

Fashion Passion

LIVERPOOL, U.K.—Shortly before Easter a company posted a photo of a "crucified" model on its website to promote a line of designer T-shirts. The Monsignor of the city's Roman Catholic cathedral, which appears in the background, called the image blasphemous. "People think they can do anything they like with religious imagery these days," he said. The company, Bdbx, responded, "This fashion range is all about youth culture, being in your face, not being afraid to break the rules and challenging convention"—but soon after apologized and pulled the image from its website.



Stroke of Bad Luck

LOS ANGELES—An insurance claims manager installed a program that recorded every keystroke on a company computer. He shared the information he gathered with the state Department of Insurance, which was investigating the company. After being fired, the man asked a co-worker to remove the logger. The colleague instead tipped off authorities, who charged the man with violating wiretap laws. (The Department of Insurance claims it never asked the former manager to do anything illegal.) The case is believed to be the first time a person has been indicted for installing a keylogger. He faces up to five years in prison.

MARGINALIA

(continued from page 45)

perceived to be primarily Anglo-Saxon. Research also showed that the use of these strings could lead to confusion. For example, although information on family planning, birth control or abortion would potentially qualify for inclusion in a proposed .sex or .adult, such information would not intuitively be associated with .xxx. Likewise, the adoption of .porn would place the registry operator and ICANN in the difficult position of making the determination of what is and is not pornography. The proposed .xxx string clearly conveys that the website contains adult material of a sexual nature."

FROM AN ESSAY by Brian Price in *Legal Affairs*. While serving 15 years in a Texas prison, Price prepared the last meals for about 200 condemned inmates: "The meal requests were rarely complicated; many prisoners ordered food that they had eaten as children. The requests were released to the media exactly the way the state received them. But many of the meals that prisoners wanted were replaced with less expensive or more accessible alternatives.



The policy of the Texas Department of Corrections was that only food items kept on hand in the commissary and butcher shop could be used. If the condemned asked for lobster, for example, he would be served a filet of processed fish. The last real steak I prepared was in 1993. After that hamburger steaks were subbed in. Most vegetables came out of cans. Requests for large quantities were pared down. David Allen Castillo requested 24 tacos in 1998. He got four."

FROM A REPORT by the Committee on Government Reform Minority Office (www.house.gov/reform/min) called *Iraq on the Record*: "This is a comprehensive examination of statements about Iraq made by George Bush, Richard Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice. It identifies 237 statements that were misleading at the time they were made. It does not include statements that appear only in hindsight to be erroneous. Most of the statements were misleading because they expressed certainty where none existed or failed to acknowledge the doubts of intelligence officials. Ten of the statements were simply false. The statements began at least a year before hostilities in Iraq, when Cheney stated on March 17, 2002, 'We know they have biological and chemical weapons,' and continue through January 22, 2004, when Cheney insisted, 'There's overwhelming evidence that there was a connection between Al Qaeda and the Iraqi government.' The 30-day period with the greatest number of misleading statements was before the congressional vote on the Iraq war resolution."

POWER PARTIES

PUT ON YOUR DANCING SHOES—IT'S TIME TO BUY SOME VOTES!

BY SAMUEL LOEWENBERG

Four years ago I was in Los Angeles covering the Democratic convention when a woman wearing pearls and a power suit jabbed a finger into my chest and asked, "Have you ever sucked a cock?"

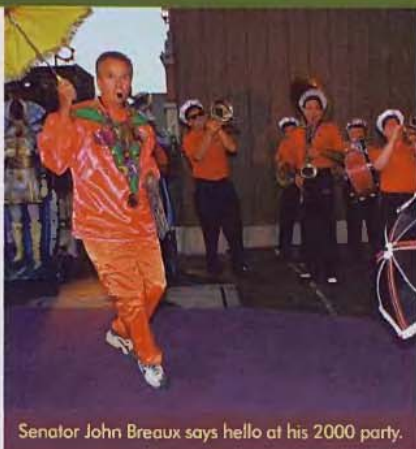
At the time, I was working through my fourth postmortem martini at a swanky hotel bar and had indiscreetly told the woman—a stranger—how all the corporate cash at both conventions made me wonder if there was any difference between the two parties. The woman, a campaign manager from Washington, was not pleased with that observation.

"Have you ever sucked a cock?" she asked again, poking with each word. I said no, I hadn't.

"Well, I have," she said, "and let me tell you a secret. Women don't like it. But we do it. Why? Because we want that Mercedes. And that's why I suck corporate cock: to get money to keep my boss in Congress. You get it?"

For the past 18 months legions of corporate fellators have descended on Boston and New York to book the hottest venues, bands and restaurants. The conventions themselves are such predictable leap-year spectacles that even the networks hate to cover them. But off camera, at exclusive parties, corporations spend millions feting lawmakers, particularly those in leadership positions and on appropriations and tax-writing committees. Since these parties are not direct contributions, nearly all the money spent on them is hidden from public view.

Democratic planners long ago reserved hot Boston venues such as the New England Aquarium, the JFK Library and the Museum of Fine Arts. For the August GOP shindig in New York, think soirees at the Rainbow Room (rented for \$75,000 a pop), sock hops, country music by the likes of



Senator John Breau says hello at his 2000 party.

Faith Hill and Toby Keith and appearances by celebrities such as Tom Selleck and Bruce Willis. Plans are under way for corporate-sponsored yacht trips and chartered buses to Atlantic City (a big hit at the 2000 Philadelphia convention). The wet dream of every GOP party planner is an appearance by Governor Schwarzenegger. He's important not only for cachet but because he can direct funds to the Republican Governors Association, which, like its Democratic counterpart, is a state organization not subject to soft-money limits established by the McCain-Feingold Reform Act.

Another loophole is the use of charities to funnel campaign funds. That alone has transformed this year's party scene. It's why House majority leader Tom DeLay (R.-Tex.) had planned to host a week's worth of events in New York to raise money for Celebrations for Children, his charity for disadvantaged kids. By filtering the money through a charity, DeLay would have been able to have an even bigger event than he did in 2000 in Philadelphia, when he and more than a dozen corporate sponsors co-hosted a Blues Traveler concert. Because much of the partying is ostensibly for charity, most

of what corporations shell out is tax deductible. Says one veteran lobbyist, "That's the real scandal."

In 2000, \$25,000 made you a bigwig. This year DeLay was asking companies for as much as \$500,000 each. Before the New York events were scuttled because of pressure from watchdog groups, contributors were being offered dinners with DeLay, invites to his golf tournament at Bethpage Black, tickets to Broadway shows and access to a luxury suite the night President Bush gives his acceptance speech. The kids would presumably have gotten what was left after the corporate cash bucket paid for expenses.

Other anticipated shindigs:

Representative John Boehner of Ohio will use the Republican convention for a four-day party at the cavernous Tunnel club. (Technically, because of the new ethics rules, lobbyists will throw it on Boehner's behalf.) The party is being sponsored by various corporations giving \$30,000 each.

Friends of Ted Kennedy (D.-Mass.) are planning a Boston tea party, with the Boston Pops playing a piece by *Star Wars* maestro John Williams. The cost? Insiders say \$800,000.

John Breau (D.-La.)—who once said that while his vote couldn't be bought, it could be rented—is the king of convention-party hosts. In Los Angeles in 2000, Breau turned a Paramount back lot into a full-scale Mardi Gras, complete with imported bands and floats. The \$500,000 event had so many corporate sponsors, he said, that any one of them couldn't possibly have influenced him. This year the Potomac Group, headed by Breau's former chief of staff, is hosting a Caribbean Beach Bash at the New England Aquarium to honor Breau. Ziggy Marley will perform from a harbor barge.



Ziggy Marley The son of reggae legend Bob is scheduled to perform for Democratic guests from atop a barge.



Wild Cherry The hit party song at both 2000 conventions was the band's "Play That Funky Music (White Boy)."



Tom DeLay He can't take money from lobbyists anymore, but he can collect it for down-and-out children.



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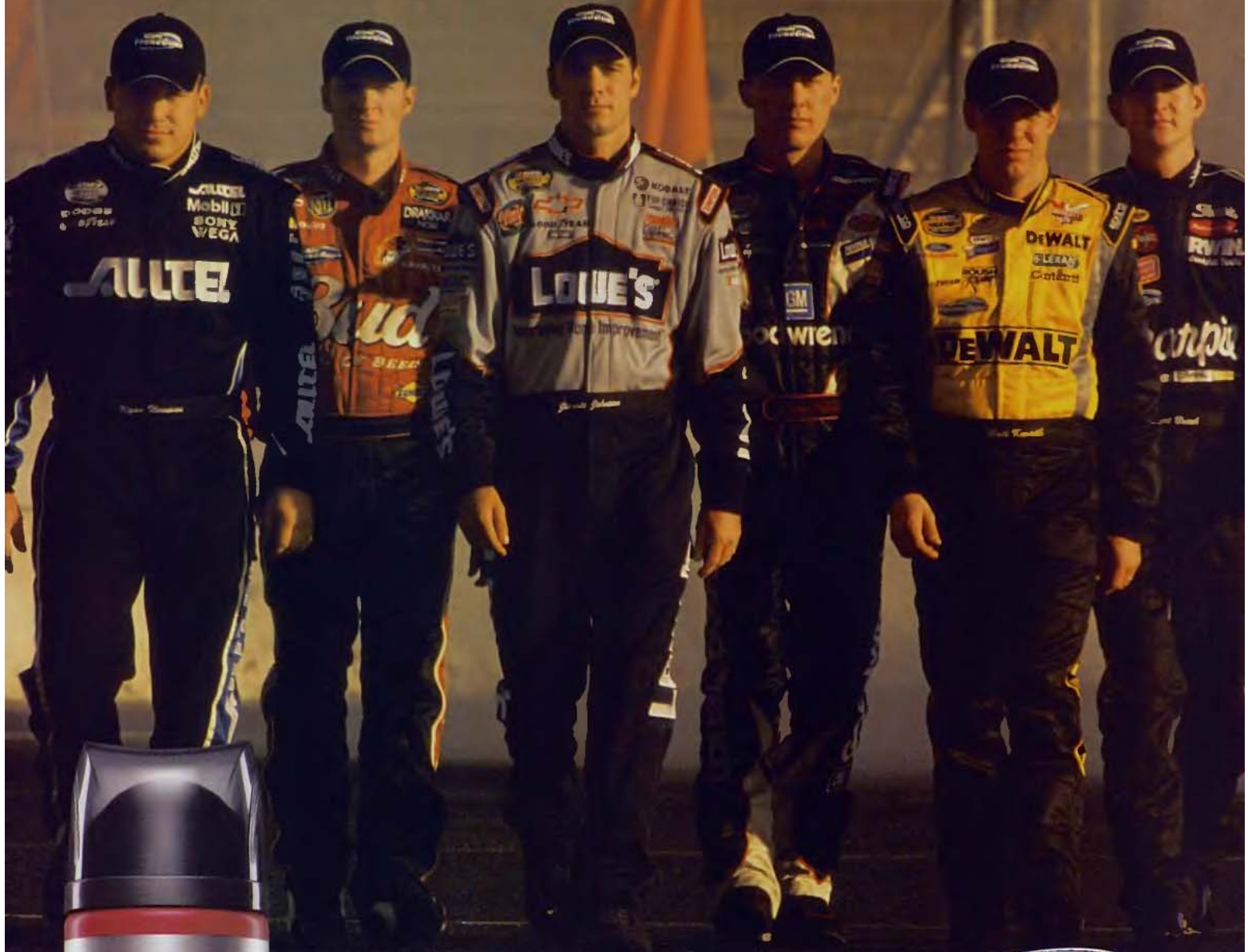
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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: MATT DAMON

A candid conversation with the Bourne Supremacy star about dating Winona, having panic attacks and what really went on with Ben and J. Lo

Matt Damon has an image problem. Most media reports paint him as an affable, toothy, stand-up Mr. Clean-Cut—an earnest guy who takes acting seriously. But once the movie cameras switch off, Damon turns out to be a chain-smoking, beer-drinking, outspoken, complex guy who just happens to be the star of such films as *Saving Private Ryan* and *The Bourne Supremacy*, a sequel to the 2002 spy thriller *The Bourne Identity*.

One reason for his image as a well-meaning good guy is his Cinderella story. Damon and lifelong pal Ben Affleck won Oscars for co-writing the 1997 hit *Good Will Hunting*, a script the then-struggling 20-something actors had spent six years writing and refused to sell unless they starred in the movie. (Damon plays the title role of a troubled math genius; Affleck plays his friend from their old South Boston neighborhood.)

On the heels of *Good Will Hunting*, other acting jobs started coming Damon's way. Impressive showings in *The Rainmaker*, directed by Francis Ford Coppola, and *Saving Private Ryan*, directed by Steven Spielberg, put him on the A-list of Hollywood actors who get first crack at the best projects and their faces featured on magazine covers. What's more, his name was linked romantically with actresses Claire Danes, Minnie

Driver, Penélope Cruz and, for several years, Winona Ryder. Then his career hit a rough patch when *Rounders*, *The Legend of Bagger Vance* and *All the Pretty Horses*—gigs many predicted would vault him to Tom Cruise-level status—crashed and burned with ticket buyers. Just as things looked bleak, he lucked out with the one-two punch of *Ocean's Eleven* and *The Bourne Identity*, which revitalized his career.

Born Matthew Paige Damon in 1970, he and his brother, Kyle, born in 1967, lived in Newton, Massachusetts with their parents, Kent Damon, a stockbroker, and Nancy Carlsson-Paige, a professor of early-childhood education, until the couple's divorce when Matt was two. His mother raised him in a commune-style house in a working-class section of Cambridge, where creative play and open conversation ruled. Having attracted considerable notice in performances at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, Damon hit the TV- and movie-audition circuit, encouraged by neighbor and fellow student Affleck, who had already begun landing commercials and TV roles, and by Affleck's father, who had worked alongside Dustin Hoffman and Robert Duvall in the respected Theater Company of Boston. In 1988, at the age of 18, Damon debuted in *Mystic Pizza*, which

starred the then-unknown Julia Roberts, and enrolled as an English major at Harvard University. He bailed in 1991, however, 12 credits short of graduation, following a credible performance in the 1990 TV movie *Rising Son*. For the next five years he built up his acting résumé in such movies as *School Ties* and *Geronimo: An American Legend*. He and Affleck have remained close, showing up together in 1999's *Dogma* and creating *Project Greenlight*, a reality-TV series about young filmmakers struggling to make their first movies.

PLAYBOY sent Stephen Rebello to Chicago to meet Damon at the Peninsula hotel just after he had completed *The Bourne Supremacy* and begun filming *Ocean's Twelve*.

PLAYBOY: In an interview in 1997, the year *Good Will Hunting* was released, you sounded especially pumped about the minibar in your hotel room. Seven years later we're sitting in this grand hotel suite with a sumptuous spread of food and drink. Have you become blasé about the perks of fame?

DAMON: I've lived in a lot of hotels since then. One fear I honestly have—and it's something I talk about to my family a lot—is that I don't want to experience



"You start to meet people who can't pay their mortgage, and you think, But you were on the cover of *Premiere* eight years ago. And you assume that Tom Cruise is secure, but I guarantee you that guy isn't secure either."



"I've never been in a significant relationship for longer than two and a half years. If the price to pay for having dalliances forever is not having a family and children, then the dalliances are not worth it."



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JULIAN BROAD

"Ben got killed because he was in a high-profile relationship and the press fucking teed off on him. It was destroying his career. I doubt Ben will pick up another movie magazine in his life. He'll read this, though."

this bizarre life. I try to be vigilant about ways in which it's changing me. There's the stuff I'm aware of, and then there's the stuff I'm not aware of, which is why people who've known me a long time play a huge role in my life. You want somebody to say, "Dude, you fucking used to live for the minibar, and now you just take it for granted."

PLAYBOY: Whether or not you take the minibar for granted, you've been tagged in the press as a nice guy.

DAMON: As a celebrity you're often credited with being the nicest human in the world just for being relatively normal during a routine exchange. It's like, "Don't put that on me, because that's going to fuck me later."

PLAYBOY: Have you ever needed to give yourself an attitude adjustment?

DAMON: I am constantly doing that in little ways. I haven't yet had the experience of pushing someone really close to me to the point of having to sit me down and say, "You really have to fucking pay attention, because you're unaware that you're doing this or that." First it's the minibar you take for granted, then it's a four-course meal, and suddenly you won't fly commercial anymore. And after that, who are you going to play, the billionaire?

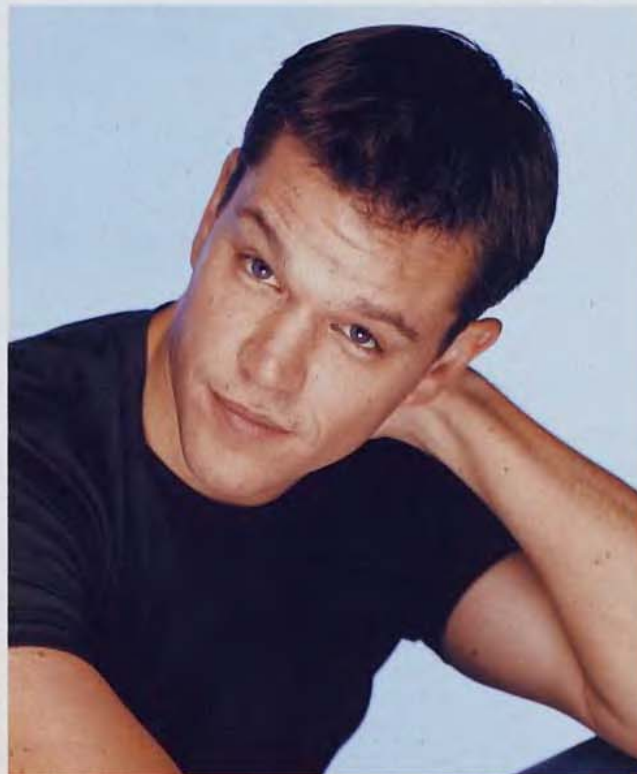
PLAYBOY: How does keeping a close watch on yourself affect your relationships, especially with women?

DAMON: The bigger fear is that you won't want to participate in intimate relationships because they push back at you and superficial relationships don't. If you're a movie star, then they really don't push back at you. Someone's usually just happy you're talking to them, which means you can walk around having meaningless encounters with just about everybody and live with the perception that you're the greatest guy in the world, without having anything or anyone close to you. Whether you're famous or not, close relationships require work. You still have to participate, be there and get called on your shit. It's easy to say, "You've called me on my shit. I don't want to talk to you anymore. I want to go have a drink down at the bar, where the guys say, 'Oh, you're great, just a regular guy.' I don't want you telling me that I've got to fucking clean up after myself." So the real thing is not to take that hall pass to great-guydom, which is really superficial in the end.

PLAYBOY: You've had several relationships with fellow actors that seemed to matter. Should you have handled your breakup with Minnie Driver, your then-

girlfriend and *Good Will Hunting* co-star, differently? You announced it on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*.

DAMON: No, that show aired three weeks after we had broken up, and the relationship lasted less than six months. I said on the show, "We're still friends. I really like her, but I'm single." And she said, "I found out that he broke up with me on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*." She later retracted that and said, "I knew it was serious only when he said it on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*." But even if that wasn't true, the damage had been done. *Good Will Hunting* had come out only a month before, and that was my first experience of getting stung. So the honeymoon of thinking it's all good was



I still care way too much what other people think. One thing Ben does better is live life on his terms.

relatively short-lived. I wouldn't be in that relationship now.

PLAYBOY: Why not?

DAMON: Being so excited you're in a movie that you immediately fall in love with your co-star hasn't happened to me since then.

PLAYBOY: Is falling in love with co-stars a good habit to break?

DAMON: Most people get over it pretty quickly. It's like summer camp. The first year you go—and maybe even the second year—you have a summer romance, but finally it's not that big a deal.

PLAYBOY: Before the release last year of your comedy about conjoined twins, *Stuck on You*, rumors circulated that you and co-star Eva Mendes were stuck on

each other. Not true?

DAMON: No, not at all. I don't want to talk about Eva's personal life, but she has been in a serious relationship for years. I'm friends with her boyfriend; his nickname is the Invisible Man. It's funny that she's constantly being linked to people, but George, her boyfriend, is always there.

PLAYBOY: After you've broken up with a woman, do you remain friends or do you keep a distance?

DAMON: It depends. Obviously with Minnie there was no relationship after that, partly because I was disappointed in the attempt to make a story out of something I didn't think was a story. It didn't make me angry; it just bummed me out.

PLAYBOY: Does media scrutiny speed up the demise of relationships between famous people?

DAMON: My most recent relationships have not been with famous women, but I was with a very famous woman, Winona Ryder, for a couple of years, and we had a great relationship. It ended for reasons far more pedestrian than, say, a mad orgy at the Four Seasons during which my feelings were hurt because Richard Gere was too interested in her. [laughs]

PLAYBOY: You and Ryder hadn't been together for years, but what was it like for you when the press scorched her for the 2001 shoplifting incident?

DAMON: When she was being pilloried in the press, to me it was like, "This too shall pass"—that somehow her true colors would come out and she would get past it because she's a great woman. It's the same way I feel watching Ben get ass-raped by the media. I think, That's my friend. You have no idea who this person is, and you don't even care. You're just trying to get your story filed and get in a couple of good zingers. So that part sucks, seeing somebody you care about being treated

poorly in public. On the other hand, if they're really good people, they're going to be fine.

PLAYBOY: Have your romantic relationships been handled badly by the media?

DAMON: To a certain degree, if you end up in the sights of *Us Weekly* or one of those other magazines, if you're the cover child or the cover couple, then you're fucked. The key is how not to be that guy. To not be that guy, don't go out and do stupid shit. If you go out and attack a paparazzo or get into bar fights, you're just craving the attention. And don't date a celebrity. I don't think I could fall in love with a celebrity right now, because it would mean changing my lifestyle, and I like that my lifestyle feels

normal to me most of the time. I compartmentalize. There are these weird little blips where the celebrity side of things happen: I get dressed 10 minutes before a premiere, get out of the car and a hundred people take pictures. I shake a couple of hands at the party, and 45 minutes later I'm back home in my sweatpants or walking down the street to get a pack of cigarettes or a magazine.

PLAYBOY: You're in a relationship now with Luciana Barroso, an interior decorator. How do you keep relationships going, considering the long overseas shooting schedules you've been on lately?

DAMON: I'm very happy with this woman. Casey Affleck, Ben's brother, is about to have a baby, and I saw how everything changed with my brother when his kids came. I want a family someday. The long-distance thing is tough. But I assume eventually you think, Well, summer camp's nice, but I own a pretty nice house, and that's okay with me. I've never been in a significant relationship for longer than two and a half years, so that will all be new ground. Presumably these things deepen and grow, so those other things become less tempting. But if the price to pay for having dalliances forever is not having a family and children, then from where I'm sitting, the dalliances are not worth it.

PLAYBOY: How did watching Affleck's relationship with Jennifer Lopez affect you?

DAMON: Ben got killed because he was in a high-profile relationship and the press fucking teed off on him. They believed, cynically enough, that he was trying to get publicity. What they never understood was that Ben is far too smart not to know that being in that relationship was the worst thing for his career. It was absolutely destroying his career. He stayed in it because he loved her. The cynical perception was that he was courting the attention, when he was actually embarrassed by the attention.

PLAYBOY: As an old friend, could you have done anything to advise him?

DAMON: It was one of those weird situations where there was absolutely nothing you could do. People weren't going to stop paying attention to that relationship—it was selling too many magazines. But privately, you saw how much love was there. As a friend, the only course of action is to support your friend, support the relationship and talk shit about the people who are writing things.

PLAYBOY: Couldn't you say, "How about trying to dial down the big spending, the trips, the bling-bling?"

DAMON: No, no way. One thing Ben has always done much better than I do is live life on his terms, not taking into consideration what something might look like. I still care way too much what other people think. But if people are not in your

Spy vs. Spy

Who's the best secret agent on film? A look at the contenders



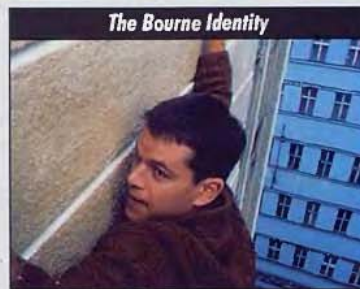
James Bond

Spy: Pierce Brosnan as 007, unkillable secret agent, swordsman and double entendre king, recruited by the British to save the world

Deadly weapons: incredible gadgets, martial arts moves, suave sarcasm, patent leather hair

Slogan: "Governments change. The lies stay the same."

Mission accomplished: It's been 42 years since the first Bond flick, and still nobody does it better.



The Bourne Identity

Spy: Matt Damon as David Webb, alias Jason Bourne, CIA-trained assassin recruited to save the world

Deadly weapons: martial arts, multiple-language fluency, ability to outsmart anyone

Slogan: "I'm on my own side now."

Mission accomplished: Damon plays the haunted, paranoid, memory-challenged, turtle-neck-wearing badass so well, he's rumored to be headed for yet another sequel.



XXX

Spy: Vin Diesel as Xander Cage, extreme-sports athlete and adrenaline junkie recruited by the U.S. government to save the world

Deadly weapons: dart-gun revolver, tats and a wicked bad 'tude

Slogan: "Stop thinking Prague police and start thinking PlayStation. Blow shit up!"

Mission accomplished: He's Bond for boneheads, but Diesel won't be lumbering his way through the sequel. Ice Cube is replacing him.



Mission: Impossible

Spy: Tom Cruise as Ethan Hunt, gym rat and covert-operations team member recruited by the U.S. government to save the world

Deadly weapons: fab gadgets such as eye-glasses with built-in cameras

Slogan: "We just rolled up a snowball and threw it into hell. Now we'll see if it has a chance."

Mission accomplished: As long as Cruise can pull off those action scenes, he's golden.



The Sum of All Fears

Spy: Ben Affleck as Jack Ryan, young low-level CIA analyst recruited by the U.S. government to save the world

Deadly weapons: expertise in Soviet affairs and satellite-photo interpretation, Chechnya-size chip on his shoulder

Slogan: "The bomb is in play."

Mission accomplished: Affleck is okay as a guy who's been romantically smacked upside the head, but as a CIA ace? Hardly.



Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery

Spy: Mike Myers as Austin Powers, freeze-dried 1960s-era spy and lech defrosted by the British government to save the world

Deadly weapons: bad teeth, serious chest hair and an arsenal of single entendres

Slogan: "Shall we shag now, or shall we shag later?"

Mission accomplished: Do we want Myers ever to stop skewering spy flicks? Oh be-have.

—S.R.

inner circle, you don't have to spend your life worrying. The first time I met George Clooney was at his house soon after *Good Will Hunting*, and the first thing he asked was, "How are you doing?" I said, "I'm doing okay." After giving me some really good advice, he said, "Don't let them keep you inside," which was this great piece of wisdom Paul Newman had dropped on him at one point.

PLAYBOY: So you and Affleck aren't staying inside.

DAMON: Ben, much more than I, has lived by that from the beginning, and he didn't need anybody to tell him. Ben will do stuff and know what the perception is going to be, but he doesn't care. With both Ben and me at this point in our lives, it's like we care less just because we're okay now. I'm fine. Say what you want. I don't fucking care anymore. You can't alter perception, so there's no reason to spend your life worrying about it. I doubt Ben will pick up another movie magazine in his life. He'll read this, though. [laughs]

PLAYBOY: Is the media accurate in portraying Affleck as having an addictive personality?

DAMON: I don't think so. Both of us smoke like freight trains, but based on that, would you say I've got an addictive personality?

PLAYBOY: You've never been in rehab,

though, and he has.

DAMON: No, I've never been in rehab. Ben made a choice to do something that was extremely preemptive. Here's a guy who comes off three movies in a row and has never been late for work, has never missed a line and gets phone calls from people saying, "I'm really impressed. We just put you in a \$90 million movie and you were great. The whole crew loved you, and we had no idea." To label him with that is wrong and just easy and judgmental. He's much more complicated.

PLAYBOY: Let's talk about your childhood. How did your parents' divorce affect you?

DAMON: I have no recollection of their being together. I was two, so it seemed like a normal childhood to me. To this day I have only one friend whose parents are still married. All the rest are divorced, so I didn't feel that everyone else got to sit around at exactly 6:30 and have dinner, and why did I get fucked here? My mother and father grew up in a generation when no one divorced, and they wanted the kids to feel okay. They were always telling us, "It's okay that we're divorced." And we were saying, "Yeah, we know. We love both of you, you both love us, it didn't work between you, and that makes total sense to us."

PLAYBOY: Did studying at alternative schools and growing up with your mother and brother in a politically minded

experimental co-op house set you apart? **DAMON:** My mother is a professor of early-childhood education. I'd come home and she'd be watching cartoons, counting the acts of violence and commenting how the shows were becoming commercials to sell products to children and teach them how to use them. She said, "A generation of children will suffer because they're being desensitized to violence and are not being protected from these corporations." She predicted something like Columbine a decade before it happened.

PLAYBOY: Did she keep war toys away from you?

DAMON: No, but she encouraged us to play with toys that used our imaginations. As a result, my brother and I ended up being very creative people. He's a painter and sculptor. Even when we were little kids I remember him spending hours drawing a bionic arm on a piece of construction paper so he could put it on me and I could run around getting into my own *Six Million Dollar Man* adventures. My mother created a really good environment for us to be who we were.

PLAYBOY: Did you get static from neighborhood guys who weren't raised in such an evolved way?

DAMON: I played with dolls when I was a kid—superhero dolls. I remember knowing that it might not be that cool to tell some of the other guys that I played with them, even if they were superheroes.

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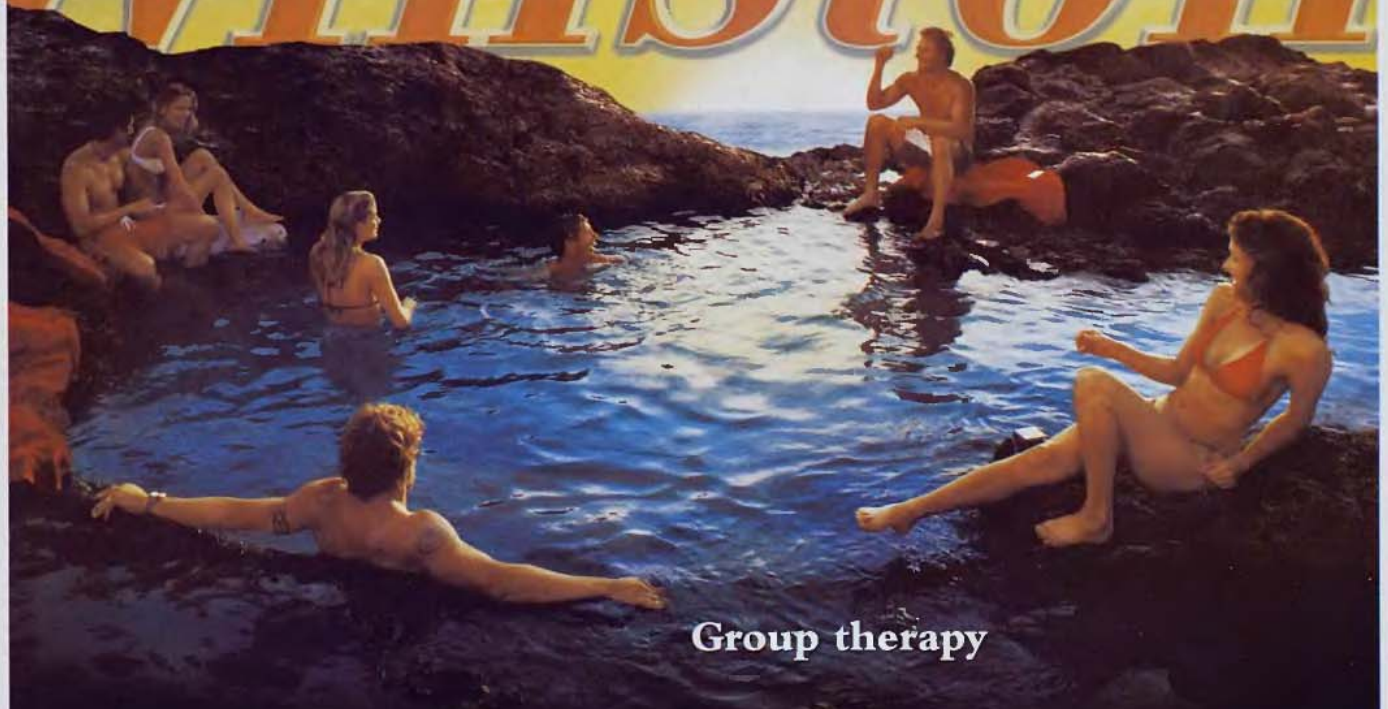
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My mom isn't a Pollyanna. She knows that if you leave two boys in a room—whether they're brothers or friends or whatever—eventually one of them is going to hit the other. One of her specialties is nonviolent conflict resolution, which was a huge topic around our dinner table. She would never ignore the fact that violence is a part of the human condition. It's about how it's handled in the media, in film and television.

PLAYBOY: Once you gave up your dolls, we assume you moved on to girls.

DAMON: I kissed my first girl in fifth grade, Jennifer Andella. I was always interested in girls, though obviously more so in high school, when it becomes something different from just making out for five minutes after school, then jumping on the school bus for home. Our high school had a really good drama department and a great teacher, and that was my reality for four years. And obviously pretty girls were in drama too.

PLAYBOY: Did you get into acting partly because of the pretty girls?

DAMON: It was probably more for the attention than the great-looking girls, though in junior and senior year I was really interested in the girls.

PLAYBOY: Do you have the drama department to thank for your first sexual experience?

DAMON: Yeah. It was the summer I was 16 years old, and we were doing the musical *Pippin*. Ben and I were thick as thieves through that school year. Ben can't sing, so he just worked on the crew. A group of us would get together every night, then try to find somebody 21 to get beer. The girls were suddenly a little faster in the summertime. My mother had left that summer for Mexico to learn Spanish, and my brother was already in college. He had this great girlfriend, and for a month they were the matriarch and patriarch of the house. My mother totally trusted us, and for good reason, in the sense that we weren't totally out of control. I could have friends stay over, but I wasn't supposed to have girls. I knew my brother wasn't going to dime me out, so that summer was the first time I had sex, which was just incredible.

PLAYBOY: So this girl was in the show you were doing?

DAMON: Yes, and she was one of my closest friends in the world—and still is, actually—a tremendous, incredible woman. She was lying on this pullout couch, which just about fit in my bedroom. This is a girl I'd wanted to have sex with since I was 12, and there she was, lying on the couch while I was in my underwear on my bed. I was trying desperately to think of anything to talk about so she wouldn't go to sleep. I didn't want the night to end. I was far too cowardly to make a move in a dark room on

a summer night. Finally she said, "You know we both want to do something, so why don't you just get over here and do it?" I don't think I would ever have gotten the courage to do it, so what she said was incredibly empowering.

PLAYBOY: Was that night the beginning of something with her?

DAMON: No, we went right back to being friends and have been friends ever since. We had this whole kind of respect and admiration for each other, so after that night it never got weird, like, "Oh my God, what do I say to her now?" or anything like that. I'm sure it fucks things up if you start sleeping with your friends, but in this case it didn't.

PLAYBOY: Did your mother ever catch you in compromising situations with anyone else or by yourself?

DAMON: No, I knew when my private time was, so I set my clock for those moments. Even if she had caught me, she would never handle it in a way that associated something like that with guilt or shame. She was really in tune with my brother and me, and we had an incredibly forthright relationship with her, so there was nothing we were embarrassed to tell her. The older I get, and as I start thinking about having children down the line and watch my brother raise his children, that's really amazing. It's hard to give a child the ability never to have to hide something, because most societal influences aren't pointing you in that direction.

PLAYBOY: Having been brought up with such strong liberal thinking, are you political?

DAMON: I have never voted in my life. My reasoning has always been—and this is the worst possible thing to say—that because I'm from Massachusetts, everyone I would have ever voted for didn't need my vote. But that's changing now because of where we're going in this country.

PLAYBOY: Are you even registered?

DAMON: No, but I'm going to register before this next election. I'll vote for John Kerry. The last election I had this feeling that everyone was just going toward the middle and it's the same thing no matter what, and it turned out to be the most politically critical moment in my lifetime. Now it's like you want to mobilize everybody to get out and vote because look what's at stake.

PLAYBOY: Growing up, did you ever have erotic crushes on celebrities?

DAMON: My brother and I were in love with Lisa Bonet, an absolute knockout. Really beautiful women have that thing in their eyes—a kind of sparkle or twinkle that just does it for me.

PLAYBOY: Did you ever meet Lisa Bonet and have to mask your childhood carnal thoughts about her?

DAMON: I did, but I think I covered my tracks by blurting out something like,

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"I've always been a big fan of yours." I'm sure she's heard that from guys before. That reminds me of when my brother and I were at a big dinner party in New York about five years ago. He saw Cheryl Tiegs and was like, "Wow, she still looks great. I have to go meet her. You don't know how many times I had sex with that woman." So he went over, and she was very nice, and he was very polite, but he was happy to go home and tell his wife that he'd met Cheryl Tiegs.

PLAYBOY: Did you have any other childhood idols?

DAMON: I thought Mickey Rourke was the coolest in *The Pope of Greenwich Village* and other movies. Ben and I used to say, "Man, he's fucking good," and when we'd leave the theater, we'd light cigarettes and try to swagger a little, but we were so far from that guy. And Kim Basinger and Mickey in *9½ Weeks*? Now that was a twofer—the coolest guy and the sexiest woman.

PLAYBOY: When you were 18 and Affleck already had an agent and was booking jobs, he helped you turn pro, and you got your first speaking role, in *Mystic Pizza*. Was there any competition between you?

DAMON: It's going to sound hinky, but that was never a factor. We pulled for each other. We were never in a situation where it was down to just me and him—actually we were with *Mystic Pizza*, but they hired me because I was two years older than Ben and the law said you couldn't use a minor on a night shoot. More often than not we'd both get called back for a part, we'd both feel good about ourselves, and then we'd get shot down when we went for the next round. That carried through later, to L.A. in the early 1990s, when we'd see friends' careers take off and feel like, "Well, fuck it, someone's going to play the role. I'd rather it be this friend of mine than some guy who's already working."

PLAYBOY: Actors who were already working in the early 1990s included Leonardo DiCaprio, Edward Norton and Chris O'Donnell. Any tales of jousting for jobs?

DAMON: I once said to Chris O'Donnell, who had the best agent of anybody at the time, "What's this *Scent of a Woman*? I heard it's the lead role, that it's from the guy who directed *Midnight Run* and Al Pacino is in it. Do you know what it is?" Chris said, "Yeah, I have the script." When I asked if I could borrow it, he said, "No, I need to practice." The whole cast of *School Ties*—me, Ben, Brendan Fraser, Cole Hauser—went to New York to audition, but Chris was the only one who had read the script.

PLAYBOY: And he got that job. You and Norton were apparently neck and neck for *Saving Private Ryan* and *Primal Fear*. The two of you later co-starred in

Rounders, so apparently you worked things out.

DAMON: Edward was always in the running for jobs. After he got *Primal Fear* I wanted to go up to him and say, "Just stop." After *Primal Fear* I auditioned for *The Rainmaker*, and when it came down to me, Edward and another guy, I thought I didn't have a chance. But Edward and I went out and got drunk together, and I said, "I'm fucked, but it's great to meet you, man."

PLAYBOY: But you still got the part. For *Courage Under Fire* you put yourself on a crash diet so extreme you nearly caused serious physical damage. Do you have residual health problems?

DAMON: It's not necessarily a scientific theory, but from a young age I've put myself in really high-pressure situations. After that movie, one of the medications they put me on was an anti-anxiety drug, Klonopin, because I had started to have symptoms such as blurry vision and hot flashes. Sitting in the waiting room of this great doctor at Massachusetts General Hospital, I read this article he happened to have written, I think for *The New England Journal of Medicine*, on exaggerated stress response. By the time I got through the first page, all the blood had gone out of my face. I walked into the doctor's office holding the article and said, "This is me."

PLAYBOY: And was it?

DAMON: Every single symptom. He asked how incredibly high-pressure situations like doing a movie affected me, and I said, "I don't fucking care. I deal with it." He told me, "It will manifest itself in another way. Your vision is blurry; you're having hot flashes. You're not okay." He said that I had stored all this stuff inside and there was a delay in feeling the symptoms. I went on medication for six months or something and felt weird taking pills at the age of 25. I felt it was doing damage to me psychologically because I'd always thought of myself as healthy and unassailable. I started to get better, to the point that I took myself off the medicine without calling him. Quickly after that I had some symptoms. The doctor told me to give the medication a few months, which I did, then went off it again.

PLAYBOY: Do you still get the attacks?

DAMON: I get symptoms, but they don't start snowballing now. I really love my job, and I don't feel the perspective with which I do it now would lend itself to having an anxiety attack.

PLAYBOY: After *Good Will Hunting*, a string of your big movies, including *The Legend of Bagger Vance* and *All the Pretty Horses*, stalled at the box office. Talk about a setup for an anxiety attack.

DAMON: I was off that list you want to be
(continued on page 149)

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Detroit, Death City

The Motor City has been a horror show for years. Most people have forgotten about it. But the human toll remains great



It's a throwaway city for a throwaway society, a place where the American dream came to die. No other U.S. metropolis has suffered a decline as steep as Detroit's. From "the arsenal of democracy" during World War II to a blue-collar Shangri-la in the 1950s and 1960s—where a man could go straight from high school to the factory floor and earn enough money to buy a house and a car and

support his family for the rest of his life—to a global symbol for what happens when cities go bad, a byword for violent crime, urban decay and racialized poverty. Today Detroit is America's forgotten city.

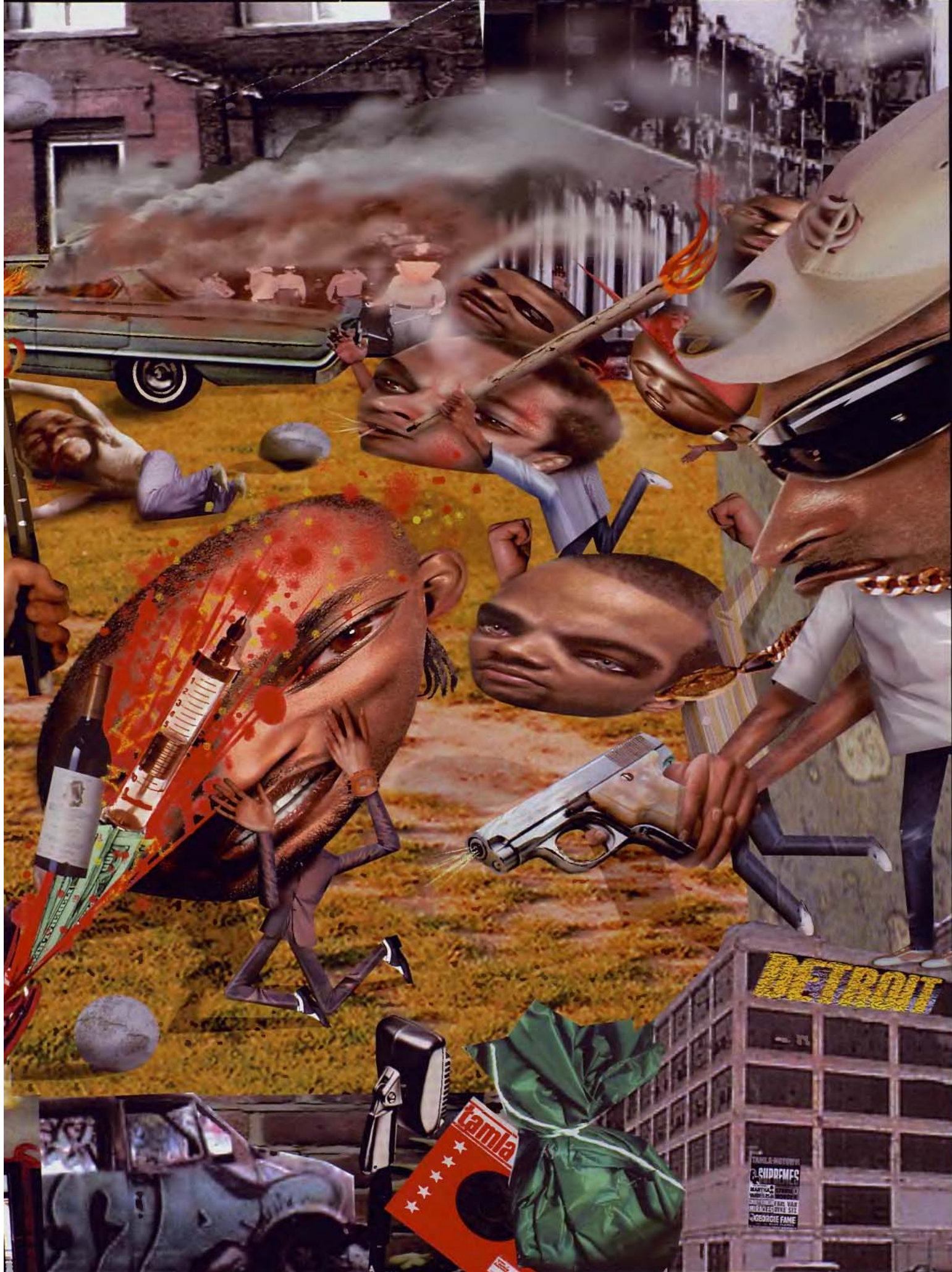
Detroiters complain endlessly about negative media portrayals of their town, usually just after they've told you of the latest horrible crime they've witnessed. They claim that journalists give their city a bad rap. But long gone are the days when reporters from all over the world flocked to Detroit on Devil's Night to capture the death throes of a great American metropolis. Once the most American of places, Detroit is now so far outside the mainstream that its plight rates lower than ethanol subsidies in our political discourse. Who cares—other than the residents—about the fate of Detroit, which even today would be regarded as a national disgrace in any civilized country? Other than knowing it as the home of white musicians such as Eminem, Kid Rock and the White Stripes, the rest of America couldn't care less about Detroit.

If Detroit were a character in a novel, it wouldn't be believable. What madness could possess a civilization to construct such a grand and magnificent place and then, within half a century, to obliterate so thoroughly what it had created? When talking about the state of Detroit, one is tempted to compare it to a natural disaster—some earthquake that laid waste to the landscape. Except there's nothing natural about what has happened to Detroit in the past

By Frank Owen

ILLUSTRATION BY JANET WOOLLEY







30-plus years. Humans built this city, and humans—an unholy and unconscious alliance of fat-cat businessmen and street-corner criminals—destroyed it. Now other humans are trying to bring it back from the dead.

Wayne State University professor Jerry Herron, who has written extensively about Detroit, compares it to a disposable industrial appliance—something that when used up gets thrown into the trash. “It’s the disposable character of the city,” he says. “Once the auto industry got here, the attitude was always to make your money and then move away, to dispose of the past and leave it behind. And that applied whether you were Henry Ford or the lowliest worker.”

That’s not how I imagined Detroit. When I was growing up in Manchester, U.K., Detroit was a mythical place, home of Tamla Motown, whose 1960s dance tunes—a slick, sophisticated sound that appealed across race lines and 3,000 miles of ocean—were popular throughout the 1970s among working-class youths in the north of England. Manchester and Detroit seemed like twin cities—grimy industrial centers that had seen better days but nonetheless played host to vibrant music scenes that provided a measure of colorful compensation for living in such a gray environment. Some people in my neighborhood regarded R. Dean Taylor (“There’s a Ghost in My House”) and the Funk Brothers’ Earl Van Dyke practically as legends. Plus, Detroit was the home of Iggy Pop and Alice Cooper. How cool was that?

So imagine my disappointment when I first came to Detroit in 1990 with my new bride to visit her parents. I thought Manchester was a dump, but Detroit made my hometown look like Venice. Burned-out houses, vacant storefronts, abandoned factories—whole neighborhoods looked as though an invading army had pillaged them. The atmosphere of desolation was pervasive. Once-proud art deco skyscrapers stood empty and forlorn. Architectural wonders such as the Statler-Hilton and Book-Cadillac hotels resembled homeless shelters. Michigan Central Station, formerly a handsome beaux arts building on the western edge of downtown, was in the process of being methodically gutted by vandals and thieves to the extent that the 18-story structure would soon become a skeleton.

Michigan Central railroad station.

SHRINK CITY

In 1950 Detroit’s population was 1.9 million, making it the fifth-largest U.S. city. By 2000 its population was 950,000.

VIEUX DETROIT

Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac founded the city on July 24, 1701, almost a century before Chicago was founded.

TOWN AND COUNTRY

Detroit is 82.8 percent African American, second only to Gary, Indiana. Livonia, nine miles from the city, is 96.5 percent white.

MOTOR CITY

Detroit’s yearly pedestrian fatality rate is the nation’s highest, at 5.05 per 100,000 residents. New York City’s rate is half that.

TAX AND SPEND

Detroit residents earn half what their suburban counterparts do. They also spend about half their disposable income in the suburbs.

DON’T BOTHER

Between 1978 and 1990 the city issued only 9,000 permits for new housing. In 1988 no building permits were issued.

The most startling thing I saw was the large tracts of open land everywhere. Nature seemed to be bursting through the cracked sidewalks. Wildlife—possums, raccoons, foxes, even pheasants—sported in the rubble. It was as if the city were reverting to the prairie it had been before the French arrived in the 1700s. I wasn't expecting to see people dancing in the street, in the words of the Martha & the Vandellas song. But I didn't expect a depopulated wilderness where the pavement was so broken that people had to walk in the street. It will take years, maybe decades, to fix this place, I remember thinking.

On subsequent visits I got to hear all the war stories and attend some of the funerals, and I saw a city in which life improved by increments, if at all, not so much rising like a phoenix from the ashes as crawling lethargically toward some semblance of normal city life.

Since my first visit, conditions have gotten better. Downtown, if not exactly bustling, is no longer a ghost town after dark. White suburbanites who hadn't journeyed past 8 Mile Road in 20 years are now walking the streets—going to Greektown Casino, a Tigers game at the new Comerica Park or a performance at the meticulously refurbished Detroit Opera House. Young professional couples are moving into luxury lofts by the river. The November opening of a Borders bookstore was cause for great municipal celebration. The current mayor, Kwame Kilpatrick, boasted that nine new restaurants had opened downtown in the past year. In his recent state-of-the-city address Kilpatrick announced that Michigan Central Station was to be restored and turned into a new police headquarters.

But in the neighborhoods surrounding downtown, little seems to have changed. The financial benefits of such large-scale commercial developments as the Renaissance Center and Comerica Park haven't filtered out to the adjacent residential districts. Poverty is still widespread, and crime is still out of control. Some areas appear as if the Sanitation Department hasn't paid a visit in years. Why has the pace of revival been so slow? Other American cities—New York, Philadelphia, Indianapolis—have come back from the brink. Why not Detroit?

"Beyond the murder rate, there are three statistics that tell you a lot about what's happening in Detroit," says Wayne State's Herron. "More than half the residents don't have high school diplomas, 47 percent of adults are functionally illiterate, and 44 percent of people between the ages of 16 and 60 are either unemployed or not looking for work. Half the population is disqualified from participating in the official economy except at the lowest levels."

Winter kill

Beneath the blight, Detroit is a city of churches and families

On a bright morning this past February, my wife and I flew into the new \$1.2 billion Edward H. McNamara Terminal at Detroit Metropolitan Airport, the latest in a long line of capital projects designed to resuscitate the city. Walking through a glass tunnel between concourses, we were surprised to find an ambient light-and-sound show. The vibe was akin to that of a chill-out room at a rave, perhaps an ironic nod to Detroit's status as the birthplace of techno music. Outside the terminal the plains of southeast Michigan were dusted with snow. It was a bad time to come. The city was in mourning for two cops—one 26, the other 21—who had been shot dead the day before by a motorist after he was pulled over during a routine traffic stop.

Even by Detroit standards this latest incident was particularly senseless. Explaining why he pumped nearly a dozen bullets into the officers, the alleged cop killer, who was quickly apprehended, said, "It was a mistake." The fact that the cops were white and their alleged killer black seemed not to matter at all. The outpouring of sympathy for the slain officers was genuine and widespread among Detroiters of all races. The only note of racial animosity was sounded when two white suburbanites vandalized the black-fist statue downtown—the one commemorating Detroit-bred boxer Joe Louis—and left pictures of the slain cops at the base.

The killing of the officers was part of a bloody surge in homicides in the first part of the new year. The day after, a pizza deliveryman was shot dead, and an armored-car guard was slain in the early hours of the next day. In 2003 Detroit posted the lowest number of homicides since 1967—about half what it had been in the mid-1970s. By April 13, 2004, however, Detroit had logged 110 murders, a nearly 50



Detroit's Black Panther Party headquarters, 1969.

percent jump over the murder rate in the first three months of 2003.

Just when Detroit was having some success in rehabilitating its reputation and getting ready to host the 2006 Super Bowl, politicians worried that the Murder City image was making a comeback.

If someone wants to commit a murder and get away with it, Detroit is as good a place as any to try. Year in and year out more than half the homicides in the city go unsolved. While the homicide rate has declined in recent years, and while New Orleans and Washington, D.C. have more murders per capita, Detroit continues to be the most dangerous major American city in terms of overall violent crime. Detroiters still die violent deaths at the rate of about one a day. To put that in perspective, if you compare killing rates over the past 35 years, Northern Ireland has been about eight times safer than the Motor City.

Sometimes it seems as if there are two Detroits. There's the Detroit that, to a British outsider, resembles a sleepy Southern town. The swelling cadences of the preachers you hear on a Sunday morning. The pickup trucks you see everywhere. The neatly tended trailer parks on 8 Mile Road. The market signs

URBAN RENEWAL

GM bought the Renaissance Center for \$72 million in 1996. The center, which opened in 1977, cost \$350 million to build.

FORDISM

In 1908 a Model T sold for \$850 (\$16,000 in recent dollars). In 1925 it cost \$290 (\$3,000 in recent dollars).

ALMSGIVERS

Thanks to the strength of its churches, Detroit is the nation's most philanthropic city. Residents give 12 percent of their income to charity.

FAMILY VALUES

Married couples head only 36.9 percent of Detroit families. Single fathers head 8.2 percent, single mothers 54.9 percent.

HOT WHEELS

Detroit is the nation's number one city for auto arson. In 1999 more than 3,300 cars were torched, costing insurers \$22 million.

VENEREAL CITY

Detroit ranks second (behind San Francisco) in per capita primary and secondary infectious syphilis cases.



Burn, baby, burn: A confrontation between cops and patrons of an after-hours club sparked the July 1967 riots that changed the face of the Motor City. Above: Troops try to keep order on Linwood Avenue. Left: the Ransom Gillis house, reduced to rubble by scavengers.

whose heroes are notorious drug dealers from the past: negative role models such as Young Boys Inc., the Chambers brothers and Richard “Maserati Rick” Carter, who was famously shot dead in his hospital room and buried in a coffin that looked like a Mercedes, complete with spinning tires and a grille. A nihilistic, dead-end culture of greed and violence so entrenched it seems impossible to uproot. A place where slinging drugs is the equivalent of Job Corps and crime is such an everyday part of life that it assumes the status of weather.

As I have found out, though, these two Detroits are not separate. They’re bound by ties of kinship and community: The drug dealer on the corner or the killer lurking in the shadows is somebody’s son or cousin or nephew.

Long hot summer

The riots of July 1967 marked the beginning of a brutal decline

that advertise CLEAN CHITLINS BY THE POUND OR COONS FOR SALE (meaning raccoon meat). The leisurely pace at which citizens go about their business. It’s a fundamentally decent and deeply religious world where strangers greet you on the street by saying “God bless you.” It’s a tight-knit community in which family values and compassionate conservatism are more than empty political slogans. This is a place where, as a local preacher told me, the real welfare department isn’t the one at city hall but the network of churches that crisscross the city. No wonder my wife’s cousin, a lifelong Detroiter, refers to his hometown as “up south,” the northernmost Southern city in America.

But there’s another Detroit—the barren, crime-ridden, postindustrial wasteland satirized in the *RoboCop* movies. The American dream turned Darwinian nightmare. A coldhearted, hyperacquisitive, dog-eat-dog world where life is worth less than a leather jacket or a pair of Nikes, where even criminals from the rest of the country fear to tread. A realm

This is a story about a father and son, one a 1960s revolutionary who became a well-known figure in the fight to save Detroit, the other a scion of relative prosperity who became a drug dealer. It’s the tale of my father-in-law and my brother-in-law. But it’s also the story of the Detroit I came to know through marriage. It’s a journey from hope to heartache, a drama that combines race, politics, violence and its victims. And it begins, as many Detroit stories do, with the 1967 riots, an event old-timers still talk about as if it happened yesterday.

The riots deeply scarred Detroit. The devastation was so extensive that, 37 years later, some neighborhoods have yet to recover. Whites fled the city in panic. Within five years Detroit would become a black-majority city. Sparked on a hot July night by a relatively minor incident between vice cops and patrons at an illegal after-hours drinking club (a blind pig, in local parlance) at 12th Street and Clairmount Avenue, it was the bloodiest and most destructive American insurrection in 50 years. It lasted five days and cost 43 lives and \$50 million in property damage. President Lyndon Johnson called in federal troops to quell the disturbance.

Not long after the riots, the Durley family—Leito Sr. and his wife, Yolanda, along with their three kids (my future wife, Chene; her older sister, Initia; and her only brother, Leito Jr.)—moved into a three-bedroom Tudor with a driveway and a garage on Manor Street, in a quiet, tree-lined neighborhood on Detroit’s west side.

It was a solidly middle-class family. Yolanda worked as a pharmacist at a local hospital, and her husband was a vice president at the Edison electricity company, a good job for a black man in those days. When the Durleys moved to the neighborhood they were the only black family on the block. “Not long after we moved in, FOR SALE signs started to go up,” remembers Initia.

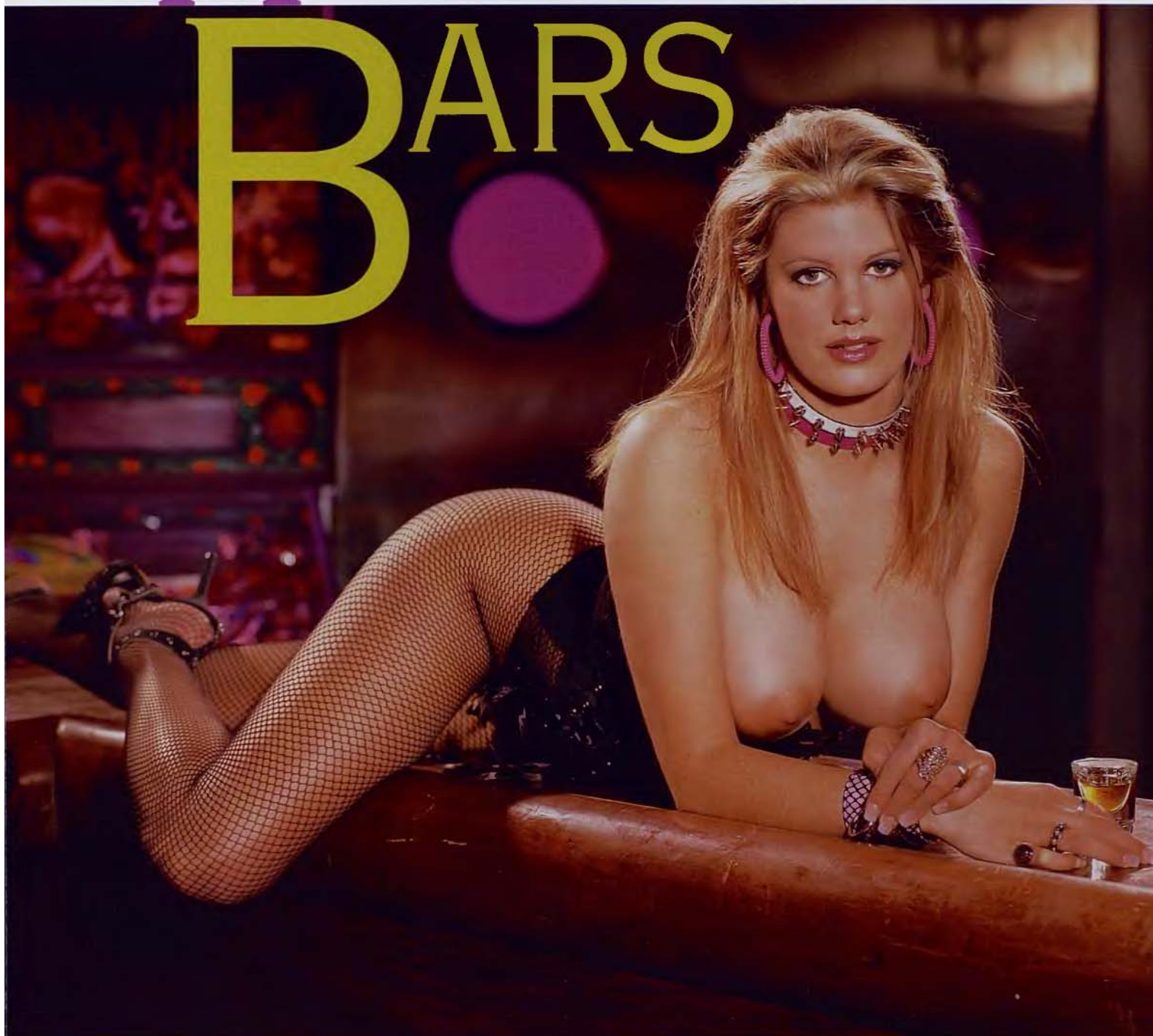
In his spare time Leito Sr. was information minister for the Republic of New Afrika, a political group that wanted to establish a separate black nation in Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina. “Free (continued on page 132)



"I never wear a bathing suit when the sea is this rough so I can be sure you're keeping a close eye on me!"

WOMEN BEHIND

BARS



Jill Christy (above and left) has heard a lot of lame pickup lines at her rock-and-roll bar in Ohio, but one stands out. "A guy asked me if I was pregnant," she says. "When I said no, he said, 'May I assist you with that?'" Jill is an expert at knowing your poison. "I match your face with what you're drinking," she says. "The next time you come up, I'll already have it made." Rebecca Leigh (right and opposite page) works at two bars in California and knows what puts the most tips into her pocket. "If three women are behind the bar, we do much better," she says. "One guy and two girls throws everything off. It's beneficial to have girl power."



Meet the
cocktail shakers
who make
us party until
last call

They'll give it to us straight up with a twist. Afterward they may even give us a martini, too. They are our favorite bartenders, the ones who have our hooch ready to go before we ask, the ones who pretend to listen intently to our confessions. We watch them set drinks on fire, toss bottles into the air, light people's smokes and look sensational. When we set out to find America's sexiest bartender, we knew it would be a daunting task. Hundreds of mixologists from around the country sent in pictures. We narrowed the list to the 10 tall glasses of gin you see here. Server Heather Smith believes her neighborhood tavern in Pennsylvania is already a winner. "Everyone is welcome," she says. "No one judges anyone. It's just a good time." Shioban Magee hopes the hoopla surrounding our sexy bartender contest will draw more thirsty customers to her New York bar. "If this boosts sales because people come in to see me, I'll be thrilled," she says. "I'll sign issues for them." Jenny Soto knows how to keep guys coming back for more at her establishment in California. "It's a fashion show behind the bar," Jenny says. "When I'm working I like to wear figure-flattering clothes. I love flirting, especially with shy guys. I love showering them with attention." Cheers to that, and to all the thirst-quenching professionals we've met along the way.





Unlike some other bartenders we spoke with, New York's Shiobon Moguee (above) isn't opposed to dating a customer. "I usually date the alpha male," she says, "especially if he has met me in the bar and has seen the way I act. I'm friendly. I dress provocatively. If they're okay with it, then they're okay with me." Jenny Soto (right and bottom left on opposite page) works at her father's bar in California. "I used to set drinks on fire," she says. "But the fire got out of control a few times, and my dad put a stop to that." Heather Smith (opposite, top left) knows how to dress for big tips at her bar in Pennsylvania. "I have a pair of lucky pants," she says. "When I wear them I clear at least \$400." Amy Preston (opposite, right) has mastered the mixing of nearly 100 martinis at her bar in California. When it comes to customers hitting on her, she's seen it all. "Women might say things that are really sexual when they come on to you, but they're not as grabby as the men are," she says. "I flirt with girls the same way I flirt with guys."







Having a positive attitude makes Jeanine Hass (left and above left) a big draw at one of Las Vegas's most popular nightspots. "I like positive people, a great sense of humor and a smile," she says. "I try not to concentrate on dislikes. They're a waste of time and energy." Everything tastes better after meeting Ohio bartender Beyea (top right). Her specialty? "A sweet tart," she says. "It's a shot with four Puckers: apple, cherry, raspberry and peach." When it comes to dating, Alba Clark (bottom right) craves a challenge. "On the best date I ever had we went motorcycling in the rain," she says. "We made love under a tree on the bike!" You may recognize Kara Monaca (opposite page) even if you've never been to her Florida lounge. (She's in our Girls of Summer special edition.) When asked why she doesn't date customers who came into her bar, Kara smiles. "All I meet are party people," she says. "But I know showing skin helps earn me better tips. I've been given \$50 and \$100 bills."

Log on to Playboy.com and vote for America's sexiest bartender.





GAME MASTERS



CARIBBEAN STUD, THREE CARD POKER, LET IT RIDE—NEW CARD GAMES POPUP IN CASINOS EVERY DAY. MEET THE MAVERICK INVENTORS BEHIND THE LATEST GAMBLING CRAZE



By
JOHN BLOOM

On the night I met Henry Lo I was hanging out on the slummy end of the Las Vegas Strip, at the Sahara. With its camel sculptures and vaguely Arabic signage, it's a legendary part of old Vegas that has become the ultimate low-roller joint. Instead of the Rat Pack cavorting in the lounge until five A.M., the best you can hope to see today are the occasional winners celebrating at the \$5 craps table.

As I killed time playing blackjack, I was also watching a lonely table by the bar, where a bored dealer named Uten had her cards fanned across the felt and her arms akimbo, facing the empty chairs but looking as if she might start filing her nails at any moment. She was attractive—as all dealers should be, in my opinion—so after an hour had passed with nobody hitting the table, I wandered over and noticed that the game was called 7 Card Thrill.

"I've never played 7 Card Thrill," I said to Uten, who I later found out is from Thailand, "but I'll give it a crack if you'll tell me the rules." This wasn't so easy, as Uten had never dealt 7 Card Thrill before. She had learned it just that day, and I was to be her first player. She motioned to her pit boss—a pleasant, boyish sort in a Wrangler cowboy shirt—and he came over to explain the rules.

The next thing I knew, four hours had passed and I was still playing 7 Card Thrill. It's a great game, like pai gow poker on fast-forward. It seems complex at first, but once you learn it you can knock out 40 or 50 hands in an hour and feel in total control of the strategy. It's a single-deck game in which players are dealt seven cards and try to make the best five-card poker hand from among them to beat the house. Other rules include a time-and-a-half payout for twin aces anywhere on the table and an optional side bet whereby players can wager that they'll have a pair of aces or better from among their seven cards. Faster than blackjack and pai gow but with elements of both, it's a wild game of streaks, surprises and moments of unbearable tension when the dealer reveals her hand.

After I'd broken the ice with Uten, a few more degenerates joined me at the 7 Card Thrill table, and soon we were getting raucous. Unlike in blackjack, players can't bust. Everyone has a sporting chance against the dealer until the last moment, which results in high-five camaraderie whenever the entire table wins.

And that's where Henry Lo came in. For a brief period in the second or third hour, the chairs at the table were all taken, but when one opened up a guy slid into the mix just to observe and cheer for the rest of us.

I didn't notice him right away, despite his oversized glasses and bowl haircut, but after I revealed one particular hand, he burst out, "Cool! You beat her with the ace-low straight!"

When Uten tried to claim the bet, he said, "No, that pays the player. It's just like pai gow." The pit boss was called over to confirm the cheerleader's assertion, and suddenly I was \$10 richer.

"I guess I should thank you," I said.

"No problem," he replied, grinning broadly.

When I finally cashed in my chips, the guy asked, "Do you like this game?"

"I love it," I told him. "Do you ever play it?"

"I invented it," he said.

It turned out I'd never encountered 7 Card Thrill before because this was the only table in the world where it was being played. Henry Lo, my new friend, was an accounting school dropout from south Philadelphia with a heavy Vietnamese accent and an affable manner. He was so bright-faced and rapid-fire, in fact, that he seemed to be starring in his own private infomercial. He had concocted the game three years earlier, he explained over a drink that he barely touched, and then tested it briefly at Sunset Station casino in Henderson, Nevada. After going through several versions and \$50,000 for lawyers, patents, table designs and fees for the independent game analyst required by the gaming commission, he'd finally talked the Sahara into taking a flier. "But the table is open only on weekends," he said. "And look where it is—behind the bar, where there's no traffic."

Still, he was excited to get a shot, however limited. "First I was a blackjack player," he told me, "but that game makes me nervous. It's stressful, there are a lot of decisions, and a bad player at the table can screw up your hand." He grimaced and threw up his hands, as though the painful memories of Atlantic City yahoos splitting face cards were too numerous to recount. "I was always mad when I played that. So I switched to pai gow, where nobody can screw up my cards. It takes forever to play one hand, though. I hate the commission, and a tie goes to the dealer, so I decided to make my own game—like blackjack but not so nerve-racking, and faster than pai gow. My game is more relaxing." Lo beamed and his pupils enlarged as he raved on, a man possessed.

That was three years ago; for one night we had made 7 Card Thrill the hip game at the Sahara. But when I returned the following night, Uten was standing there again, staring into space, her cards fanned and untouched. Lo was there too, passing out his 7 Card Thrill rules, which read SIMPLE!

EXCITING! RELAXING! ENJOYABLE! It was all true, but Lo was having flashbacks: Somebody was screwing up his hand again.

I guess I had always known that someone has to invent casino games, but I'd always assumed it was some 17th century Frenchman at the court of Versailles. Lo was my first introduction to a fascinating new breed of gambler fostered by the casino boom of the past 15 years—a gambler who bets not just with money but with his career. The casino-game inventor, a profession that didn't exist two decades ago, is strictly a long-shot player. The odds of his game breaking through are incredibly slim, perhaps 1,000 to one. But the payoff can be enormous—\$10 million a year.

And just as there are good poker players and bad poker players, so there are successful game inventors and spectacularly unsuccessful ones. It's a veritable gold rush, with every dealer, player and casino hustler who's ever had a smidgen of an idea for a new game heading to the patent office, trying to strike it rich. Most of them are only tinkering with an idea, but others, such as Lo, have an unsettling gleam in their eye, like Walter Huston's in *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*.

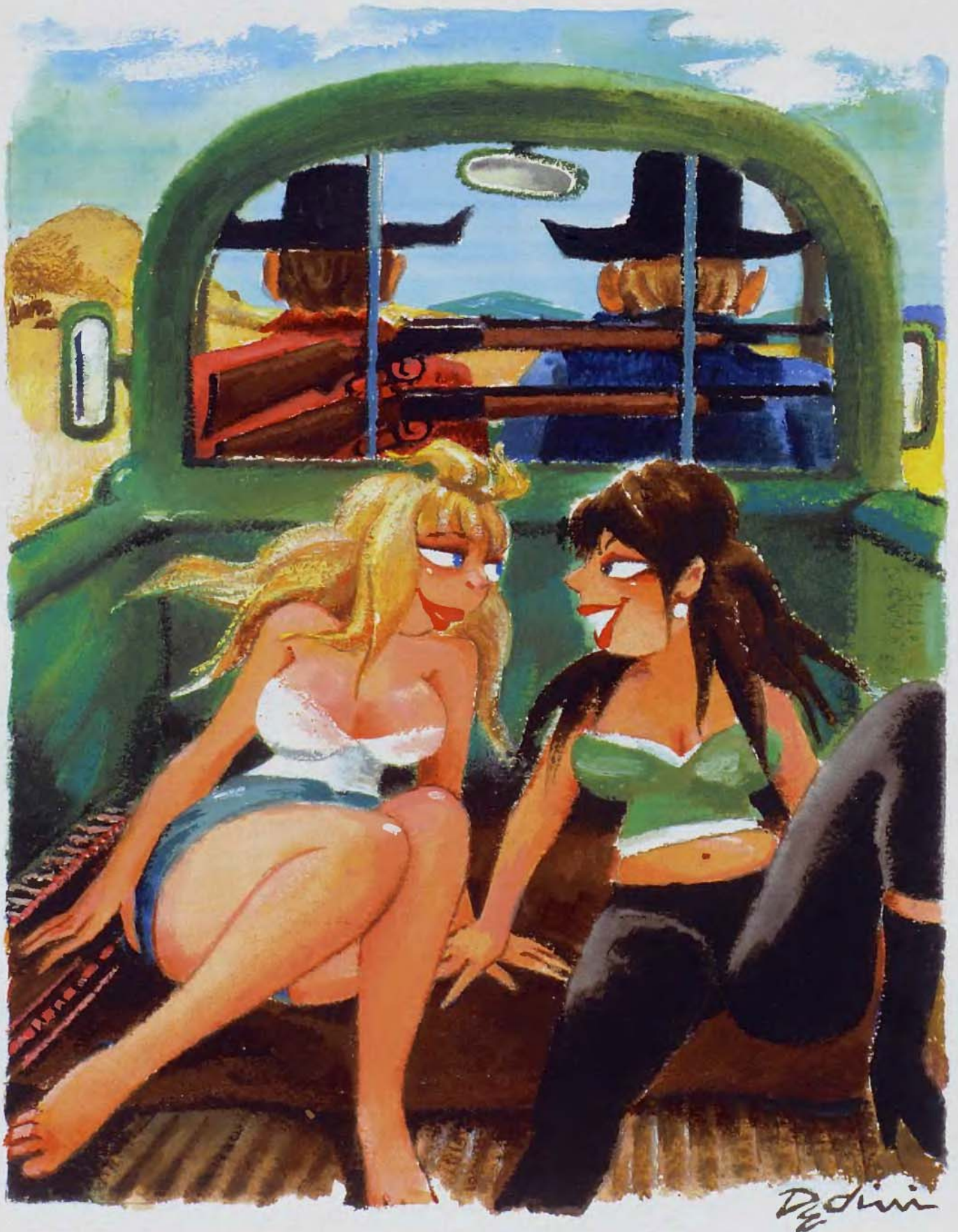
There are good reasons to be optimistic about the future of card games, even in slot-crazy American casinos. One recent weekend I motored to Atlantic City, where the Borgata, one of the newer, more lavish resorts on the Boardwalk, is rewriting history by loading the floor with table games. "It's the most exciting place I've ever worked," says Jim Rigot, the Borgata's vice president of casino operations. He is a 29-year casino veteran who oversees 139 tables and more than 1,000 gaming positions—an unheard-of number in a town known for catering to little old ladies from Scranton. "We're actually taking out slot machines to put in more tables—just the opposite of what everyone else is doing. The demand is clearly there."

"What we discovered," says Larry Mullin, the Borgata's executive vice president, "is that table games declined in Atlantic City in the past 10 years because players were so discriminating that they left here and went to Connecticut or Vegas. We started catering to them, and they came back. If you sit down at a table at the Borgata, you'll get a premium import beer in a bottle. It may sound like a small thing but not if you're accustomed to getting an Old Milwaukee in a cup. The table-games player has more money, is younger and expects a lot more."

The economics are not hard to figure out. The average bus customer to Atlantic City has a \$40 gambling budget. If he can find a \$10 blackjack table—and he won't on weekends at the Borgata, which (continued on page 80)



DEREK WEBB (TOP) IS THE BILL GATES OF CARD-GAME INVENTORS. HIS THREE CARD POKER BRINGS IN MORE THAN \$10 MILLION A YEAR. HENRY LO (BOTTOM), AN ACCOUNTING SCHOOL DROPOUT, WANTS TO PULL OFF THE SAME FEAT WITH HIS OWN NEW GAME.



"Big hats—big guns—et cetera!"



THE SOPHISTICATED SUMMER GRILL

Ingredients: four of the world's finest chefs, four sizzling summer recipes, one backyard and you. Season with liquor and beautiful women to taste

By Kent Black

Summer is upon us in full force, and with it comes the instinct to cut loose and indulge yourself. It's time for icy cocktails, gorgeous women and outdoor dining. Unlike the winter party season, when hosts blow the dust off their fine china and crystal, summer means cooking over charcoal. Meals are served on paper plates, drinks in plastic cups. And in lieu of napkins, there's always a garden hose.

This summer, why not try something special? Just because you're cooking outdoors doesn't mean your creations should fail to weaken a woman's knees. Good company aside, the soul of a party can always be sipped from a glass or stuck with a fork—and a grilled meal can be as sophisticated and ambitious as anything you would serve on Christmas Eve.

"The goal in grilling is to excite the flavors so you can really taste them," says Eric Ripert, the 39-year-old executive chef of Le Bernardin, which the Zagat guide has voted the restaurant with the top food in New York City four years in a row. Ripert himself won the 2003 James Beard award for outstanding chef in the U.S., which is kind of like winning an Oscar for best performance in a kitchen. "You must find the best ingredients—the freshest fish, the best tomatoes," he adds.

Good advice indeed, and there's more where that came from. To help turn your summer fete into a four-star feast, *PLAYBOY* visited the kitchens of four New York chefs, some of the finest cooks in North America, and asked each of them to prepare one signature dish using a grill—the kind of fare they would serve at their own backyard party. The distinguished cast:

Ripert, Tom Colicchio of Gramercy Tavern and Craft, Marcus Samuelsson of Aquavit and Riingo, and David Waltuck of the inimitable Chanterelle. We asked them to prepare dishes that would appeal to seafood lovers, steak freaks and everyone in between. While their offerings vary wildly, the chefs are unanimous in their approach to outdoor cooking.

For starters, avoid the inferno at all costs. "The minute you put anything over an open flame," says Colicchio, "you're going to get a tough, dry exterior and an uncooked center with a charred taste. The trick is to sear over high heat and then move your food to a cooler part of the grill to finish cooking."

Another steadfast rule: Prepare ahead of time. A good portion of the recipes that follow—Samuelsson's summer

vegetables, Ripert's yogurt sauce, Waltuck's duck-fat béarnaise and Colicchio's classic bordelaise—can be made well before your guests arrive. The last thing you want is to let them see you sweat, slicing and scorching in a panic when you should be clinking cocktail glasses and tending to their whims. And God forbid you should run out of booze. Always keep the bar properly stocked.

Last but never least, make sure that you have a great time. The party's vibe starts with you, the host. Whether you're entertaining two dozen guests or just one, you might as well indulge your every desire: cocktails, women, music, sunshine and some plates of fantastic summer fare—four examples of which we're serving on the next two pages. They're a little more time-consuming than your average cheeseburger, but the payoff is worth it. Feast your eyes and your stomach will follow.



Our lineup of top chefs, photographed while working the grill in their Manhattan kitchens (clockwise from top left): Marcus Samuelsson of Aquavit, Eric Ripert of Le Bernardin, Tom Colicchio of Gramercy Tavern and David Waltuck of Chanterelle.



MARCUS SAMUELSSON AQUAVIT AND RIINGO

You know you're in for an experience the moment you enter the dining room of Aquavit, just across the street from the Museum of Modern Art. The huge six-story atrium is a converted townhouse that once belonged to Nelson Rockefeller. With a garden, a waterfall and a one-of-a-kind menu, it has an atmosphere that was made for impressing your girlfriend.

Though Aquavit is heralded as America's premier Scandinavian restaurant, its menu is a United Nations of flavors. Chef Samuelsson, 33, was born in Ethiopia, raised in Sweden and trained in France at Georges Blanc (which rates three Michelin stars). He brings all those influences to the table (example: his warm beef carpaccio served in mushroom tea). Riingo, his new ultra-chic restaurant at New York's Alex hotel, takes the experience in a different direction, adding Japanese flavors to its menu and its elegant interior.

How does Samuelsson define the essence of grilling? "There's something primal about it—men cooking outdoors, the hunters gathered around the fire." His chicken dish, however, is anything but primitive. *Exquisite* is more the word.

• Grilled Chicken and Summer Vegetables (Serves 6)

- 2 whole chickens
- 2 eggplants, cut into 2-inch cubes
- 6 scallions
- 8 cloves garlic
- 4 shallots, cut in half
- 1 cup pine nuts
- 1 cup chopped arugula
- 1 cup chopped spinach

Marinade

- 1 cup olive oil
- 1 cup soy sauce
- 1 cup balsamic vinegar
- juice from six limes
- 2 bird's-eye chilies, finely chopped
- 4 sprigs thyme
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 2 tablespoons miso paste

Preheat oven (to 250°) and light grill. For the marinade, whisk olive oil with soy sauce and balsamic vinegar. Add lime juice, chilies and thyme, then sesame oil and miso. Brush marinade over chickens. Stuff chickens with eggplants, scallions, garlic, shallots and pine nuts. Tie chickens closed and bake for 45 minutes, brushing with marinade and turning them every 10 minutes. Remove chickens and cut into legs, thighs and breasts. Brush with marinade (use a clean brush) and grill breasts four minutes on each side, legs and thighs eight minutes on each side. Sauté vegetables for five minutes or so, then toss with arugula and spinach. Serve on the side.

ERIC RIPERT—LE BERNARDIN

Among gourmands with pockets full of money, there may be no hotter seat in New York than at a table at Le Bernardin. Known for its religious reverence for seafood, this is where you go to experience classic service and the cuisine of Ripert. Raised in Andorra, on the border between Spain and France, Ripert came of age in the exclusive kitchens of Paris before arriving at Le Bernardin in 1991. Critics were soon raving about his sea scallops with foie gras and roasted tournedos of monkfish.

When cooking outdoors at his summer house, Ripert lays black slate over the grill. The slate crisps the outside of a piece of fish while keeping it from drying out. "When you grill tuna or swordfish, the steak should be no more than three fourths of an inch thick," he advises. "Otherwise the crust will become too dry by the time the middle is warm."

• Seared Tuna Kebabs With Yogurt Sauce (Serves 4)

- 1 pound tuna steak, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 red peppers, seeded, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 yellow peppers, seeded, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 medium zucchini, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 red onion, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 tablespoons herbes de Provence
- salt and pepper
- olive oil

Yogurt Sauce

- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1 cup cucumber, peeled, seeded and diced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon chopped chives
- juice of 1 lemon
- salt and pepper

Light the grill and lay the slate over it. While it heats, make your sauce. Combine yogurt, cucumber, garlic, chives and lemon juice in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper, and set aside. In a medium saucepan of boiling salted water, blanch peppers, zucchini and onion for one minute. Drain in a colander and refresh with cold water. Thread tuna and vegetables on metal skewers and season with salt, pepper and herbes de Provence. Smear oil lightly on the hot slate. Sear kebabs evenly for one to two minutes on each side. Transfer to a plate, and serve yogurt sauce on the side or drizzled on top.





DAVID WALTUCK CHANTERELLE

What is dining at Chanterelle like? Perhaps its essence is best captured by a *New York Times* reviewer who gleefully sampled the menu: "Virtually everything I've tasted has been satisfying. Pillows of ravioli stuffed with potatoes come with both white and black truffles. A terrine of foie gras is laced with the sweetness of white raisins, edged with the heat of black peppercorns." Hungry yet?

Waltuck, 49, wasn't flaunting a rarefied pedigree in 1979 when he opened Chanterelle, a bastion of elegance, romanticism and imaginative French cuisine. Born and bred in the Bronx, he opened Chanterelle when he was just 24—an impressive feat, considering that his restaurant has twice earned four stars from *The New York Times*.

His duck recipe is the most ambitious dish from our group of experts—and that translates to serious extravagance. Hey, you have to pay to play.

• **Duck Mixed Grill**
With Duck-Fat Béarnaise
(Serves 6. All things duck are available at dartagnan.com.)

- 2 duck breasts, separated
(remove two thirds of the fat from breast)
- 6 duck sausages
- 3 duck-leg confits (separate legs from thighs)
- 6 half-inch-thick pieces of foie gras, about 1 ounce each flour

Duck-Fat Béarnaise

- ½ cup tarragon vinegar
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped shallots
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped fresh tarragon
- 1 tablespoon whole black peppercorns
- 3 egg yolks
- ¾ cup rendered duck fat salt and pepper

Combine vinegar, white wine, shallots, most of the tarragon (save two tablespoons for later) and pepper in a sauce pot. Bring to a boil and reduce by two thirds, then strain. In a metal mixing bowl combine the reduction and egg yolks; whisk over a pot of simmering water until frothy and hot to the touch. Eggs must be cooked but not curdled. Meanwhile, heat duck fat; it should be very warm but not boiling hot. Remove from heat, and whisk duck fat gradually into eggs. You should end up with a thick, pourable sauce. If it gets too thick, add a little hot water. Season with salt and pepper to taste and add reserved tarragon. Keep in a warm place—not too hot or sauce will curdle, not too cool or it will solidify.

On a grill (not too hot), cook duck breasts until rare and the sausages for about five to 10 minutes, flipping and moving the breasts to avoid flare-ups. Duck confits need only to be crisped on the skin side and reheated. Last thing on the grill: the foie gras. Dust lightly with flour and grill quickly so it cooks rare. Plate one piece foie gras, four slices duck breast, one sausage and one piece confit per person. Drizzle on duck-fat béarnaise. Grilled asparagus is a good accompaniment, as are potatoes fried in duck fat.

TOM COLICCHIO GRAMERCY TAVERN AND CRAFT

Few restaurants in the world are as perfectly romantic as Gramercy Tavern. In the mood for a casual date? The bar up front melds fine dining with a relaxed, cornucopia-themed decor. Feeling a bit more ambitious? The dining room in back is a shrine to everything edible. Think salt-baked salmon with pea shoots and rhubarb, or fondue of Maine crab with fava bean puree. Chef Colicchio, 41, opened Gramercy Tavern in 1994, and Craft (around the corner) and Craftsteak (in Las Vegas) more recently. One taste of his porterhouse with bordelaise and you'll know why he was one of five nominees for this year's James Beard award for outstanding chef in America.

• **Porterhouse Steak With Bordelaise Sauce**
(Serves 4)

- 2 porterhouse steaks, 2 inches thick
- kosher salt and freshly ground pepper

Bordelaise Sauce

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 small yellow onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 small carrot, peeled and chopped
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- 3 cups cremini mushrooms, chopped
- 1 cup shallots, chopped
- 1 bottle dry red wine
- 3 quarts veal stock
- 1 bunch thyme
- kosher salt and freshly ground pepper

Begin with the sauce. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion, carrot, celery, mushrooms and shallots. Cook until vegetables soften and begin to brown, about 15 minutes. Add wine and reduce until the pan is almost dry, about 25 minutes. Add stock, reduce the heat to medium, and simmer, skimming frequently until sauce is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, at least one hour. Strain sauce through a fine colander, add thyme, and season with salt and pepper. Set aside to steep.

Heat up your grill. Season steak on both sides with salt and pepper. Grill each side for about five minutes for medium rare. Transfer steaks to a plate and allow to rest in a warm place for five to 10 minutes. Meanwhile, remove thyme from sauce and warm the sauce over low heat. Slice steak and serve with sauce.



GAME MASTERS (continued from page 74)

"New table games are the future. If we don't constantly create new games, casinos will die."

has \$25-minimum tables because of the bigger crowds—he can lose it all in four bets. He's going to head for the nickel slots instead. The table-games player arrives by car and tends to be good for \$500 or more. It's the difference between fans in the bleachers and season ticket holders in box seats. And the Borgata has captured the box-seats market.

The problem for people like Lo is that casinos have captured that market so completely, they don't need any new games. The Borgata's table mix is 69 blackjack, 17 roulette, 14 craps, 11 Three Card Poker, five mini-baccarat, four pai gow poker, four Spanish 21, four Let It Ride, four Caribbean Stud Poker, three pai gow tiles, two baccarat, one big six and only one new game: Four Card Poker, recently launched by Shuffle Master Gaming. "I'm very much interested in any new product that comes along," says Rigot when asked about the paucity of new games. "My office is full of files bulging with new games. The problem, from our point of view, is that table games are just so labor intensive. For each new product we have to train the dealers, the supervisors, the pit managers, the shift managers, the surveillance guys and the gaming-commission staff. The training can take 12 weeks. Is it worth my time, the effort, all those resources? Especially when, conversely, a new slot machine requires no training at all."

"But new table games are the future," counters Barry Morris, executive vice president at Caesars Indiana, the largest riverboat casino in the world. "If we don't constantly create new table games, casinos as we know them will die."

To find out who the true king of table-game inventors is, I went to Morris, because he is an exception among casino execs. He's British, and the Brits love cards. Morris retired from a punk band in the late 1970s ("I had a safety pin through my nose, a chain attached to my ear and bright orange hair—25 years ago I would have been spitting on you!") to become a baccarat and blackjack dealer at "seedy sawdust joints" in the U.K. He then became a casino host at Paradise Island in the Bahamas, looking after jet-setters for Merv Griffin's Resorts International. In 1993 he jumped to Mississippi after gambling opened up there and quickly helped turn the state into the leading laboratory for new table games in America.

The 20th century saw so few new

games in part because the four that were popular in Nevada in 1931—the year gambling was legalized there—are the same four games that form the core of all American casino pits today: blackjack, craps, roulette and baccarat. Las Vegas had no reason to change because most of its customers were tourists who visited infrequently and were unlikely to get burned out on any particular game. But by 1995 almost every American lived within half a day's drive of a casino and the market was becoming saturated. The time was ripe for new sensations.

Barry Morris's big score: Three Card Poker, introduced at the Grand Casino in Gulfport, Mississippi when he was vice president of table games there. It is now the fastest-growing proprietary game in the world. "Derek Webb invented that game, and Derek and I made that game happen," says Morris. "Derek Webb is your man."

I'm in a barn-shaped casino set amid the bleak cotton fields of northern Mississippi, trying to hunt down Derek Webb. I eventually find him banging on the door of the Bally's Casino steakhouse, irritated that it hasn't opened on time. He's been working nonstop on his latest game, something called 2-2-1, and he's doing it in a place about as far from Vegas or Atlantic City as you can get—Tunica, Mississippi, home to 10 riverboat casinos. The one Webb has chosen is small even by Tunica standards. Most of its patrons are elderly players who graze at the buffet and then while away a few hours at the slots before climbing back into their RV or boarding a bus to West Memphis, Arkansas.

"We do it here," says Webb, "so that if we fail nobody knows about it." The king of table games turns out to be remarkably unprepossessing. He could blend easily into any crowd, with his delicate accountant's glasses, middle-class Midlands accent (he's from Derby, U.K., where his trade-unionist father worked in the Rolls-Royce factory) and prominent ears on a frank, slightly frowning face that reminds one of a character in a Hogarth print. He looks like the guy sitting next to you at the blackjack table who is polite, efficient and sociable but who just might be a card counter.

As he moves among the day-trippers and retirees, usually accompanied by his elegant wife, Hannah O'Donnell, he could pass for just another tourist wait-

ing for the early-bird buffet. No one would ever know that his income this year from Three Card Poker royalties in the U.K. alone will be about \$1.4 million.

Webb introduces himself to a crew of overworked dealers who have gathered at a converted blackjack table even though most of them have just come off an eight-hour shift and would rather be heading for their cars than chugging more caffeine to stay alert. Webb is in the dealer's position, and the dealers are in the players' seats.

"We have a new game for you!" Webb says, and they nod and smile agreeably. "It's called Triple-Hand Poker on the sign, but we call it 2-2-1. I represent the same company that brought you Three Card Poker and 21+3, so we've already had two winners for you, and we think you'll make this another one for us."

Webb is being either modest or cagey in using the royal *we*. When he takes a break later in the day, a corpulent dealer sidles up to him and asks, "So who did you say invented Three Card Poker?"

Webb flashes a sheepish grin.

"You did? You did it yourself?" The dealer rises from his chair and extends his hand. "You da man!"

Webb learned his trade in the smoky chaos of British card casinos, which tend to be so skanky that most women won't even go inside. There's no such thing as a social gambler in a British casino; everyone is there for greed and greed alone, and poker players are especially mercenary types. Webb made his living in places like that for 15 years. "I wasn't a great poker player," he says, "but I was a goodish player. It's all a matter of what the competition is, and I was better than the opposition in Derby. I could play three times a week with a £50 buy-in and make £8,000 a night. When I started playing in the States it was harder. The higher the stakes, the higher the level of competence and the less potential for things happening—the chance to outplay somebody is not available as often."

Webb is a throwback, one of those professional gamblers from the days of Nick the Greek and Amarillo Slim, who never had a real job and spent most of his life working his way from table to table, seeking the ultimate game in which the players were soft and the money was huge. From 1979 to 1994 Webb played seven-card stud, hold 'em and Omaha in Derby, London, Las Vegas and other international gambling centers. Then he had the epiphany that all card players talk about. He was playing hold 'em at the old Binion's Horseshoe in Vegas; in a two-man showdown with an Irishman he'd known from way back, he lost the \$50,000 pot on a single hand. It wasn't the largest he'd ever lost, but professional poker players, like

(continued on page 138)



*"He says it's an old Venetian tradition that the gondolier
always gets his share."*





fiction by T.C. BOYLE

UP AGAINST THE WALL

HOW DO YOU ESCAPE A DEAD-END JOB AND LIFE AT HOME?
FIND THE RIGHT FRIENDS

My childhood wasn't exactly ideal, and I mention it here not as an excuse but as a point of reference. For the record, both my parents drank heavily, and in the early days, before my father gave up and withered away somewhere deep in the upright shell of himself, there was shouting, there were accusations, tears, violence. And smoke. The house was a factory of smoke, his two packs a day of Camels challenging the output of her two packs of Marlboros. I spent a lot of time outside. I ran with the kids in the neighborhood, the athletic ones when I was younger, the sly and disaffected as I came into my teens, and after an indifferent career at an indifferent college, I came back home to live rent-free in my childhood room in the attic as the rancor simmered below me and the smoke rose through the floorboards and seeped in around the door frame.

After a fierce and protracted struggle, I landed a job teaching eighth-grade English in a ghetto school, though I hadn't taken any of the required courses and had no intention of doing so. That job saved my life. Literally. Teaching, especially in a school as desperate as this, was considered vital to the national security, and it got me a deferment two weeks short of the date I was to report for induction into the U.S. Army, with Vietnam vivid on the horizon. All well and fine. I had a job. And a routine. I got up early each morning, though it

was a strain, showered, put on a tie and introspectively chewed Sugar Pops in the car on the way to work. I ate lunch out of a brown paper bag. Nights I went straight to my room to play records and hammer away at my saxophone and vocals.

Then a day came—drizzling, cold, the wet skin of dead leaves on the pavement and nothing happening anywhere in the world, absolutely nothing—when I was in the local record store, turning over albums to study the bright glare of the product and skim the liner notes, killing time till the movie started in the mall. Something with a monumental bass line was playing over the speakers, something slow, delicious, full of hooks and grooves and that steamroller bass, and when I looked up vacantly to appreciate it I found I was looking into the face of a guy I recalled vaguely from high school.

I saw in a glance he'd adopted the same look I had—greasy suede jacket, bell-bottoms and Dingo boots, his hair gone long over the collar in back, the shadowy beginnings of a mustache—and that was all it took. "Aren't you...Cole?" I said. "Cole, right?" And there he was, wrapping my hand in a cryptic soul shake, pronouncing my name without hesitation. We stood there catching up while people drifted by us and the bass pounded through the speakers. Where had he been? Korea, in the Army. Living with his own little *mama-san*, smoking opium every night till he couldn't feel the floor under his futon. And I was a teacher now, huh? What a gas. And should he start calling me professor, or what?

We must have talked for half an hour or so, the conversation ranging from people we knew in common to bands, drugs and girls we'd hungered for in school, until he said, "So what you doing tonight? Later, I mean."

I was ashamed to tell him I was planning on taking in a movie alone, so I just shrugged. "I don't know. Go home, I guess, and listen to records."

"Where you living?"

Another shrug, as if to show it was nothing, a temporary arrangement till I could get on my feet, find my own place and begin my real life, the one I'd been apprenticing for all these years: "My parents'."

Cole said nothing. Just gave me a numb look. "Yeah," he said, after a moment, "I hear you. But listen, you want to go out, drive around, smoke a number? You smoke, right?"

I did. Or I had. But I had no connection, no stash of my own, no privacy. "Yeah," I said, "sounds good."

"I might know where there's a party," he said, letting his cold blue eyes sweep the store as if the party might materialize in the far corner.

"Or a bar," he said, coming back to me. "I know this bar—"

I was late for homeroom in the morning. It mattered in some obscure way—in the long run, that is, because funding was linked to attendance, and somebody had to be there to check off the names each morning—but the school was in such an advanced state of chaos I don't know if anyone even noticed. Not the first time, anyway. But homeroom was the least of my worries—it was mercifully brief, and no one was expected to do anything other than merely exist for the space of 10 minutes. The rest of the slate was the trial, one swollen class after another shuffling into the room, hating school, hating culture, hating me, and I hated them in turn because they were brainless and uniform and they didn't understand me at all. I was just like them, couldn't they see that? I was no oppressor, no tool of the ruling class but an authentic rebel, 21 years old and struggling mightily to grow a

I saw in a glance he'd adopted the same look I had—greasy suede jacket, bell-bottoms and Dingo boots, his hair gone long over the collar in back.

mustache because Ringo Starr had one and George Harrison and Eric Clapton and just about anybody else staring out at you from the front cover of a record album. But none of that mattered. I was the teacher, they were the students. Those were our roles, and they were as fixed and mutually exclusive as they'd been in my day, in my parents' day, in George Washington's day for all I knew.

From the minute the bell rang, the rebellion began to simmer. Two or three times a period it would break out in a riot and I would find myself confronting some wired, rangy semi-lunatic who'd been left back twice and at 16 already had his own mustache grown in as thick as fur, and there went the boundaries in a hard wash of threat and violence. Usually I'd manage to get the offender out in the hall, away from the eyes of the mob, and if the occasion called for it, I would throw him against the wall, tear his shirt and use the precise language of the streets to let him know in excruciating detail just who was the one with the most at

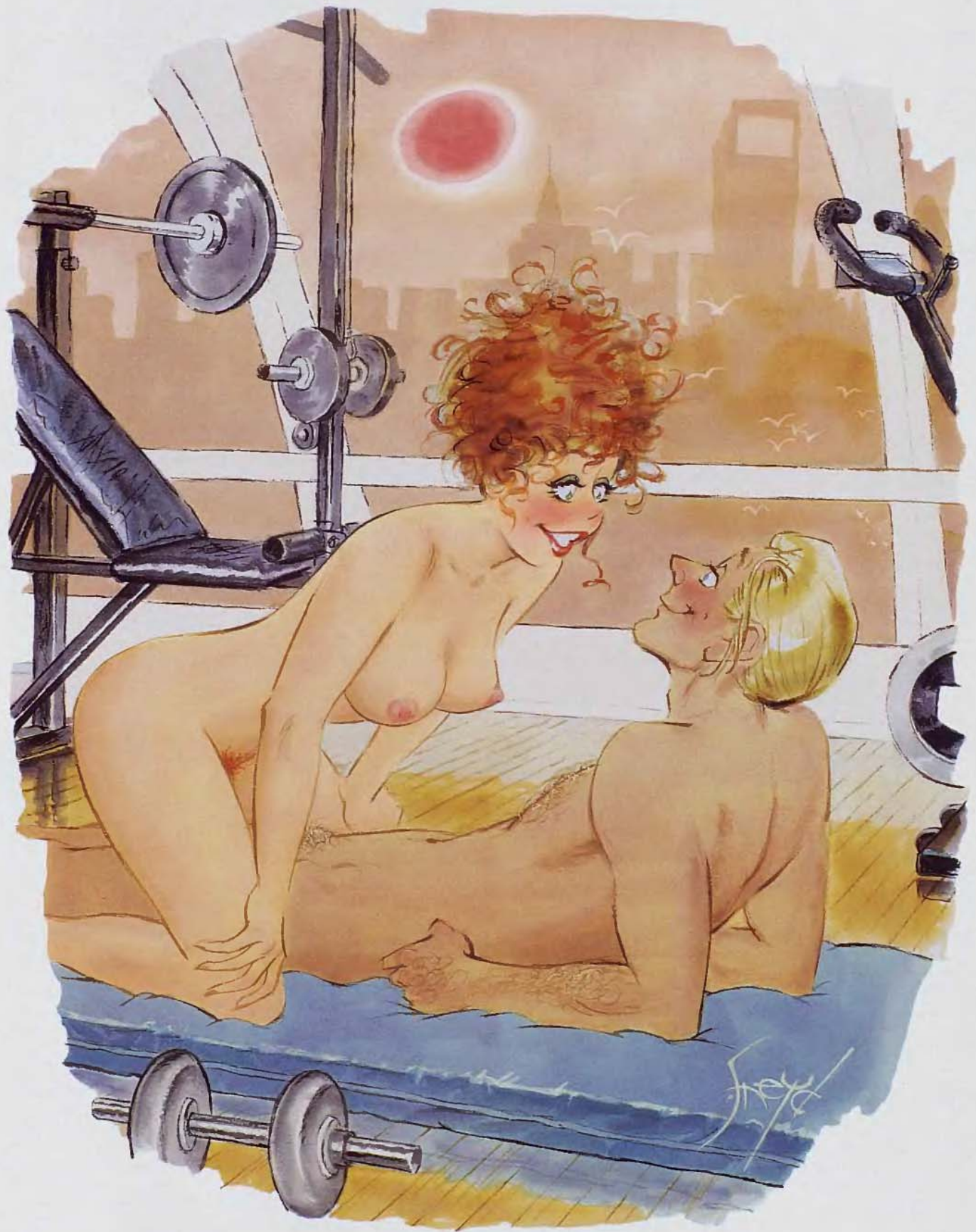
stake here. A minute later we'd return to the room, the victor and the vanquished, and the rest of them would feel something akin to awe for about 10 minutes, and then it would all unwind again.

Stress. That's what I'm talking about. One of the other new teachers—he looked to be 30 or so, without taste or style, a drudge who'd been through half a dozen schools already—used to get so worked up he'd have to dash into the lavatory and vomit between classes, and there was no conquering that smell, not even with a fistful of breath mints. The students knew it, and they came at him like hyenas piling on a corpse. He lasted a month, maybe less. This wasn't pedagogy—it was survival. Still, everybody got paid and was free to go home when the bell rang at the end of the day, and some of them—some of us—even got to avoid the real combat zone, the one they showed in living color each night on the evening news.

When I got home that afternoon Cole was waiting for me. He was parked out front of my house in his mother's VW Bug, a cigarette clamped between his teeth as he beat at the dashboard with a pair of drumsticks, the radio cranked up high. I could make out the seething churn of his shoulders and the rhythmic bob of his head through the oval window set in the back of the Bug, the sticks flashing white, the car rocking on its springs, and when I killed the engine of my own car—a 1955 Pontiac that had once been blue but was piebald now with whitish patches of blistered paint—I could hear the music even through the safety glass of the rolled-up window. "Magic Carpet Ride," that was the song, with its insistent bass and nagging vocal, a tune you couldn't escape on AM radio, and there were worse, plenty worse.

My first impulse was to get out of the car and slide in beside him—here was adventure, liberation, a second consecutive night on the town—but then I thought better of it. I was dressed in my school clothes—dress pants I wouldn't wish on a corpse, button-down shirt and tie, brown corduroy sport coat—and my hair was slicked down so tight to my scalp it looked as if it had been painted on, a style I'd adopted to disguise the length and shagginess of it toward the end of appeasing the purse-mouthed principal and preserving my job. And life. But I couldn't let Cole see me like this—what would he think? I studied the back of the Bug a moment, waiting for his eyes to leap to the rearview mirror, but he was absorbed, oblivious, stoned no doubt—and I wanted to be stoned too, share the sacrament, shake it out. But not like this, not in these clothes.

(continued on page 141)



"We worked our abs last night. What say we work our pecs tonight."

Oooh La LASTRA

Miss August
jumps
from Texas
to the silver
screen

Pilar Lastra does not take her good fortune for granted. Although the 23-year-old actress is excited to discuss her forthcoming movie roles, she first recalls how she's come such a long way from her home in San Antonio. "My family was so poor that my sisters and I wore boys' hand-me-downs," she says. "My mother and father divorced when I was young. My father lives in Spain, along with most of my extended family. We came from nothing, so I'm grateful now when I look at everything I have." A self-described bookworm in high school who "tried to rebel and be cool," Pilar couldn't deceive her mother without feeling guilty. "I'd sneak out of the house at night, but I would leave a note for my mom so she could contact me. I didn't want her to worry. I never wanted to cause trouble. I never got caught, thank God. I can't imagine my mom crashing a party or calling and going, 'Is my daughter there? You guys aren't drinking, are you?'"

Miss August considered a variety of careers before committing to acting. "One day I wanted to be a brain surgeon, the next a bus driver, then a teacher, then an undercover agent," she says. "I decided to pursue acting because I can pretend to do all those things." Pilar's first role was in a SeaWorld commercial. "I had to ride a roller coaster 25 times in a row and still look excited after take 25," she says. After moving to Los Angeles she shot more commercials and appeared on *Days of Our Lives*. "I would like a big-box-office movie in my future, but more than that I want a role that requires me to be extremely brave," she says. To build her fortitude Pilar has racked up a few fearless adventures: "When I was 19 I packed my car and took off across the country. I'd also like to go to Spain. I've never been there, but I hear the partying is out of control. I would rather fall on my face a thousand times than live my life thinking, What if?"

While Pilar says she used to be anti-nudity, she changed her mind when *PLAYBOY* made her an offer. "I figured I should do nudity the right way, not in some cheesy, raunchy film," she says. Next up? Roles in *Hollywood PI* and opposite Gary Busey in the cage-fighting flick *No Rules*. "I have a bitch-fighting scene in *No Rules*," she says. "In real life I talk trash, but I never bite. I wouldn't know how. I'd probably start crying."



When she's not pulling hair in catfights, Pilar is a talented singer-songwriter who's looking for a writing partner. "I don't play a musical instrument, so it's hard for me to finish a melody," she says. "I've written songs that I don't hear myself singing, though someone else could knock them out of the park. I'd like to find someone who understands my energy flow." Meeting would-be partners was a snap when she leased out apartments, an occupation that doubled as her own private dating service. "For a while I met all my boyfriends through that job," she says. "I could do a background check, see if they had a criminal history and discover who was in debt. If one said he was a musician, I'd be like, 'Sold!'" Even though she had keys to all her tenants' pads, Pilar swears she never snooped. Except for one time, on Valentine's Day. "I let myself into my boyfriend's apartment to leave candles, chocolate and hearts leading into the bedroom," she says. "It was great."







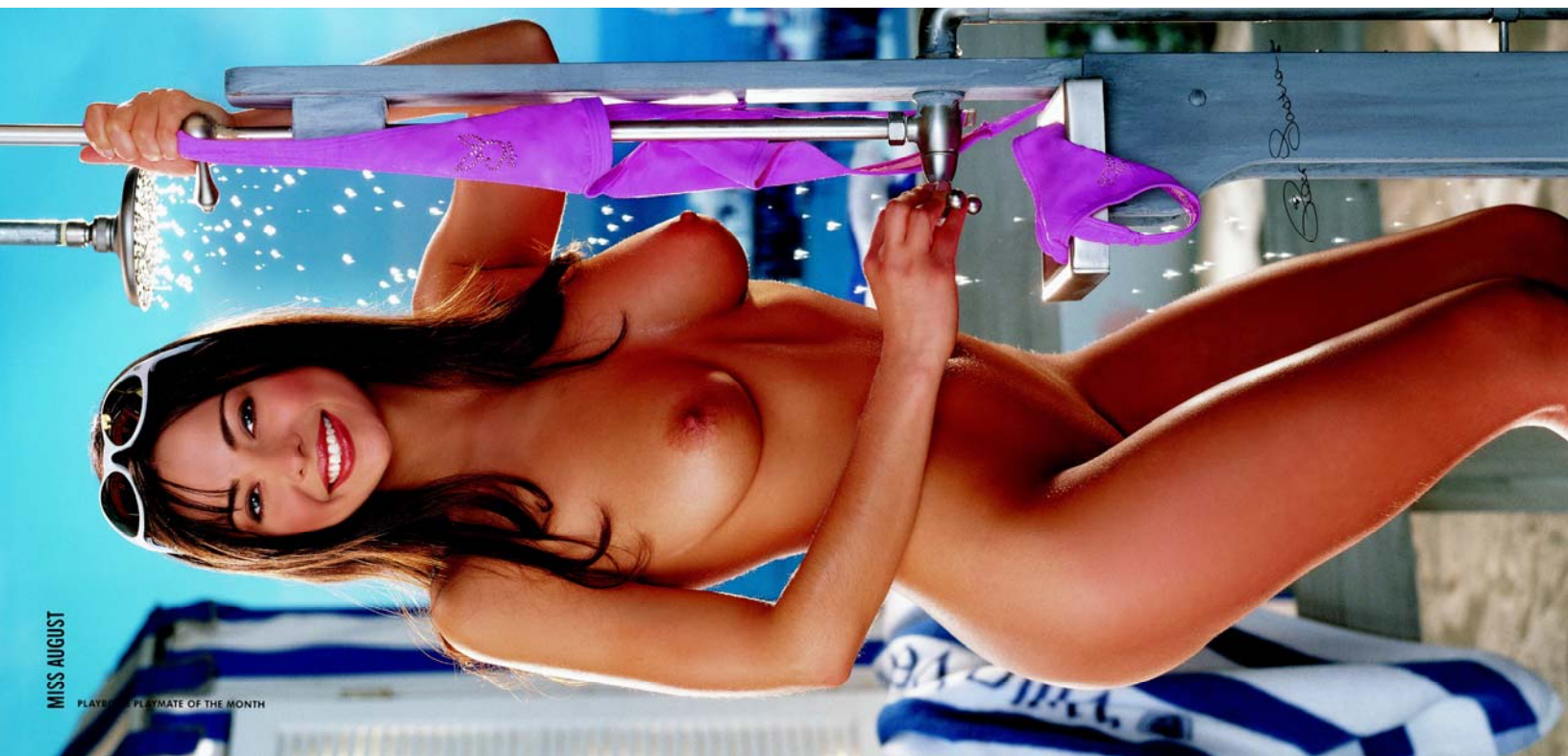


*"It's okay to talk to other people
when we're out together—as long as
you're still coming home with me."*





See more of Miss August at cyber.playboy.com.



MISS AUGUST

PLAYBOY PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET



NAME: Pilar Lastra

BUST: 3A WAIST: 25 HIPS: 34

HEIGHT: 5'5 1/2" WEIGHT: 110

BIRTH DATE: 01.15.81 BIRTHPLACE: MONTEREY PARK, CA

AMBITIONS: To be a successful entertainer & make people feel emotions. To use my success for charity & DISEASE AWARENESS.

TURN-ONS: Body rubs, Confidence, A Sense of Humor. Musical talent is Always a plus.

TURNOFFS: BAD Breath, A man who spends more time looking in the mirror than I do. Liars & cheaters STAY AWAY!!

JOBS BEFORE I STARTED ACTING: Bartender, LEASING Agent. One DAY I WAS Desperate enough to sell ART FROM MY TRUNK!

ACTRESS I ADMIRE AND WHY: DEMI Moore - I feel she has made some really Brave choices in her career.

FAVORITE SUMMER ACTIVITIES: Going to the lake & Getting on the Jet Skis, Rollerblading, hiking.

MOVIES I WISH I'D STARRED IN: Mission: Impossible, Enough, Gone in Sixty Seconds, Pretty Woman.



FRESHMAN YEAR TRACK PICTURE.



Senior year JROTC Picture. 1st time I EVER had short hair.



My 1st paying gig.



PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

A man told his friend, "I'm breaking up with Carol."

The friend asked, "What did she do?"

The man replied, "She told me she was bisexual."

The guy said, "That sounds pretty hot. What's the problem?"

"What's the problem?" the man asked. "Who wants to fuck just twice a year?"



A newborn baby weighed in at 10 pounds. His body weighed five pounds, and his balls weighed five pounds. The hospital staff didn't know what to make of his condition. When the chief surgeon saw the crowd around the infant, he asked if there was a problem. A nurse said, "We don't know what to do with this baby boy."

The surgeon said, "You should put him into a mental institution."

"Why?" another nurse asked.

The surgeon said, "Isn't it obvious? He's half nuts."

The U.S. Postal Service issued a George W. Bush stamp. It soon discovered that the stamps were not sticking to envelopes, so it established a commission to investigate the matter. The commission reported the following findings:

1. The stamps met all regulations.
2. Nothing was wrong with the adhesive.
3. People were just spitting on the wrong side.

BLONGE JOKE OF THE MONTH: A blonde persuaded her husband to let her come along on his hunting trip. When they were deep in the woods, he collapsed. She took out her cell phone and dialed 911. "I think my husband is dead," she said. "What should I do?"

The operator said, "Calm down. First, let's make sure he's dead."

The operator heard a gunshot. Then the blonde got back on the phone and said, "Okay. Now what?"

According to an article in a women's magazine, a lady's sleeping position says a lot about her: Women who sleep on their side are sensitive, women who sleep on their stomach are competent, and women who sleep on their back with their ankles behind their ears are very popular.

PLAYBOY CLASSIC: A wealthy woman had a wild night out on the town with her friends. She awoke the next morning naked and suffering from a hangover, so she rang for her butler. "Jeeves," she said, "I must have blacked out. I can't remember a thing about last night. How did I get to bed?"

"Well, madam," he said, "I carried you upstairs and put you to bed."

"And my dress?" she asked.

"It seemed a pity to wrinkle it," he replied, "so I took it off and hung it up."

"How did my underwear come off?" she asked.

"I thought you might be uncomfortable, so I removed your bra and panties."

She said, "I must have been tight."

"Only the first time, madam," he replied.

Two women were sitting in a doctor's waiting room. "I want a baby more than anything in the world," the first woman said. "But I just can't get pregnant."

"I used to feel the same way," the other woman said. "But then everything changed. Now I'm pregnant."

"You must tell me what you did," the first woman said.

"I went to a faith healer."

"But I've tried that," she said. "My husband and I went to one for nearly a year, and it didn't help a bit."

The other woman smiled and whispered, "Try going alone next time."



W. Lloyd Neuman

What do you get when you cross Raggedy Ann with the Pillsbury Dough Boy?

An ugly redhead with a yeast infection.

How do asthmatic lesbians breathe?

In snatches.

Our Unabashed Dictionary defines same-sex marriage as what you get when homosexual lovers exchange wedding vows.

Our Unabashed Dictionary defines some-sex marriage as what you get when heterosexual lovers exchange wedding vows.

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.



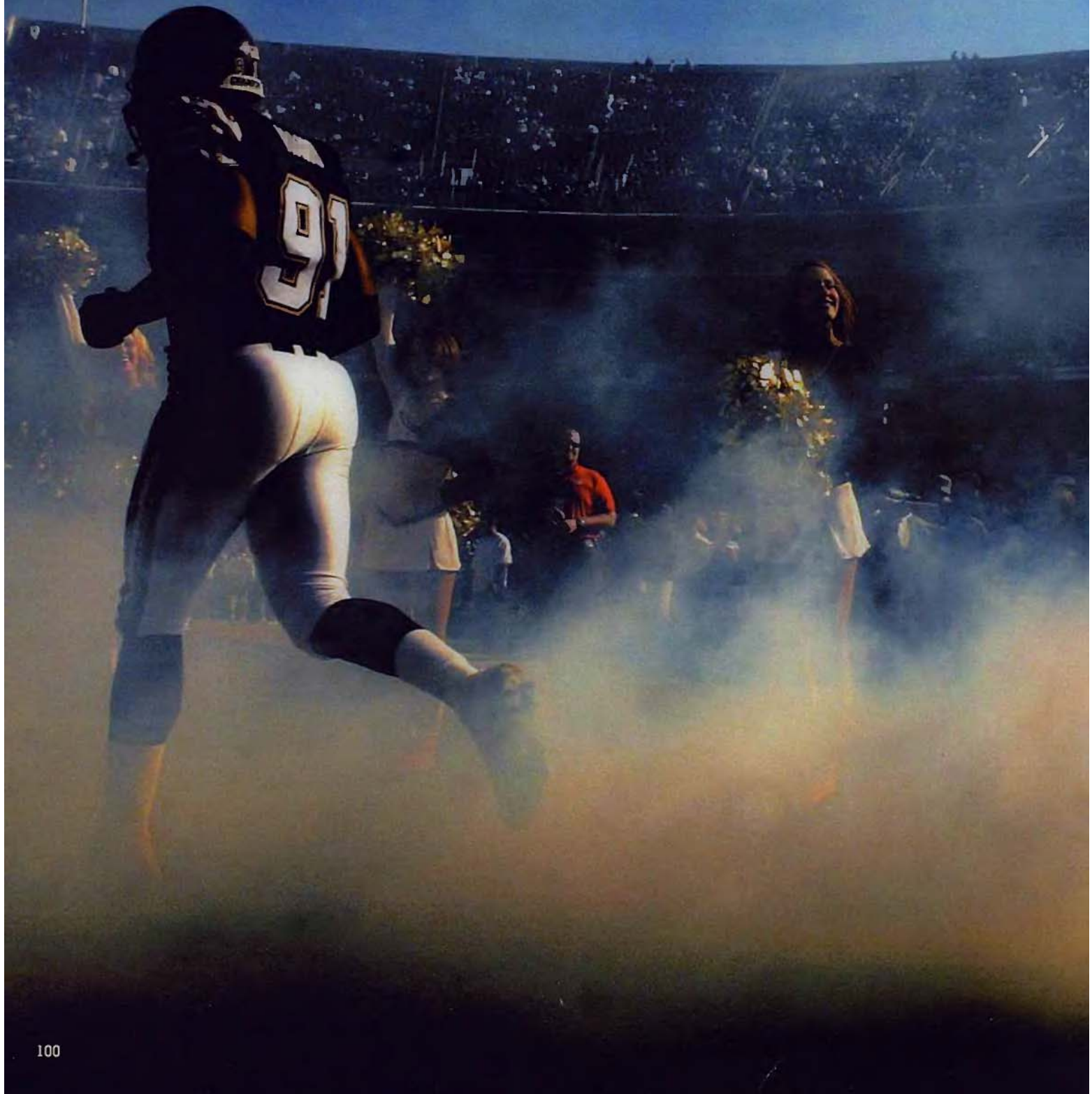
"Wow, Dad! Look at this great action figure!"

PLAYBOY'S

NFL PREVIEW

THE 2004 SEASON IS SHAPING UP TO BE ONE OF A KIND

BY ALLEN ST. JOHN AND ALLEN BARRA





Slam! Did you hear that? It wasn't the crunch of a blitzing linebacker inflicting a hit on a quarterback. It was the sound of a window of opportunity closing in the NFL.

As football fans turn their attention away from clambakes and beach volleyball to matters of the gridiron, a few players and coaches are preparing for their moment of truth. More than in any recent season you'll see athletes doing the hustle with destiny in 2004. It's put-up-or-shut-up time, and that means every game will be worth watching, even the ones involving Arizona.

It starts with the Super Bowl—champion Patriots. Just when everyone was saying dynasties were dead in the NFL, the Pats went out and won two Super Bowls in three years. They begin this season riding a 15-game winning streak, three short of the record held by four different franchises. The Dolphins are one of those, and appropriately enough, if the Pats break the record this year, it will happen at home against Miami in week five.

By winning a second Super Bowl last year in Houston, Tom Brady and company have risen above the Pack. They're now better than the Brett Favre-led Green Bay title teams and a notch below the John Elway-led Broncos. Another Super Bowl win this year would move the Patriots into a league with the elite teams of all time: Joe Montana's 49ers, Troy Aikman's Cowboys and Terry Bradshaw's Steelers. The prospect of that alone makes this season a special one.

If one guy is capable of interfering with a

PLAYBOY'S PICKS

AMERICAN FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

AFC EAST	NEW ENGLAND
AFC NORTH	CINCINNATI
AFC SOUTH	INDIANAPOLIS
AFC WEST	DENVER
WILD CARDS	TENNESSEE, KANSAS CITY
AFC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME	NEW ENGLAND OVER INDIANAPOLIS

NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

NFC EAST	PHILADELPHIA
NFC NORTH	GREEN BAY
NFC SOUTH	NEW ORLEANS
NFC WEST	SEATTLE
WILD CARDS	ST. LOUIS, DALLAS
NFC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME	SEATTLE OVER DALLAS

★ **SUPER BOWL** ★
NEW ENGLAND OVER SEATTLE

Patriots dynasty, it's Colts quarterback Peyton Manning, who also has a date with destiny this year. There's no hotter place in sports than under center in the NFL. Succeed and you go to Disney World; fail and you go to the hospital. On paper, 28-year-old Manning is already one of the most productive passers in history. But to establish true greatness he has to win the big game—and more than once. Manning finally bagged a playoff game last season, but against New England in the AFC championship game he had that deer-in-the-headlights look for which his detractors have always criticized him. Four interceptions later, his season was over. Manning's window of opportunity is beginning to close. In the NFL, one tough hit can end your career.

The same can be said for the Eagles' Donovan McNabb, 27, who has won the heart of everyone but Rush Limbaugh. McNabb's Eagles have been on destiny's doorstep for a while now and have lost the NFC title game at home for two straight years. With all-world wide receiver Terrell Owens to throw to, McNabb now has no more excuses. It's put-up-or-shut-up time for him, too.

History could also be made on the sidelines in 2004. It's been 14 seasons since Bill Parcells got the Gatorade shower

in the Super Bowl, back when he was coach of the Giants. The Tuna's rebuilding projects with the Jets and Patriots were successful, but it don't mean a thing if you ain't got that ring, especially in Texas. Former Parcells protégé Bill Belichick has won four Super Bowls, two as a head coach (with the Pats), and is in position to eclipse his former mentor's success. If Parcells can win a title with Dallas—and the Cowboys have added talent to their 10-6 squad of last year—he'll be the first head coach to win a Super Bowl with two different teams. That would put him in a league with Vince Lombardi. If he fails, you might find him in the next Levitra ad.

There's plenty more. Will the Falcons' Michael Vick step up and morph from a great athlete into a championship-caliber quarterback? Will the Giants' Jeremy Shockey finally zip the lip and live up to the hype? Can Joe Gibbs return from the grave and lead the talented Redskins back to the playoffs?

There are a million stories in an NFL season. In no other sport can an athlete achieve such heroism. At the same time, in no other sport can a hero become a has-been quite so quickly. Just ask Kurt Warner. Or the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Did you catch that, Tom Brady? Peyton Manning? We're all watching.



AT DESTINY'S DOOR

Clockwise from top: Patriots head coach Bill Belichick; Pats QB Tom Brady, who has earned two Super Bowl MVPs in three seasons; the Colts' Peyton Manning getting sacked by New England's Mike Vrabel in Indianapolis.

THE NUMBERS GAME SOME FOOTBALL STATS YOU WON'T FIND IN THE DAILIES THIS SEASON



\$3.75 Price of a 16-ounce beer at Pittsburgh's Heinz Field, the cheapest at any NFL stadium.

\$75.33 Average ticket price at New England's Gillette Stadium, the most expensive in the NFL.

61% Percentage of 2,488 retired NFL players in a recent study who reported suffering one or more concussions during their careers.

12% Percentage who reported suffering five or more concussions.

\$230,000 Minimum NFL salary for players with less than one year of experience.

\$34.5 million Signing bonus given to Colts quarterback Peyton Manning, the NFL's highest-paid player.

\$200,000 Amount the NFL fined Lions general manager Matt Millen for not interviewing minority candidates before hiring coach Steve Marucci.

\$0 Amount the NFL fined Millen for calling Chiefs receiver Johnnie Morton a faggot.

160 Weight in pounds of Ravens kick returner Lamont Brighthul, the lightest player in the league.

390 Weight in pounds of Bears offensive lineman Aaron Gibson, the heaviest player.

80,499 Average attendance in 2003 for Redskins home games, the highest in the league (fans pictured, left).

36,062 Average attendance in 2003 for Cardinals home games, the lowest.

43 Age of Chiefs kicker Morten Andersen, the league's oldest player.

40 Age of Buccaneers coach Jon Gruden, the league's youngest head coach.

\$952 million Estimated value of owner Daniel Snyder's Redskins, the highest of any NFL franchise.

\$21 billion Net worth of Seahawks owner Paul Allen.

6 to 1 Preseason odds on the Patriots to win the Super Bowl, the best of any team, as handicapped by *USA Today* sports betting expert Danny Sheridan.

1 trillion to 1 Preseason odds on the Cardinals to win the Super Bowl, the worst of any team.

THE 2004 PREVIEW

LISTED IN PROJECTED ORDER OF FINISH, OUR TEAM-BY-TEAM GUIDE TO THE WINNERS AND LOSERS ON THE ROAD TO SUPER BOWL XXXIX

AFC EAST

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS



LAST SEASON: How do you top a 14-2 regular season, 15 straight wins (counting the playoffs) and a championship? **OUTLOOK:** Most of the 2003 squad returns, including Tom Brady, Ty Law, Willie McGinest, Tedy Bruschi, Deion Branch and Adam Vinatieri. The loss of run-stopping monster defensive tackle Ted Washington hurts, but 340-pound draft pick Vince Wilfork should fit right in on a defense that allowed the fewest points last year. The big news in New England: the arrival from the Bengals of running back Corey Dillon, a disenchanting thug—not the type of character guy that coach Bill Belichick typically covets. Will Dillon bring a rushing attack to New England, or will he be trouble? Tune in when the Patriots take on Peyton Manning and the Colts in week one. **CRYSTAL BALL:** Brady and the Pats always make things interesting, winning nail-biters week after week. Expect more of the same this season—right up to the Super Bowl.

MIAMI DOLPHINS



LAST SEASON: The Dolphins went 10-6 only to get shut out of the playoffs. That has to leave a bad taste. **OUTLOOK:** Coach Dave Wannstedt has won 41 games in four years with the Dolphins, two more than Bill Belichick in New England. But he has won only one playoff game and has missed the post-season two years in a row. Football-crazed Miami will feel a sense of urgency this year. The defense, third in the league in points allowed in 2003, should excel again, but will the offense? Receiver David Boston is the big addition, and Ricky Williams is simply awesome. But a shakeup on the offensive line should have a bigger impact. **CRYSTAL BALL:** Miami's scary quarterback situation—eminently abusable Jay Fiedler and former Eagles backup A.J. Feeley—will tell you everything you need to know about Wannstedt's job security.



NEW YORK JETS



LAST SEASON: QB Chad Pennington suffered a freak wrist injury during a preseason game and it was downhill from there. Record: 6-10. **OUTLOOK:** The offense could be one of the best in the league, depending on Pennington's ability to deal with high expectations. The good news: He'll have a new target in receiver Justin McCareins, who'll complement emerging speedster Santana Moss. Curtis Martin rushed for 1,308 yards last year, but at the age of 31 he may be slowing down. Free-agent safety Reggie Tongue will delight *New York Post* headline writers and should improve an already decent defense. How critical is a winning season in 2004? Unlike patient patriarch Leon Hess, current Jets owner Woody Johnson takes names. If the Jets don't make the playoffs, he'll take the names of coach Herman Edwards and GM Terry Bradway. **CRYSTAL BALL:** A tough late-season schedule will sink this club's postseason hopes.



BUFFALO BILLS



LAST SEASON: The Bills opened with a 31-0 win over Tom Brady and the Patriots, but they won only five more games. **OUTLOOK:** New coach Mike Mularkey has the NFL's most unfortunate name since Dick Butkus, but as the offensive coordinator in Pittsburgh he performed the impossible: He turned former XFLer Tommy Maddox into an elite NFL passer. Mularkey has more to work with here, with Drew Bledsoe, running back Travis Henry and receivers Eric Moulds and first-round draft pick Lee Evans. Because Bledsoe has the mobility of an oak

tree, the play of guard Chris Villarrial, who replaces Pro Bowler Ruben Brown, could determine the QB's neurological well-being. The defense, which was second in the NFL in yards allowed in 2003, should be solid again. **CRYSTAL BALL:** In most divisions the Bills would be a contender. In the tough AFC East, 8-8 would qualify as a moral victory.

NFC WEST

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS



LAST SEASON: Ray Rhodes's defense went from awful to adequate, while Matt Hasselbeck and the offense went from good to great. The Seahawks (10-6) made the postseason for the first time since 1999. **OUTLOOK:** Seattle's top draft picks, defensive tackle Marcus Tubbs (University of Texas) and safety Michael Boulware (Florida State), along with defensive end Grant Wistrom, acquired from division rival St. Louis, will toughen up the defense and put the Seahawks in a position to dominate this division. The offense didn't need any help. Hasselbeck threw for 3,841 yards and 26 TDs in 2003, despite 50 dropped balls, including six in the end zone. Count on him and running back Shaun Alexander (1,435 yards) to fill the highlight reels again. **CRYSTAL BALL:** The Seahawks are post-season bound. And they'll make some noise once they get there.



ST. LOUIS RAMS



LAST SEASON: The Rams had a fine year (12-4), but with all that talent the fans were expecting a championship. **OUTLOOK:** St. Louis enters the season with something to prove. The team returns most of its top offensive dogs, minus ailing Jesus freak Kurt Warner. In Torry Holt, Isaac Bruce and Marshall Faulk, signal caller Marc Bulger (3,845 passing yards in 2003, third in the NFL) will have more weapons than Donald Rumsfeld. Then again, this team has been the pick to win the Super Bowl for the past three years. The defense has slipped from championship level, and new coordinator Larry Marmie is no Bill Belichick—his Cardinals defense was worst in the league last year. **CRYSTAL BALL:** A soft schedule will help the Rams snag a wild-card spot.

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS



LAST SEASON: A 7-9 campaign doesn't go over well in a rabid football city like San Francisco. **OUTLOOK:** QB Tim Rattay is no Joe Montana. Coach Dennis Erickson has been touted as the Stephen Hawking of offensive football, but with Jeff Garcia, Terrell Owens, Tai Streets and Garrison Hearst all gone, the 49ers may need more than genius to match last year's 384 points. The defense has talent, led by linebacker Julian Peterson, a legit Pro Bowler. But the squad underachieved last season—the Niners lost five games by three points or fewer. A repeat of that performance and the self-important Erickson will be looking for a job. **CRYSTAL BALL:** Niners fans primed for playoff excitement should dust off the tape of Super Bowl XXIII.



ARIZONA CARDINALS



LAST SEASON: Take your pick of pejservatives for the worst organization in the NFL, a team that won four games in 2003. The last time the Cards won 10 games Jimmy Carter was president. **OUTLOOK:** New coach Dennis Green brings a glimmer of hope to the desert. Green was moderately successful in Minnesota, but now he'll have half the talent to work with. His

WORD PLAY

EVER LISTEN TO NFL PLAYERS TALK ABOUT THE GAME OFF CAMERA? THEY SOUND AS THOUGH THEY'RE SPEAKING PORTUGUESE. HERE'S A SHORT GLOSSARY OF TERMS

BAD MOOD A player with a mean streak. The Ravens' Ray Lewis comes to mind.

BIG BUBBLE A lineman with big buttocks and thick thighs. Usually meant as a compliment in the NFL. Example: Rams offensive tackle Orlando Pace.

BIRD DOGGER A quarterback who locks onto one receiver throughout his pattern. Even the beer vendor outside the stadium knows where the pass will be thrown. Chad Pennington was criticized for this in his first few starts, back when Laveranues Coles was a Jet.

COVER 2 Zone coverage in which each safety is responsible for half the deep part of the field.

DIME A defense on passing downs—usually on second-and-long or third-and-long—that lines up with six defensive backs.

EDGE PASS RUSHER A defensive end or linebacker who has the speed to come from the outside and sack a quarterback. Lawrence Taylor was the quintessential edge pass rusher.

EXTRA BAGGAGE A guy with problems off the field. Example: Ravens running back Jamal Lewis, who was charged in February with conspiring to possess with the intent to distribute five kilos of cocaine.

GETTING THROUGH TRASH When a defensive lineman or linebacker moves well around pileups to reach the quarterback or ball carrier.

HOME RUN HITTER An explosive running back, receiver or return specialist who can break long touchdowns. Example: Kansas City's Dante Hall.

LONG STRIDER A fast receiver who takes long steps. Generally, he prefers deep patterns to short ones with quick cuts or hooks.

NICKEL A defense on passing downs that lines up with five defensive backs. First used by George Allen's Redskins in the 1970s.

RAG-DOLLING When an offensive lineman is tossed aside by a stronger defensive lineman or linebacker, as in "The Colts' front line got rag-dolled all day long."

SAM, MIKE AND WILL The linebackers by position, as in strong side (Sam), middle (Mike) and weak side (Will). A center might say before a snap, "I'm on Mike. Who's got Will?"

SLOW BLINKER A player who is short in the brains department.

★ PLAYBOY'S ★ ALL-PRO TEAM

NFL.COM SENIOR ANALYST AND PLAYBOY CONTRIBUTOR GIL BRANDT PICKS THE BEST FOR 2004

OFFENSE

QUARTERBACK: PEYTON MANNING, COLTS

HALFBACK: CLINTON PORTIS, REDSKINS

FULLBACK: FRED BEASLEY, 49ERS

WIDE RECEIVER: RANDY MOSS, VIKINGS

WIDE RECEIVER: MARVIN HARRISON, COLTS

TIGHT END: TONY GONZALEZ, CHIEFS

TACKLE: JONATHAN OGDEN, RAVENS

TACKLE: ORLANDO PACE, RAMS

GUARD: STEVE HUTCHINSON, SEAHAWKS

GUARD: ALAN FANECA, STEELERS

CENTER: OLIN KREUTZ, BEARS

PUNTER: SHANE LECHLER, RAIDERS

KICKER: ADAM VINATIERI, PATRIOTS

KICK RETURNER: DANTE HALL, CHIEFS

DEFENSE

TACKLE: KRIS JENKINS, PANTHERS

TACKLE: LA'ROI GLOVER, COWBOYS

END: SHAUN ELLIS, JETS

END: RICHARD SEYMOUR, PATRIOTS

LINEBACKER: RAY LEWIS, RAVENS

LINEBACKER: KEITH BULLUCK, TITANS

LINEBACKER: TAKEO SPIKES, BILLS

CORNERBACK: CHAMP BAILEY, BRONCOS

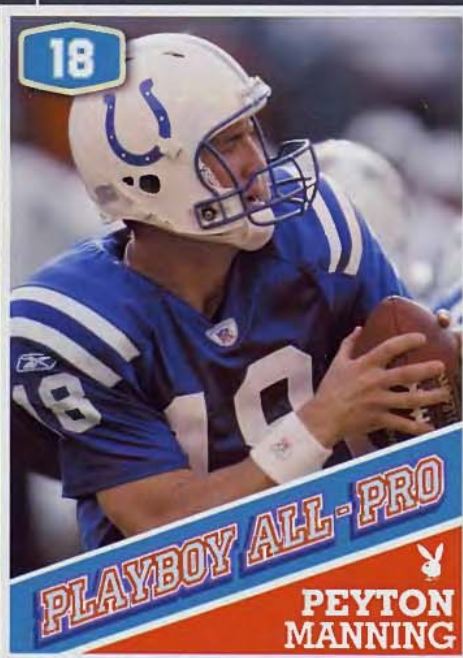
CORNERBACK: PATRICK SURTAIN, DOLPHINS

SAFETY: BRIAN DAWKINS, EAGLES

SAFETY: RODNEY HARRISON, PATRIOTS

MOST UNDERRATED: TEDY BRUSCHI, PATRIOTS

★ MVP: PEYTON MANNING



main weapons: Anquan Boldin and rookie Larry Fitzgerald, two wideouts who can make the big play. QB Josh McCown has played in just 12 pro games. Defensive end Bert Berry, a former Bronco, should lend some credibility to what was an ineffective pass rush. **CRYSTAL BALL:** The Cards open against the Rams and the Pats. What is this, a cruel joke?

and receiver Andre Johnson all have great potential. Six of the Texans' top seven draft picks are defensive players. That's saying something. We're not sure what, but we'll find out. **CRYSTAL BALL:** Doesn't look good.

AFC SOUTH

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

LAST SEASON: So much for the 12-4 regular season. The Patriots made glue out of the Colts in the AFC championship game. **OUTLOOK:** With Peyton Manning, Edgerrin James and Marvin Harrison all healthy, the Colts have their attack in place. So while all the buzz centers around the Manning-led offense (the reigning MVP is the only quarterback who still calls most of his own plays), coach Tony Dungy is quietly rebuilding the defense. The unit allowed just 7.7 yards per game more than the vaunted Patriots defense last year, and Dungy—the brains behind Tampa Bay's 2002 championship D—is tinkering the right way, opting for coaching adjustments rather than gambling on free agents. Top draft pick Bob Sanders (University of Iowa) will provide help at safety. **CRYSTAL BALL:** Indy will go far. But can Manning finally win the big game?

TENNESSEE TITANS

LAST SEASON: The Titans had a great run (12-4) behind a banner year for QB Steve McNair (24 passing TDs, four rushing TDs), but they came up three points short against New England in the playoffs. **OUTLOOK:** Tennessee had a quiet off-season, adding little talent. McNair is now 31 and has been listed as "questionable" on game day an astounding 23 times during the past three seasons. Running back Eddie George is no longer the Eddie George of 1999 and 2000. The defense played well last year but will have to make up for the losses of defensive linemen Jevon Kearse and Robaire Smith. On top of that, the team plays the Colts, Chiefs, Raiders and Broncos in succession in December. That's going to hurt. **CRYSTAL BALL:** The Titans will snag a wild-card berth.

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

LAST SEASON: The Jags went 5-11, losing all eight of their road games. **OUTLOOK:** This team has cleaned house since the Tom Coughlin era. The Jaguars' fortunes are now in the hands of talented but unproven second-year QB Byron Leftwich. Draft pick Reggie Williams, a receiver out of Washington, should give Leftwich a first-rate target, while bruiser Greg Jones bolsters the Fred Taylor-led running attack. The defense earned its pay last year, finishing sixth in yards allowed, but that goes only so far in a division with the Colts and Titans. Coach Jack Del Rio will have his hands full integrating more than 10 free agents. **CRYSTAL BALL:** The talent of Leftwich will give fans something to scream about, even as the Jags wallow in a mire of mediocrity.

HOUSTON TEXANS

LAST SEASON: They took the Pats into overtime in week 12, but that moment aside, the Texans (5-11) were one of the worst teams in the league on both sides of the ball. **OUTLOOK:** Houston's first two games, against San Diego at home and Detroit on the road, are winnable, but all in all this team will be—how do you put it?—not good. The bright spot is at the skill positions: Quarterback David Carr, running back Domanick Davis

NFC EAST

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

LAST SEASON: For the second straight year Philly went 12-4 and lost at home in the NFC championship game. **OUTLOOK:** Once again the Eagles were better on defense (17.9 points allowed, seventh in the NFL) than on offense (23.4, 11th). Will this year's D be as tough? The secondary losses of Troy Vincent and Bobby Taylor will hurt. New QB hunter Jevon Kearse could charge the pass rush as long as he stays healthy—he played in only 18 of the past 32 games in Tennessee. The bigger news in Philly is the arrival of receiver Terrell Owens. Yes, he's an egomaniac, but he's the game breaker Donovan McNabb has needed and will more than make up for the loss of running back Duce Staley. **CRYSTAL BALL:** Thanks to two superstar signings (Owens, Kearse), the Eagles take this division again.



DALLAS COWBOYS

LAST SEASON: Bill Parcells took over a team that was 5-11 in 2002 and went 10-6. The Dallas defense yielded the fewest yards per game (253.5) in the league. **OUTLOOK:** The D should be stellar again. The offense? Well, at least this team now has what you can call a star in Keyshawn Johnson. He'll help on third-and-five—and in the interview room. Watching Parcells, who takes no shit, work with the receiver will be entertaining to say the least. And who will throw the ball to Keyshawn? The Cowboys' weak spot last year was at quarterback: Quincy Carter threw more interceptions (21) than TD passes (17). This season former Yankees farmhand and University of Michigan standout Drew Henson joins the team as a 24-year-old rookie. Will he get the nod over Carter? Will Parcells be slapping Keyshawn on the butt or in the face? Win or lose, America's team will be fun to watch. **CRYSTAL BALL:** The Cowboys will make good use of a wild-card slot come January.



WASHINGTON REDSKINS

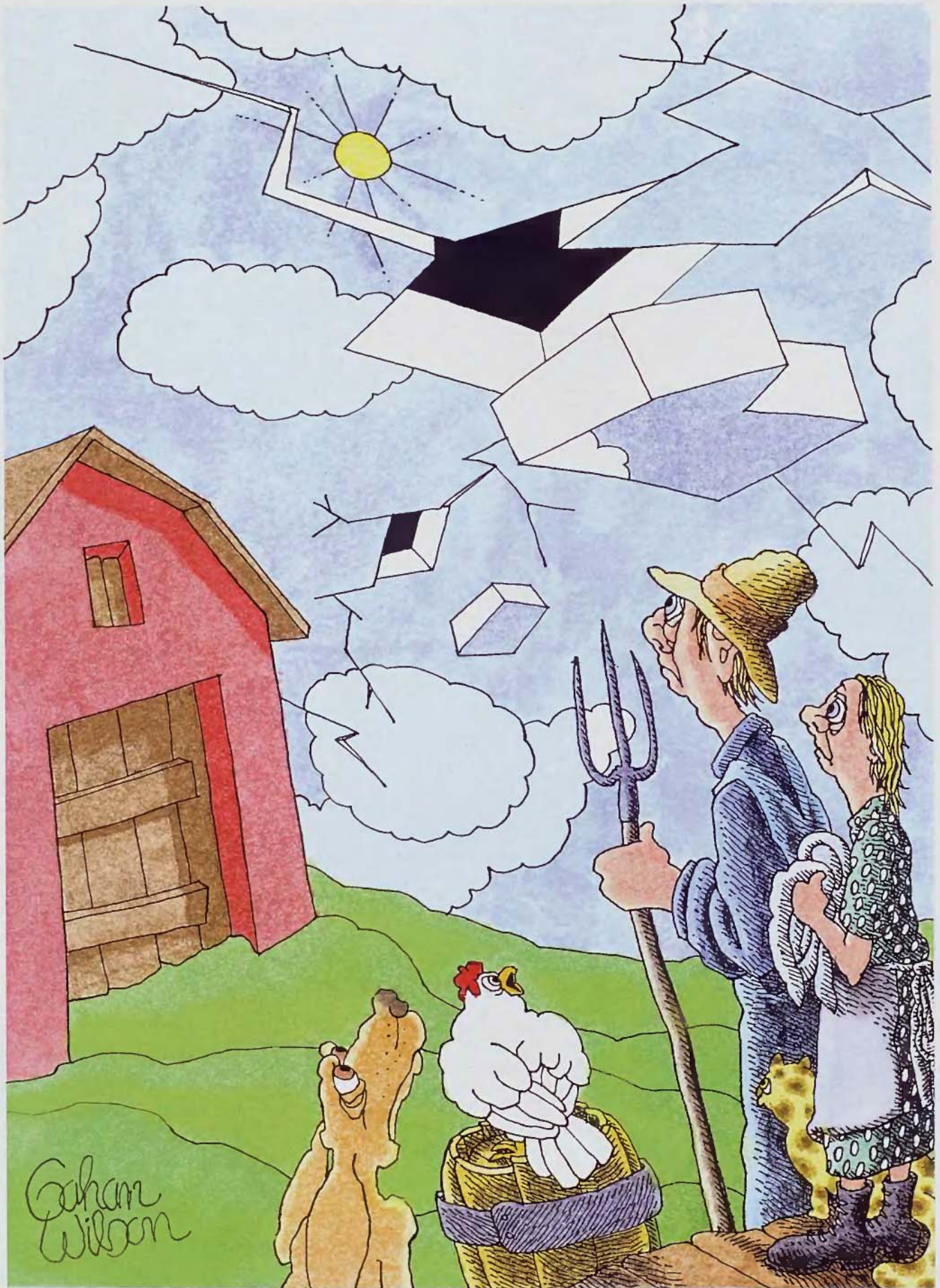
LAST SEASON: After a 5-11 season, coach Steve Spurrier packed his bags. **OUTLOOK:** Can Joe Gibbs come out of retirement and succeed in today's NFL as a 63-year-old head coach? If Dick Vermeil and Bill Parcells can do it, why can't Gibbs? Washington added serious talent in the off-season. The offense should be much improved, with steady QB Mark Brunell tossing to Pro Bowl receiver Laveranues Coles and newly acquired James Thrash. And former Broncos halfback Clinton Portis will certainly make a difference. The all-too-generous defense (23.3 points per game, 25th) adds rookie safety Sean Taylor to help make up for the loss of star corner Champ Bailey. The problem child is owner Daniel Snyder. The guy who hired Spurrier in the first place still runs the show. Will he stop meddling long enough to let Gibbs clean up the mess? **CRYSTAL BALL:** The Skins will win a few for the Gibber and make a run at the playoffs.



NEW YORK GIANTS

LAST SEASON: Ugh. Touted as Super Bowl contenders, the Giants (4-12) finished tied for 30th in points and 29th in points allowed. **OUTLOOK:** New coach Tom Coughlin is a Parcells-like disciplinarian—no shades, no beards, no platinum—who should turn things around quickly. But with more than 15 free-agent additions, the Giants may need time to establish a rhythm. Rookie QB Eli Manning will make for a great story even if he (continued on page 153)





"I hate to say I told you so!"

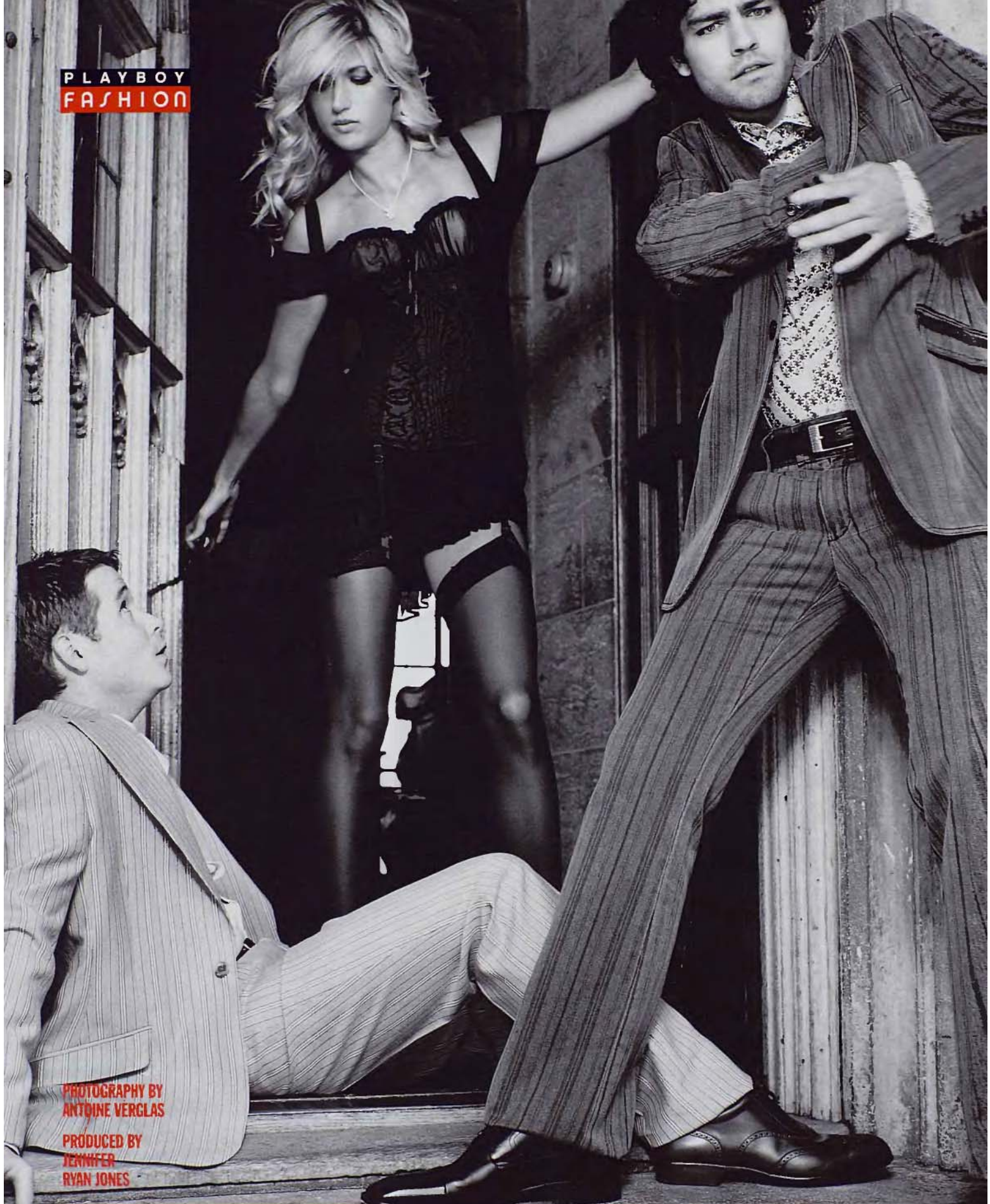
INSIDE THE ENTOURAGE

The stars of HBO's new series hit the Playboy Mansion with style and flair



FASHION BY JOSEPH DE ACETIS

CLOCKWISE FROM FRONT RIGHT: Before Jeremy Piven played the weaselly dean in *Old School*, he was under fire in *Black Hawk Down*, starred in TV's *Ellen* and stole scenes in *Rush Hour 2*, *Serendipity* and *Runaway Jury*. In *Entourage* he's a high-powered agent; here he's in a suit (\$2,395), shirt (\$295) and tie (\$170), all by **GIANLUCA ISAJA** and a belt by **TED BAKER LONDON** (\$70). Adrian Grenier is Vince, around whom the entourage gathers. He's in a suit by **CLAIBORNE** (\$229), a shirt by **STUDIO CHERESKIN** (\$80) and a belt by **TORINO BELTS** (\$75). Kevin Connolly is in a blazer (\$295), shirt (\$125) and jeans (\$135), all by **HUGO HUGO BOSS**. Kevin Dillon is in a jacket by **JACK VICTOR** (\$495), a shirt by **CLAIBORNE** (\$79) and jeans by **J. CREW** (\$75). Jerry Ferrara is in a suit by **PERRY ELLIS** (\$400) and a shirt by **BLUE GURU** (\$65).




PHOTOGRAPHY BY
ANTOINE VERGLAS

PRODUCED BY
JENNIFER
RYAN JONES

Entourage tracks a group of buddies making their way through Hollywood after one of them—Vince, played by Grenier—makes it. At right, Grenier reaches for his smokes in a suit (\$1,050) and op-art shirt (\$165) by **JUST CAVALLI** and a belt by **TORINO BELTS** (\$79). His shoes—with double-buckle monk straps—are by **KENNETH COLE** (\$175). Our starlet is in a corset by **CHANTAL THOMASS FOR LA PETITE COQUETTE** (\$440), a skirt by **DUBUC** (\$330), lace-top stay-ups by **WOLFORD** (\$48) and a rhinestone Rabbit Head necktiaco by **PLAYBOY JEWELRY** (\$30). Taking his role literally is Connolly, who plays Eric, one of the guys trying to keep Vinco grounded. He's in a suit by **D&G** (\$775), a shirt by **C.R. COMPANY** (\$200) and shoes by **J.M. WESTON** (\$980). His belt is by **JOHNSTON & MURPHY** (\$55).

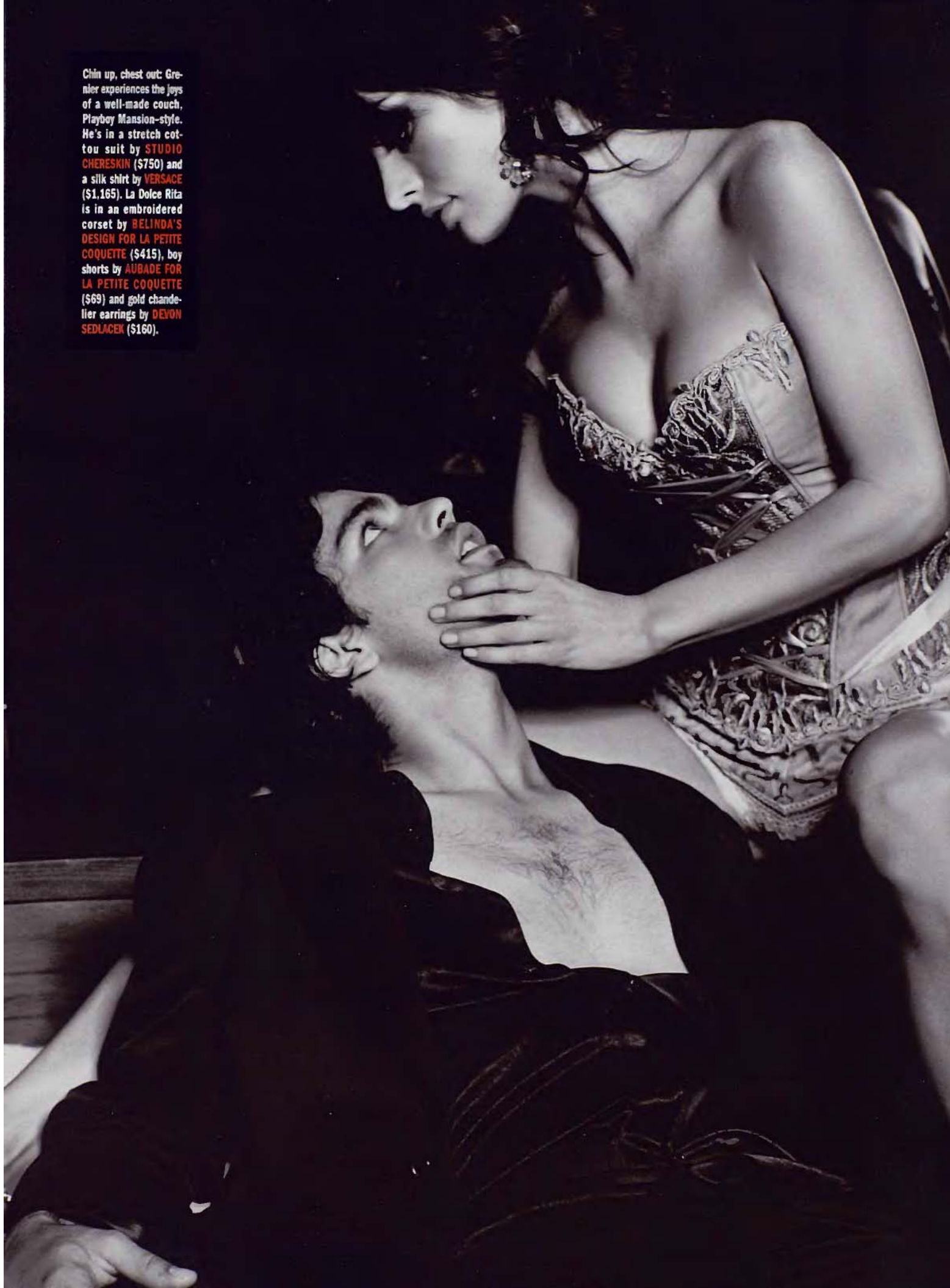


Agents will talk about buzz and box office, but there's only one sure sign you've made it in Hollywood: getting invited to a party at the Playboy Mansion. FROM LEFT: Piven wears a suit (\$495), shirt (\$75) and tie (\$68), all by **JOHN BARTLETT**. His brown leather belt, by **TORINO BELTS** (\$79), has a nickel-plated brass buckle. Our beautiful lingerie is in a sheer slip (\$210), bra (\$149) and matching thong (\$90), all by **LA PERLA BLACK LABEL**. Her boots are by **STUART WEITZMAN** (\$400). Granler wears a sharkskin suit (\$2,350) and shirt (\$345) by **RON-N-RON** and a pocket square by **JOHN BARTLETT** (\$25). Connolly is in a suit by **TED BAKER ENDURANCE** (\$595), a shirt by **TED BAKER LONDON** (\$145) and loafers by **NAUTICA FOOTWEAR** (\$100).



Getting a He's-eye view of the world are Ferrara (left) and Dillon. Ferrara, who plays a good-timer named Turtle on the show, is decked out in pin-striped trousers (\$200), sports jacket (\$300), contrasting-collar shirt (\$125) and tie (\$95), all by **MARC ECKO COLLECTION**. His news-boy cap is by **COUNTRY GENTLEMAN** (\$33), and his shoes are by **DIESEL FOOTWEAR** (\$130); his stainless watch is by **SEINO** (\$395). Dillon, who fills the role of Vince's would-be-actor brother, is wearing a sports coat (\$495) and velvet turtleneck (\$150) by **ARNOLD BRANT**. His pants are by **MARC ECKO COLLECTION** (\$150). Bunzila's slip (\$210) and thong (\$90) are by **LA PERLA BLACK LABEL**, and her rock-steady stilettos are by **ZANG TOI** (\$600).

Chin up, chest out: Grenier experiences the joys of a well-made couch, Playboy Mansion-style. He's in a stretch cotton suit by **STUDIO CHERESKIN** (\$750) and a silk shirt by **VERSACE** (\$1,165). La Dolce Rita is in an embroidered corset by **BELINDA'S DESIGN FOR LA PETITE COQUETTE** (\$415), boy shorts by **AUBADE FOR LA PETITE COQUETTE** (\$69) and gold chandelier earrings by **DEVON SEDLACEK** (\$160).





FROM LEFT: Grenier lends his buddy a hand in a suit by **LUBIAM** (\$995) and a striped shirt by **J. CREW** (\$65). Few people—Connolly not among them, obviously—are easily persuaded to leave the Mansion after a heavy night of partying with Playmates. Connolly is in a pin-striped suit by **CHRISTOPHER DEANE** (\$657), a shirt by **RENÉ LEZARD** (\$175) and a cognac belt by **TORINO BELTS** (\$75). Ferrara wears a three-button jacket by **MARC ECKO COLLECTION** (\$500), a hooded sweater by **TED BAKER LONDON** (\$165), cargo pants by **GUESS** (\$79) and a stainless diver's watch by **TAG HEUER** (\$2,800). Dillen is in a black suit (\$1,100) and optic-pattern shirt (\$175) by **RENÉ LEZARD** and a tie by **DOLCEPUNTA** (\$125). Thanks for sharing the dream, boys.

SLICK KICKERS

Fashion by Joseph De Acetis



The Laidler (\$70), by 310 Motoring Footwear, has green nubuck accents.



Lime-green suede and yellow nylon make Aldo's sneaker (\$60) stand out.



The blue-mesh-and-suede styling of Nautica's Rock (\$75) make it tech and tough.



This back-to-the-future slip-on is the TDK (\$75) by Adidas. The stripes are denim.



The Deflector (\$75) and its three-color fade are available from Pony.



The rubber-bottom Price sneaker (\$40), in two-tone suede, is by Penguin.

True, summer is sneaker season. Just be sure to leave your gym shoes in the locker. Here's what you need: the latest trainers in light looks and bright colors

photography by james imbrogno



Nike's old-school sneaker with gold details is called the Air Force II Low (\$65).



This blue-and-gray suede kick (\$185) is the latest offering by Hugo Hugo Boss.



Diesel makes the Auriga (\$100), remixing colors and fabrics for proper flash.



The TH Vapor (\$65), with suede and nylon details, is by Tommy Hilfiger.



Elastic straps across the top keep Reebok's Carbon X (\$90) sleek.



Eye-popping color makes the Finale (\$50), by Globe Shoes, a perfect summer shoe.



"I don't know much about art, but seeing something you paid \$2 million for really turns me on."

Centerfolds On SEX



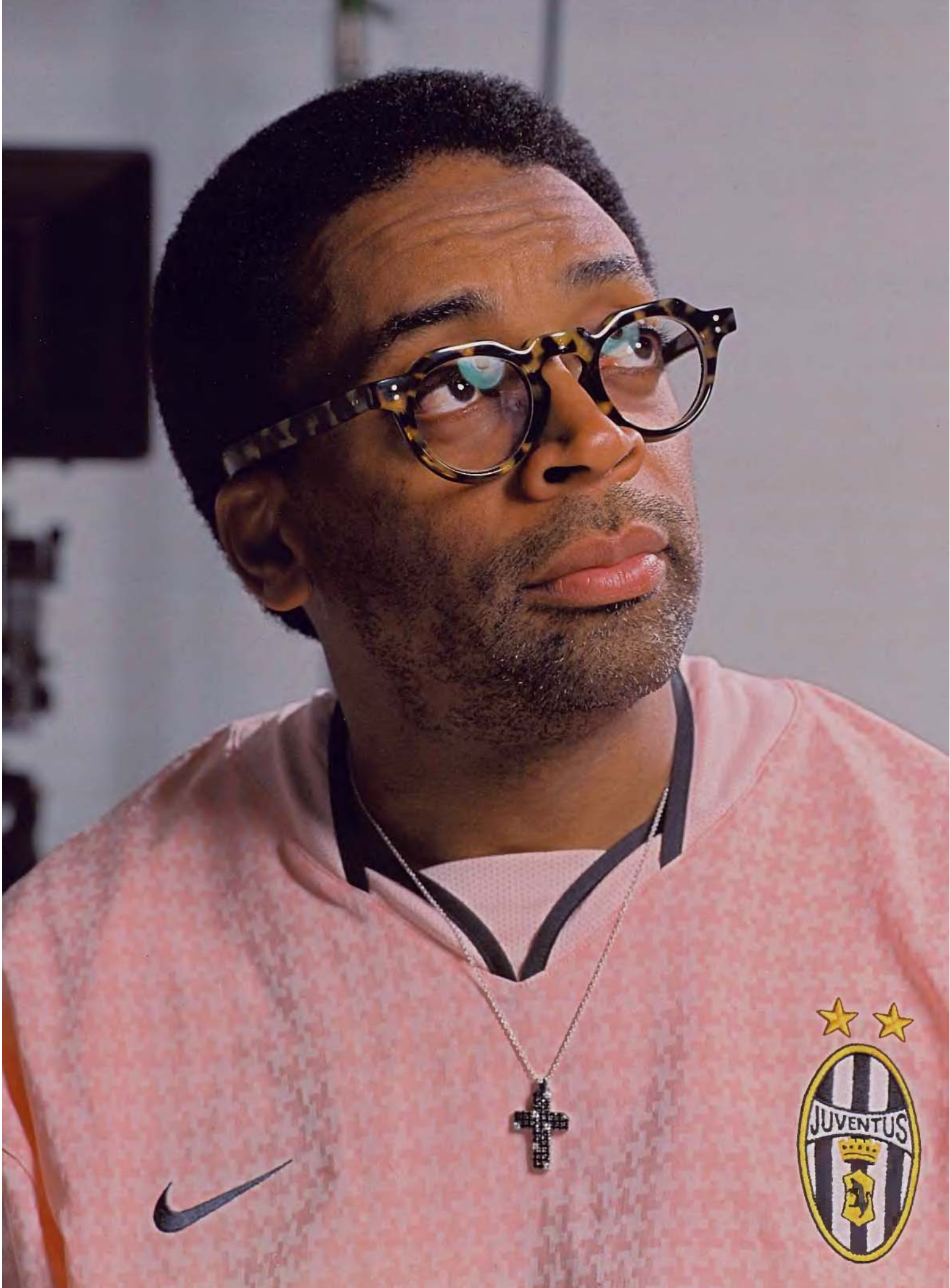
SHE PLAYS HARD TO GET...

People take sex so lightly these days that it's lost its meaning. I don't think we should be giving ourselves away so freely. If you sleep with someone on the first date, he or she won't ever bring you home to meet the family. You're going to have sex, and only sex, with that person. There's no challenge, so what's the point of committing? I never have casual encounters, because I don't want a man to lose respect for me. I like to wait a month or two—I have to know that our relationship is going somewhere first and that it's not built on sex alone. It's much more fun when you're monogamous.

BUT ONCE YOU GET HER...

I'll make my guy a candlelit dinner, then answer the door wearing black leather boots and a robe over a sexy thong. It's important to have dinner first, because waiting is a form of teasing and foreplay. We'd start off by kissing each other everywhere. He would go down on me and I would go down on him. I want it to be slow and sensual. Then we'd try all kinds of sexual positions, like doggy style, me riding him and side by side. We'd do it all over the house—in the basement, in the shower, on a table, in the living room and in front of a mirror. After we've christened every room, he'd carry me upstairs. We'd scream each other's name or say things like "You turn me on" and "You make me so hot." I'd try to time it so we come together. When that moment nears we'd get into the missionary position. He'd pull out and come all over my stomach while we look into each other's eyes.





Spike Lee

200Q

The outspoken director takes on 50 Cent, NASCAR, Viagra and Strom Thurmond—just for starters

1

PLAYBOY: Your new film, *She Hate Me*, tackles the subjects of corporate greed and sex for money. For you that's tame stuff. Are you mellowing on us?

LEE: Not at all. The majority of Americans think these corporate guys are crooks. I'm disheartened to see people work their entire lives and lose their life savings or their retirement or have the money for their children's education wiped out. Enron's Ken Lay has yet to spend a day in jail. And with the furor now about gay marriage, this film is an intelligent look at sex the way it is today. I did my research. The oldest sperm bank in New York state is in the Empire State Building, the great phallic symbol. If you're a woman, you go there and they have a folder—what color eyes do you want, how tall, left-handed or right-handed? If the donor has a post-grad degree, that costs more. It's almost as if people are playing God now.

2

PLAYBOY: You looked at explosive inner-city race relations in *Do the Right Thing*, explored interracial sex in *Jungle Fever* and made headlines with *Malcolm X*. But now it seems the most controversial director around is Mel Gibson. Are you jealous?

LEE: It's good when other people come in and take the spears. But in all honesty, when I choose the films I want to do, I really don't choose them by asking what new controversy I can tackle. I look first for a story. Sometimes controversy is inherent in real stories.

3

PLAYBOY: *She Hate Me*'s protagonist, an African American executive named Jack Armstrong, exposes wrongdoing and then gets framed by his own company. He fights back and raises hell in a Senate hearing room. Haven't we seen that story before?

LEE: No, because I don't know if he wins. His business career is over. This film is really about whistle-blowers. When he's in that Capitol setting, he cites the whistle-blowers from the CIA, Enron and WorldCom. And he cites a great whistle-blower who never got his due, Frank Wills [the security guard who discovered the Watergate break-in]; he later couldn't get a job and just fell by the wayside. He's a true American hero.

4

PLAYBOY: The Armstrong character changes careers and exhibits prodigious potency when he impregnates lesbians for big bucks. But we see him popping a few of those blue pills. Are you bracing yourself for complaints from black men who buy into the stud stereotype and might be insulted by the idea of Viagra?

LEE: I don't care who he is, any man put in that position is going to need some help. He's a breeder. The women come to him when they're ovulating. He's on 24-hour call, like a doctor. Historically, white American men have felt some inadequacy when it comes to black men's sexuality. Otherwise we wouldn't have been castrated and lynched because of the fear of a black man looking at a white woman. There's a great term—*reckless eyeballing*. Emmett Till was murdered for it. During the 1950s, when he was 14 years old, he went down to Mississippi for the summer and was murdered for reckless eyeballing. In *The Birth of a Nation* a white lady jumps off a cliff rather than be ravaged by the black savage.

5

PLAYBOY: Lesbians lining up at the door to have sex with a virile black man—is that Spike Lee's ultimate fantasy?

LEE: I would never do that. I couldn't, no matter how good a friend she was. But here you have someone in the business world with high ethics, and because of that he becomes a whistle-blower. To

complicate matters, he doesn't come up with the idea of impregnating lesbians; his ex-fiancée, who is now a lesbian, is the one insisting he do it. He's compromising the high standards that got him in trouble in the first place, but he's getting \$10,000 a wallop. Meanwhile, she wants a 10 percent cut. And she's very slick, because she makes sure the first women she brings to him are really good-looking lipstick lesbians. But we tried to be careful. Not every woman there could be orgasmic. We had to show that some of those women have no use for men. They're not getting off; they just want to get pregnant. Then he starts to realize, I'm going to burn in hell. I'm just as bad as the people I blew the whistle on.

6

PLAYBOY: Did you deliberately cast Jim Brown as Armstrong's father to provide a backstory for his masculinity?

LEE: Jim Brown is the definition of manliness. I felt it would be amazing to have this man—who exemplified masculinity, strength and being a warrior—in a wheelchair and remain dignified. It really hit Jim, because he said, "I've always been so physical. Me being in a wheelchair is a trip."

7

PLAYBOY: *The Playboy Advisor* cautions that relationships are usually affected adversely by the inclusion of a third person. Given the three-way relationship, involving people with kids, depicted in *She Hate Me*, should we assume you hold a different opinion?

LEE: You really don't know what happens with this new relationship. There's a reason the film ends with Jim Brown looking at his son and laughing. He's like, "Oh boy!" No one should think that at the end of this film the characters walk off into the sunset with the perfect three-way marriage. I don't know how that could work. They all

realize they don't know how it is going to work. I wanted to end the film by showing that they were going to attempt it.

8

PLAYBOY: In *Jungle Fever* Ossie Davis delivers a passionate speech against the white man's exploitation of black women. Do you suppose Senator Strom Thurmond, who fathered Essie Mae Washington-Williams with a black woman, missed that movie?

LEE: Old Strom missed a lot of stuff. That was a revelation about his daughter. This goes back to Thomas Jefferson. All these guys were going to the slave quarters to have sex and had children by black women. That borders on rape. I just can't understand why she kept quiet. Maybe she felt she couldn't tell that secret to the world, so it passed. It's ironic that Thurmond was one of the staunchest segregationists. It made me start to wonder about Jesse Helms.

9

PLAYBOY: John Turturro's turn as a Mafia don in *She Hate Me* is memorable in part because Monica Bellucci plays his daughter and in part because of his rant that "gangsta rappers can never be us." What is it with Spike Lee and Italians?

LEE: When I was in first grade I moved to an Italian American neighborhood, Cobble Hill in Brooklyn. Since those formative years a lot of my friends have been Italian American. I've noticed that despite the friction between blacks and Italian Americans over the years, they have many similarities. It's hard for me to describe, but the sensibilities are very similar—the way people talk, the way they move, the flashiness, the loudness, the brashness. Turturro's character was a good opportunity to give a riff.

10

PLAYBOY: You've been to Africa many times. What would you tell others about your experience?

LEE: African Americans grew up here, so our images of Africa are for the most part uninformed. We get images from Tarzan movies—*Ooga-booga* and lions and tigers. It's astounding to Africans that African Americans don't know as much as they should about Africa. Even more, they don't want to know. This whole thing of race is very interesting to me. Now, because of DNA, African Americans can finally find out what region of Africa their ancestors were from. My wife, Tanya, and I took a test—we swabbed the inside of

our cheek with a Q-tip—from a company called African Ancestry. Tanya's ancestors on her mother's side were from Sierra Leone. My mother's side came from what is now Niger, and my father's side came from the region that is now Cameroon. It was a revelation for Tanya and me to finally discover where our ancestors were from. And I really encourage other African Americans to take that test.

11

PLAYBOY: You don't exactly have a high opinion of the Oscars, but do you happen to have an acceptance speech in your desk drawer?

LEE: No. As an artist you can't rely on any organization of power to validate your work, whether it be the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the Grammys, the Tonys. You have to have enough confidence to know that what you do is worthwhile. For example, *Ordinary People* won for best picture over *Raging Bull*. Robert Redford won for best director over Scorsese. No one is watching *Ordinary People* now. *Driving Miss Daisy* won for best picture, and it's not being taught in college film classes across America as *Do the Right Thing* is. We didn't get nominated for best picture—I got nominated for original screenplay and Danny Aiello for best supporting actor—but every year *Do the Right Thing* grows in stature. Denzel should have won for *Malcolm X*. Who did he lose to? Al Pacino, for that film he was blind in, *Scent of a Woman*. How can you compare Al Pacino's performance with what Denzel did in *Malcolm X*? Denzel got it later for *Training Day*, but that's not his best performance. You can go crazy thinking about that.

12

PLAYBOY: NASCAR is making a pitch for African American fans. Will we ever spot Spike Lee at the speedway?

LEE: *Yee-haw!* I just imagine hearing some country-and-western song over a loudspeaker at NASCAR: "Hang them niggers up high! Hang them niggers up high!" I'm not going to no NASCAR.

13

PLAYBOY: You're an unabashed fan of your hometown. Some Brooklynites still maintain that their city screwed up in 1898 when it became part of New York. Do you think Brooklyn is the greatest city in the world?

LEE: Brooklyn is my favorite borough. It looks as if the New Jersey Nets will move there, and I think that's great, even though it won't change my allegiance to the Knicks. Everyone always forgets that 4 million people live in

Brooklyn, and if you made a roster of all the great people who came out of there, you couldn't top it: Woody Allen, Barbra Streisand, Biggie Smalls. Very diverse. It's not a coincidence that Jackie Robinson, the first African American in modern baseball, played for the Brooklyn Dodgers. That's the spirit and the vibe of Brooklyn.

14

PLAYBOY: We enjoyed the Reverend Al Sharpton's wit during the Democratic primaries and his performance as host on *Saturday Night Live*. Can you help us figure him out?

LEE: He was phenomenal on *Saturday Night Live*. He could definitely act in movies. He was in *Malcolm X*. He had a scene with Johnnie Cochran in *Bamboozled*—they were demonstrating against a television network. That poster of Sharpton in *She Hate Me* is from Sean John, Puffy's clothing line. If you watched all the primaries, Sharpton made more sense than anybody else. He wasn't going to get elected, but he served a great purpose, because he kept the topics focused on what really matters to Americans. He will be an asset to Democrats come November.

15

PLAYBOY: Cornel West, a professor of religion and African American studies at Princeton, theorizes that white American youths are becoming culturally Afro-Americanized. Do you agree? Would you like to claim some credit?

LEE: I'm not going to take credit, but it's true, because hip-hop has become the dominant culture. I'm not going to say that's all good. But it's not an overstatement if you look at the way hip-hop has invaded the culture—movies, music, fashion, language. African Americans have always had that influence on culture. We had the minstrel shows and then jazz. I don't know what the outcome will be, but it's good that we're getting acknowledgment for being creative. In some art forms that hasn't been the case. Rock and roll is seen as a tribute to Elvis; Bo Diddley, Little Richard and Chuck Berry are overlooked.

16

PLAYBOY: Your lawsuit against Spike TV for adopting the Spike moniker has been settled. But your award-winning student film was called *Joe's Bed-Stuy Barbershop: We Cut Heads*. Did the makers of *Barbershop* and *Barbershop 2* know to tread lightly around your intellectual property?

LEE: I never said there was a trademark (concluded on page 130)

Sex Surfing



JUAN MIVAREZ • JORGE G



ALL ABOUT EVA

It's been 10 years since her Wonderbra billboards caused car crashes around the world. But Eva Herzigova is just getting started

Here's something the luckiest people in the world know: When Eva Herzigova rolls out of bed, she looks incredible. We discover this on a Wednesday morning in May, when the supermodel swings open the door to her New York City hotel suite. She's wearing a delicate white shirt, jeans and white sneakers—a low-key but expensive outfit. Freckles dot her nose.

"I just woke up," she says. "Come in."

Eva is recovering from a late night. Though the gossip columns will report the next day that she was spotted partying with fellow knockout Carmen Kass at a restaurant called Butter, we can assure you she was working that night. She was posing for the photos you see here.

The shoot, Eva says, is something she'd always planned to do: "For me, PLAYBOY is on the career list. I've been asked to pose a million times." So why now? "This was the first time I got everything I wanted, including the photographer. I picked Mario Sorrenti because of his work. It's artsy, mysterious, feminine and sexy. PLAYBOY is a great concept. It shows the beauty of the body in an elegant way."

Eva has been showing the beauty of the body since she began mod-

eling at the age of 16. Her big break arrived in 1994, when she starred in a Wonderbra ad campaign. With Eva on traffic-stopping billboards around the globe, the push-up bras became a phenomenon and she became a household name. "Their sales went up 40 percent," she says. To date, Eva has modeled for Guess, Burberry, Louis Vuitton and Victoria's Secret. She recently launched a line of swimwear called Eva Herzigova. "Original, huh?" she says. "But it would be sad to call the line anything else. I've worked so hard to build a brand. You don't just throw that away."

The brand building has segued into acting, and like Michelle Pfeiffer and Cameron Diaz, Eva is making a successful transition. She even won a best actress award at the New York International Independent Film and Video Festival for her role in *Just for the Time Being*. Next up? *Modigliani*, in which she plays Picasso's first wife, and *Go-Go Tales*, starring Harvey Keitel. Eva sees acting as a natural next step. "When I'm being photographed I create a character. With acting I just find a voice." But even when the pictures are still and the voice is silent, she leaves us speechless.



"Beauty gets you far. But I wouldn't give up my brains, that's for sure."

















Spike Lee

(continued from page 118)

on the word *Spike*. The problem was the combination of Spike and Spike TV. I hired Johnnie Cochran, and we got the settlement. To this day people come up to me on the street and say, "I watched your network, your channel." I have no copyrights on barbershops. The barber-shop is a staple of the African American community, a meeting place. So that's there for any artist to utilize.

17

PLAYBOY: You deconstructed blackface—burnt cork over cocoa butter—in *Bam-*

boozled. Can we learn something from the minstrel show?

LEE: It's putting on a mask. It's not who you are. It's projecting something that's not positive. And people laugh at you. A lot of minstrel shows and minstrel people are still around today. If you turn on BET and watch some of these rappers, that stuff is borderline minstrel show. They've just become more sophisticated, so you don't have to put on red lipstick and blackface. It's horrible, and they don't even realize it. I love rapping. The rap I grew up on originated in the South Bronx and was about having a good time: hip-hop, graffiti, break dancing and MCs rapping. It was not about "I got my nine millimeter and I'll blow

your fucking brains out and make your ho or your bitch suck my dick."

18

PLAYBOY: We hear you rapping right now. Want to go on?

LEE: What was the title of 50 Cent's debut album? *Get Rich or Die Tryin'*. He's one of the biggest rappers out there. He is not a fake act. He's been shot several times. He's shot at people. He wears a bulletproof vest when he's outside, and he's not doing it for fashion. When young African Americans live by the code "Get rich or die tryin'," it's a very sad state: [raps] "Whatever I got to do to get my Nikes, my Adidas, my Sean John, my Timberlands, my ride, to get my rims, so I can drink my Cristal, to have my platinums. I run the bitches and hos. I gotta kill some people. I gotta maim somebody. I gotta maim you. I gotta paralyze you. I gotta kill you. I gotta rob you." It's insane.

19

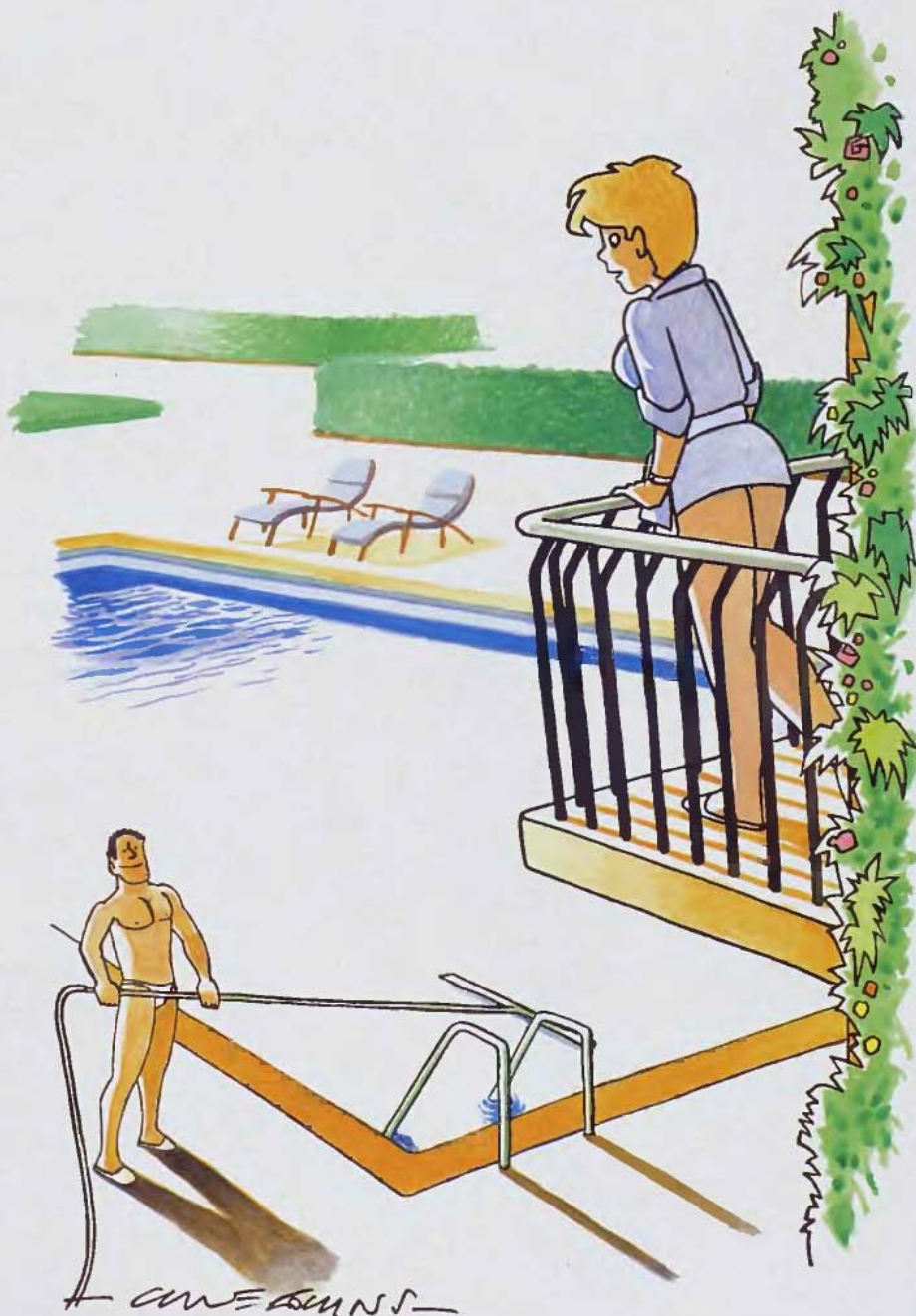
PLAYBOY: You're a big sports fan. With NBA players on trial for rape and manslaughter and with steroids a problem throughout the sports world, is it tough to root for a lot of athletes these days?

LEE: I'm able to separate their personal stuff from what they do as athletes. This is not new. It's just that it wasn't reported back then. I know some people can't separate it. I was telling my wife that the Knicks may be getting Kobe, and her feeling was, Why would the Knicks want Kobe Bryant, an alleged rapist? Valid point. In the sports realm today, the bottom line is to win. If a great athlete has some character flaws or problems, that's overlooked as long as he is able to perform. For singer R. Kelly, I can't make that separation. I saw that DVD with him and those girls. I have a nine-year-old daughter. I look at him in a different light now. I can't listen to his music, and I wouldn't buy a record of his.

20

PLAYBOY: Everyone's giving advice to the slumping Tiger Woods. Some even suggest that his Swedish girlfriend has gotten him off his game. Could the director of *Jungle Fever* counsel the pro?

LEE: I heard that a lot. There may be some truth to it. [laughs] I've never met the woman. I've met Tiger a couple of times. The same thing happened with Derek Jeter recently when he was zero for 32—everybody and his mom were giving him advice. Sometimes you just have to let people alone and let them work it out. Hopefully Tiger will get back to where he was.



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When I asked what happened, what brought about the change, he wouldn't tell me. So I did what any red blooded American woman would do - I started snooping. It didn't take long to find his secret. In his underwear drawer under the men's magazines, was a tube of Maxoderm Connection. I went on line and found that Connection (of which I'm making my boyfriend buy a lifetime supply) is a topical lotion applied directly to the "privates". Your site said that Connection is an all natural blend designed to "activate and invigorate the senses, making orgasms for both of us not only more intense, but more frequent" - Well this was an UNDERSTATEMENT - for the first time in my life, I was having multiple orgasms and get this - so was he, sometimes at the same time as me!

We're not into taking pills of any kind - not even aspirin - so I was relieved to see he was using something topical without systemic side effects - unless you want to think of great sex as a side effect. His confidence level is through the roof and it shows - he just received a job promotion!

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T.J.

T.J.
 Phoenix, AZ



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Detroit, Death City (continued from page 64)

Each morning before he took the kids to school, Leito Sr. checked under the hood of his car for bombs.

the land" was their slogan. Members renounced their citizenship and refused to pay taxes, telling white America to kiss their collective black behind. They loaded up on guns and ammo in preparation for the coming conflagration. Not surprisingly, the FBI took notice of the RNA's pronouncements and activities and set out to sabotage the group.

"Leito was always ahead of the times," says Bob Newby, a friend and fellow activist who met Leito Sr. when both were studying at Wichita State University in the 1950s. "In the early 1960s, when everybody was talking about integration, he was talking about black power. He knew white America wasn't going to change. He thought integration was just utopian pie-in-the-sky politics."

Born at the height of the Depression in Independence, Kansas, Leito Sr. served as a paratrooper in the Army before receiving a master's degree from Boston University. He came to live in Detroit at the end of the 1950s, and the experience radicalized him. The racism of the police, the open segregation in housing, the way blacks were banned from employment in certain stores—all of it infuriated him. The effort to better his race became his new vocation.

Leito Sr. was a proud and dignified man, not someone who would easily turn the other cheek. He always spoke proper English and never cursed. He rarely raised his voice, because he didn't have to. His authority and encyclopedic knowledge of world affairs were such that people listened when he talked.

At six feet, two inches, he was an imposing presence. In later years, after he started to go gray, he would be mistaken at airports for Ed Bradley of *60 Minutes*. When I first met him in the early 1990s, over Christmas dinner, he scared the hell out of me. He spent most of our meeting playing a game of pin the tail on the honky, blaming me personally for Ronald Reagan's policies, even though I was born and raised in a terraced house in working-class Manchester. Of course what really teed him off was that, in opposition to his firmly held racial beliefs, his Nubian princess had married a white man. Still, you didn't have to like his stern personality or agree with his ideology to respect him.

After Edison fired him in 1968 for his extracurricular political activities, Leito Sr. devoted himself full-time to insurrection. The riots killed the dream of integration in Detroit—where only four years before, Martin Luther King Jr. had led 125,000 people in a march down

Woodward Avenue to Cobo Hall and delivered an early version of his "I have a dream" speech.

It was a period of open racial hostility. A survey conducted after the riots revealed that 67 percent of white Detroiters believed blacks had only themselves to blame for their poverty. Leito Sr. saw what happened not as a riot but as a rebellion—an expression of rage against racism and oppression. Next time, however, blacks would be organized. Instead of burning down their own neighborhoods, he vowed, they would take the fight to the white man.

To this end, the Durley household became a home for revolutionaries. Though Leito Jr. was too young at the time to remember much, his sister Initia recalls H. Rap Brown and Huey Newton bouncing her on their knees. A secret door in the house led to a closet full of weaponry. An underground newspaper was printed in the basement. Each morning before he took the kids to school, Leito Sr. checked under the hood of his car for bombs. Undercover government agents followed the family whenever they left the house. Everywhere they went, RNA bodyguards went with them. Later, the kids were the only ones in school who wore FREE ANGELA DAVIS badges and refused to stand for the pledge of allegiance.

Things came to a head one spring night in 1969. Leito and Yolanda kissed their kids good-bye, told them they'd be back soon and headed over to the New Bethel Baptist Church, where the RNA was holding its second annual conference. The Reverend C.L. Franklin, Aretha Franklin's father, had founded the church, a warehouse-like building that dominated the neighborhood.

Shortly before midnight, after the meeting had ended and people were starting to head home, two white officers in a patrol car stopped to ask questions. In those days the Detroit police department was as racist as any in Mississippi. The force was 90 percent white. Members of the RNA's paramilitary wing, the Black Legionnaires, were standing outside. The Legionnaires were a fearsome sight—decked out in black berets, combat boots and leopard-skin epaulets, they were trained in self-defense and openly carried guns. The rookie officers got out of the car and approached the Legionnaires. A confrontation ensued that left one of the officers, Michael Czapski, dead on the sidewalk, his gun still holstered. His partner was seriously wounded.

"One of the cops started to pull out his

gun, but the young brothers outshot him," Imari Obadele, then the group's charismatic leader, says today. "The cops were out to kill us that night. It was an attempt to assassinate the leadership of the RNA." The Detroit police saw it as cold-blooded murder, the politically inspired killing of a brother officer. Within minutes police vans and cruisers surrounded the church, and an armed siege followed. Cops fired rifles and pistols into the building.

Yolanda was standing in the church lobby when bullets started flying through the open doorway. She rushed back into the sanctuary to find her husband. RNA officials turned off the lights and told everybody to get on the floor, where they crawled under the pews as round after round whizzed above their heads, creating hysteria among the women and children.

"It went on for 15 or 20 minutes," recalls Yolanda. "They finally stopped shooting, then stormed the church and told everybody they were under arrest. We didn't know what was going on."

A dozen guns and a cache of ammunition were confiscated. Everybody was taken to the police station, where they were kept incommunicado while being fingerprinted and given nitrate tests to find out if they had fired a weapon. By the next day the police had released all but a handful of individuals. "Before they let us go they asked us to sign a release saying we hadn't been mistreated," remembers Yolanda. "We told them to get lost." Three RNA members went on trial for the murder, but all were acquitted.

With the revolutionary father, I knew where I stood within minutes of meeting him. But my brother-in-law always seemed to be hiding something behind his gleaming smile. Popular with the ladies, he was a dapper, handsome man in his 30s, with Asian-looking eyes and an almond-shaped head that seemed a bit too small for his broad shoulders. Charming and well-mannered, he was a ghetto playboy who enjoyed the good things in life.

Leito Jr., or Lo, as his friends called him, was a drug supplier by trade—something the whole family was aware of. He once called to ask if I knew where he could get 10 keys of cocaine in a hurry. There was a drought in New York's Washington Heights, where he normally bought his coke before transporting it to Detroit. Appalled that he was talking about a major drug transaction on my home phone, I told him I knew where to get an eight ball in a hurry, but that was about it, and then I hung up.

Like so many other dealers, Leito fell on hard times. After finishing a prison stretch in the mid-1990s, he went back to the streets but was unable to hook up with his dope connections, most of

whom were either dead, in jail or retired. A new set of hustlers had taken over the trade, which was now more anarchic than in the past. This wasn't like the old days, when someone fronted you a couple of keys of cocaine and told you to pay him back the next week. If you didn't have the money right then and there, nobody would deal with you.

Stressed out by his diminished circumstances and too proud to show it, Leito felt increasingly trapped by his bad life choices. Running through his mind was the constant worry that he would be unable to support his son, Little Leito, who was living with the child's mother in South Carolina. He hated being poor and was embarrassed not to own a car, a severe social handicap in a city where the automobiles people drive are often better tended than their homes. The time had come to quit the game. Tired of the daily gangster grind, he was going through the hustler's equivalent of a midlife crisis, a harsh realization that while crime often pays in the short term, it rarely does over time.

Club 313 occupies a one-story stucco building at the corner of Schoolcraft and Greenfield. When we pull into its parking lot on a cold February evening, the old attendant, seeing me write in a notebook, accuses me of being undercover heat. "I know what you doing, boy," he says. "You taking down plate numbers. Don't lie." It seems the police had been keeping an eye on the dance club.

Earlier, one of Leito's acquaintances had cautioned us, "You got to be careful about the questions you asking. These niggers up here is crazy, man. This ain't New York. These niggers don't want publicity. They want to shoot you."

A notice at the door instructs patrons, NO HOODS, BASEBALL HATS, GYM SHOES, JERSEYS. MEN 25 UP. A human colossus pats down customers on the way in, which is just as well, according to Kenny, the joint's amiable owner: "You'd be crazy to go to a nightclub in Detroit that doesn't check for guns. Shit, some restaurants in this town even search you for weapons." Attired in a flight jacket, sneakers and a wool cap, he is in violation of his own dress code, even though he wears an expensive Piaget watch.

A large bar occupies the center of Kenny's establishment. Leather booths ring the perimeter. The DJ plays a mixture of old-school soul and funk with some contemporary hip-hop—typical for a city where Frankie Beverly and Maze are still big stars. A line of young women in new boots gyrate on the dance floor in perfect formation as they check themselves out in the mirrored wall.

Club 313 is the land of a thousand hustles. There's the social hustle, the booty-call hustle, the push-it hustle, the original hustle, the ballroom hustle and

so forth. "Detroit has so many different hustles, it's ridiculous," says 313 bartender Adrienne, an elfin, light-skinned black woman whom Leito used to date.

Leito often came to 313, where he'd sit in the corner drinking a split of Moët & Chandon. "He always used to reminisce about his life before he went to prison," remembers Kenny. "He had a bad time after he got out. People he'd helped in the past turned their backs on him."

Sitting next to Kenny is his cousin Fly Guy, one of Leito's oldest friends. He wears a baby blue suede outfit, with matching hat, jacket and trousers. It looks more like a stage costume for a 1970s funk band than something you'd wear on the street. Leito met Fly Guy at a screening of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* in the early 1980s, when Leito saved him from a beating after Fly Guy was cornered in the cinema's parking lot. "That nigger taught me how to shoot," Fly Guy says. "Before I met Lo I was throwing the bullets, spraying them all over the place. I'd turn the gun to the side and shoot like in the movies. Leito told me, 'No, man, that's garbage. That's stuff you see on TV.'"

Living in Detroit, Fly Guy has seen his fair share of senseless slaughter. "When I was in high school two sisters had their mother killed for the insurance money. And guess how much the insurance policy was for? Fifty thousand," he recalls. Later a friend of his was murdered because he stepped on somebody's shoes outside a bar and refused to apologize. He was shot in the back as he walked away. The victim's brother came to the bar the next week and blew away his brother's killer in front of a packed room. "A lot of people walking around Detroit don't have any souls," says Fly Guy. "There's people out here who are so petty they'll take your life over nothing. It's the crab-in-the-bucket syndrome. We're all hungry down here at the bottom of this barrel. But if you're climbing up, trying to get out of this nonsense, I got to pull you down and take from you."

Given the perilous nature of Leito's chosen lifestyle, it's a wonder he didn't quit the game sooner. While Leito was in prison, another friend was crippled after hoodlums heard he had a lot of cash in a safe at his home. They broke into his house and shot him a dozen times in the legs, arms and genitals with an Uzi, attempting to get him to give up the combination. Knowing that if he gave it up, the next bullet would be to his head, he held on for life. An acquaintance sitting outside in a car heard the commotion and called the police. The assailants ran away.

By the early 1970s Leito's parents had separated. His father went from trying to overthrow the system to working within the system, taking a job as chief of

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public information for the Wayne County Commission, a position he held for three decades. After 1967 more blacks were elected to high office in Detroit. Former revolutionaries were now councilmen and commissioners. In 1973 Detroit chose its first black mayor, Coleman Young. "Coleman Young had a high regard for Leito's intellect and often asked him for advice," says one former mayoral aide. They would lunch together at the now-shuttered Enjoy, on Michigan Avenue, an unhygienic hole-in-the-wall soul food restaurant that functioned as a male clubhouse for the new political class.

Leito Sr.'s dream of black power had been achieved only on a political level, not on an economic one, where it really would have counted. The 1967 riots were merely a prelude to a deepening economic crisis. In the face of cheaper and better-made Japanese imports, Detroit's auto industry suffered a dramatic decline. The OPEC crisis only exacerbated the slump. Between 1967 and 1981 Detroit lost half its manufacturing jobs.

Scared whites continued to decamp to the suburbs. Many middle-class blacks soon followed, especially after the public school system collapsed. Court-mandated school busing hastened the exodus. Between 1970 and 1980 Detroit shed more than a fifth of its population. The diminished tax base was unable to support a city increasingly made up of poor black people. During the next 20 years, Detroit would lose two thirds of its property-tax base as the number of whites in the city dropped from 56 percent of the

population in 1970 to 22 percent in 1990.

Criminals became more brazen. In August 1976, at a Kool & the Gang concert, 150 members of the Errol Flynn gang (in tandem with another group, the Black Killers) committed what one gang-banger boasted was "the boldest mass robbery in Detroit history." They stormed through Cobo Hall and stole money and jewelry, beating or sexually assaulting any of the 8,000 concertgoers who resisted. Named after the swashbuckling Hollywood star of yore, the Errol Flynn gang fancied themselves debonair criminals. They came to the concert dressed in double-breasted suits and their signature black felt Borsalino fedoras, the collars of their shirts turned up, many of them carrying walking sticks. They commandeered the stage and grabbed the microphones, chanting "Errol Flynn, Errol Flynn" and doing the Errol Flynn dance move popular at the time.

As the industrial economy went into free fall and well-paid jobs on the assembly line dried up, a new underground economy developed in its place—a deadly trade that would end up destroying almost everything Leito Sr. held dear.

"The politics changed dramatically," remembers activist Bob Newby. "When I left Detroit in 1970 to go to graduate school, the talk was all about black power. When I came back in 1974 it was all about personal escapism. Drugs had a lot to do with that."

Oak Park—the Detroit suburb where Yolanda moved her family after her

divorce in the mid-1970s—bills itself as "the family city." Driving around the neatly tended streets, you see nothing to dispel that image. Ranch-style homes, all nearly identical, line the streets. On the outside, at least, there's little to suggest this area was a breeding ground for criminality.

Yet when Leito was in high school in the early 1980s, Oak Park had quite a reputation. This was the era of Young Boys Inc., a group of older men who used underage kids to peddle drugs. Milton "Butch" Jones, the gang's leader, lived in Oak Park. He also had several houses for counting and storage in the neighborhood. The YBI's assembly-line cocaine and heroin operation reportedly grossed \$35 million annually and flourished for five years before police and the feds broke up the gang in the early 1980s. "At that time a lot of the major gangsters in Detroit came from Oak Park and Southfield," says one of Leito's best friends, Pretty Tony.

"You had kids when we were in school who were 15, 16 years old, driving BMWs and Benzes and wearing mink coats," says Fly Guy, who also grew up in the area. "Why bust your butt going to college and doing the right thing when the person down the street who can't spell *cat* or *dog* has a pocket full of money? You look at yourself and say, 'Damn, I got more brains than this one. I could do the same thing and make more money.' Which Leito did."

All the Durley kids inherited their father's rebelliousness. Middle-class security was a bore. "We didn't want to be preppy Negroes," my wife says. "None of us wanted to hang out with the sort of people my mother wanted us to hang out with." While the sisters contented themselves with symbolic rebellion by dressing up like punk rockers, the brother took a more hazardous path. The danger and excitement of the streets—a world from which his parents had always shielded him—appealed to Leito in a way tennis lessons and horseback riding never could. Becoming a drug dealer represented everything he was bred not to become.

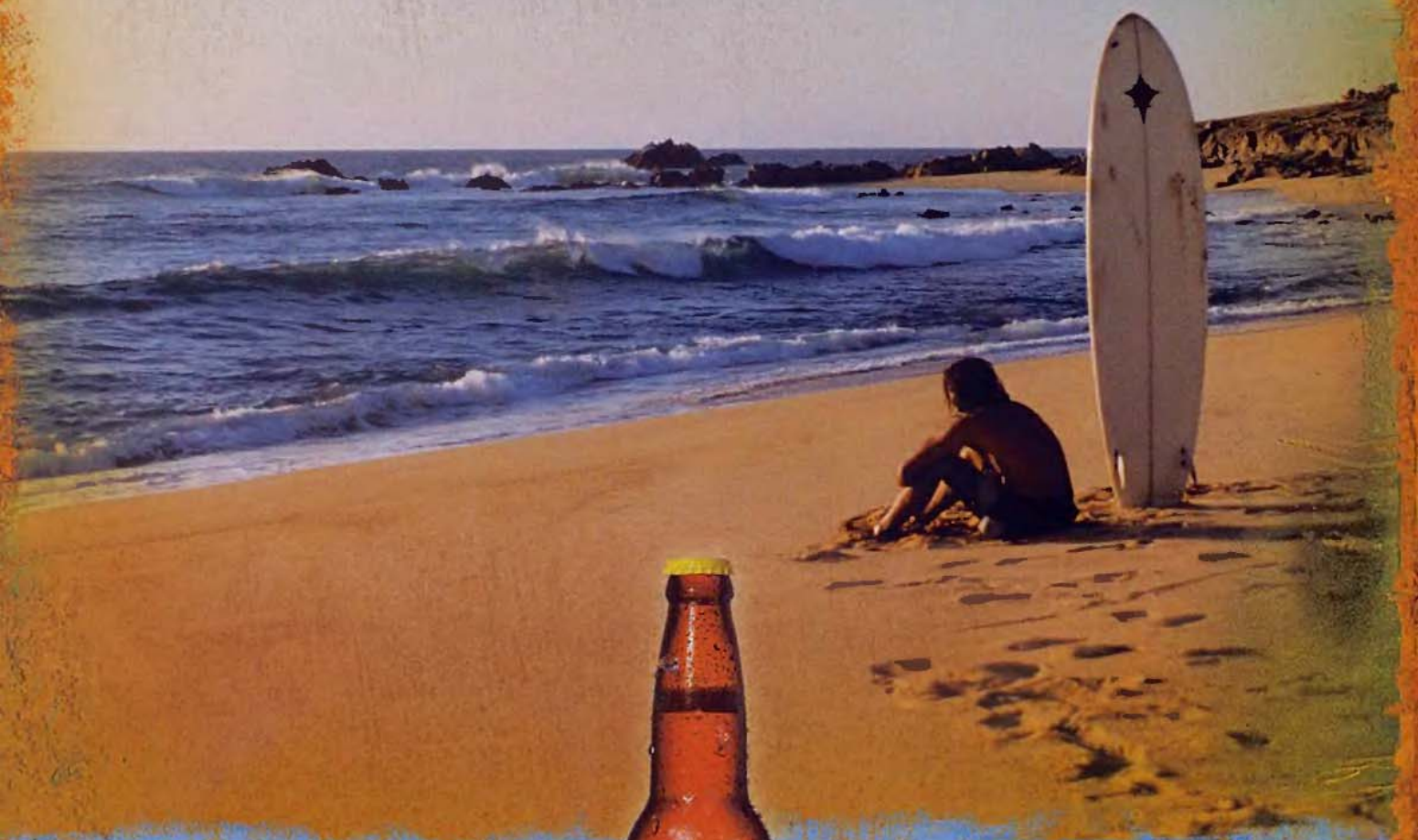
Leito's career path resists easy sociological explanation. The normal excuses for criminal behavior—poverty, poor education, abusive parents—didn't apply in his case. He wasn't stupid, a delinquent because he was too dumb to do anything else, nor was he selling drugs because he needed to support a habit. He was widely read—everything from Shakespeare to Sun Tzu to Donald Goines. And you couldn't blame it on genetics: The Durley family had no history of serious criminality. The only possible explanation is cultural. Leito dug the lifestyle. He liked being a gangster.

"Many young boys in Oak Park were selling drugs when they had no real reason to," says his sister Initia, who suffered many sleepless nights worrying



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about her brother's fate. "It had a lot to do with peer pressure. Leito was slinging drugs because his friends were."

Within the city proper, things went from bad to worse when the recession of the 1970s was followed by the downturn of the early 1980s. In parts of Detroit normal economic life ground to a standstill. On some strips the only signs of commercial activity were the ubiquitous party stores. In the 1980s Leito Sr. led a campaign called Denounce the 40 Ounce, against the advertisement of malt liquor in poor neighborhoods. While the effort succeeded in persuading liquor manufacturers not to advertise in such areas, the proliferation of party stores continued unabated. Leito Sr. was also active behind the scenes, trying to combat the escalating problem of drugs in the community. He was a founder of Partnership for a Drug-Free Detroit.

Meanwhile, his son and a couple of friends had set up shop at the Crystal House, a rundown motel on Greenfield Road. They would bribe the desk clerk, then rent 20 to 30 rooms and have a team of juveniles sell drugs for them. When one group of dealers would get tired, they'd go to bed and the next group would take over. It was a 24-hour operation.

Crack was just hitting Detroit. You could take an ounce of powdered cocaine, cook it, cut it up and sell it within an hour at the Crystal House, doubling or tripling your money.

The notoriously violent Chambers brothers ruled Detroit's crack trade in those days. The four brothers from Arkansas got their start selling pot out of a party store; two moved on to selling crack by the mid-1980s. They supposedly grossed about \$55 million a year, more than any privately owned legitimate business in the city. Dubbed "crack capitalists" by writer William Adler, they employed hundreds of people and controlled some 200 crack houses before being arrested in 1988. According to Adler, there were 450 emergency room admissions for cocaine intoxication in 1983. Four years later there were 3,811.

Leito's operation paled in comparison with the Chambers brothers'. But he was still making \$10,000 to \$20,000 a week, which he spent on luxury cars, Armani suits, diamond watches and alligator shoes. He paraded around town toting a Bally briefcase that contained a MAC-11 nine-millimeter machine gun.

Along with the drug dealing, Leito was involved in running guns. His father once threatened to call the FBI after he found a large number of weapons under Leito's bed. "It's the only way he's going to learn," he told his sobbing daughters as he reached for the phone. (He didn't make the call.)

For years Leito avoided the law and made tons of money in the process. "We

had no real concept of what money was worth," says Fly Guy. "Having that amount of money so early in life fucked us all up to a certain extent, but it particularly fucked up Leito."

Leito's luck couldn't last. In late October 1987 two undercover Detroit cops spotted him in a brand-new Acura, talking on his car phone in front of a building known to be a drug hot spot. As the officers got out of their car and approached, Leito got out of his and ran across the street. As he ran he tossed a clear plastic bag containing white powder to the ground. One of the officers chased after Leito and tackled him from behind. Another bag was found in the jacket he was wearing—250 grams of cocaine in all. Found guilty of possession with intent to deliver, he was sentenced to 10 to 30 years.

In 1992, while in prison, Leito was charged, with members of a gangster-rap group called the Rap Mafia, on a drug conspiracy count that could have kept him behind bars for the rest of his

life. The cops claimed the Rap Mafia was merely a front for a \$5-million-a-month cocaine operation. And Leito was allegedly one of the group's suppliers. Eventually Leito was found not guilty, but not before he pummeled the Rap Mafia associate who had ratted him out to the cops—someone he knew from Oak Park High—after they encountered each other in lockup. "Leito was so mad he probably would have killed him if it wasn't for the fact that he knew the guy's mother and family," recalls Fly Guy.

The Reverend Loyce Lester appears at the door of the Original New Grace Baptist Church, sporting a mink coat and wearing gold jewelry on his wrists. His hair is relaxed and puffed up in the style favored by James Brown and Al Sharpton. In Detroit, competition is fierce in the preacher business, and if you're not a showman, you won't attract a congregation. Every Sunday morning Lester's 400-capacity wood-paneled church, near



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the intersection of Woodward Avenue and 7 Mile Road, is packed with parishioners. After the service, guards escort the elderly to their cars for their own safety. In this neighborhood, as in most of Detroit, the church is the anchor of the community and a sanctuary from the madness all around.

Lester is the man to whom Leito turned for solace and guidance in the final years of his life. Introduced by a mutual friend, a former drug dealer who had seen the light, Lester took Leito under his wing.

It's not unusual in Detroit for troubled souls to turn to God. Just as the city has a hundred versions of the hustle, it also has a hundred versions of Protestantism—denominations such as the Church of God, Church of Christ, Foursquare Gospel, Full Gospel, Nazarene, Bible Brethren, Charismatic and Missionary. Lester's church is straight-up Baptist, but it illustrates one of the enduring contradictions of Detroit: How can such a God-fearing place be so godless?

After Leito was paroled from prison, he told his family he was determined to turn his life around. But it wasn't easy for an ex-con to get a legitimate job in Detroit. A real estate deal he'd put together collapsed after his partner ran off with the money. While he was inside, the funds he'd saved from dealing drugs had also disappeared—either spent on lawyers' bills or stolen by former associates or corrupt cops. Restless and defiant, he continued to peddle drugs. For all his smarts, he seemed oblivious to the hurt he was causing himself and those who loved him.

Predictably, less than two years had passed before Leito was back in trouble. In summer 1997 the Drug Enforcement Administration arrested a Colombian drug courier named Alfredo Reyes at the Dearborn Amtrak train station, where he was awaiting the delivery of half a kilo of heroin from Toledo, Ohio. Reyes told agents he'd planned to deliver the heroin later that day to an individual he knew only as Rambo. At the agents' insistence, Reyes paged Rambo and set up a meeting in the parking lot of a party store in Southfield. At 3:45 p.m. a red two-door Buick with Michigan plates pulled into the lot. Leito got out of the car and walked toward Reyes's car. As he was about to take delivery, the agents arrested him.

During a pretrial hearing, Reyes backpedaled on his story. He said Rambo had expressed interest in buying the drugs but that they hadn't yet sealed a deal when he was arrested. The agents had sprung their trap too early. Leito was lucky; he was let go for insufficient evidence. Nonetheless, what his father's friend Malcolm X had called "the steadily tightening vise of the hustling life"

would soon make its last turn.

Seeking to aid his prodigal charge, Lester arranged an interview for Leito at Ford Motor. But the meeting was canceled when the company announced a round of layoffs. Lester also persuaded a judge not to send Leito to jail after he violated his probation by not reporting to his parole officer.

Leito did repairs at the church. He was an usher at funerals. He drove the reverend around town in Lester's Mercedes. On Wednesdays he cooked and served food to poor people at the Mercy Kitchen.

Leito led a schizophrenic existence, running with the reverend during the day and hanging out with drug dealers at night. He was torn between the two Detroits—a struggle between two dogs. "Some people are born to stray," says Lester. "Leito wasn't your typical thug in the street. He could have been anything he wanted to be, but he chose that life. He was a rebellious child who became a rebellious adult. But he sincerely wanted to change."

About this time, Lester first met Leito's father. One part of Leito Sr. secretly admired his son's defiance toward his old enemies, the police and the FBI. "There was this outlaw camaraderie between the two of them," recalls older sister Initia. But the father couldn't disguise the disappointment he felt that his son had become part of the problem.

Understandably, Leito Sr., who by this time was ill with prostate cancer, was scared that his only son would end up in jail or, worse, dead. Indeed, father and son had code words that the son was to use if rival drug dealers ever kidnapped him, a practice the father had supposedly picked up during his revolutionary days. He'd tried everything to help his son and was at the point of despair—until he met Lester.

Impressed by the positive effect the reverend was having on Leito, the father, a lifelong atheist, started to rethink his attitude toward religion, which he had regarded as the opiate of the black masses that had blinded his people to their material conditions. "Leito Sr. wasn't really a religious person," says Lester. "But in his later years he said, 'I think I made a mistake. I got caught up in the revolutionary movement. I didn't get caught up in Christ.'"

Despite his dalliance with religion, Leito was unable to escape his predicament, as the events of July 22, 2003 would prove. Leito had been living in a beat-down ghetto on Detroit's west side, where petty thieves in pickup trucks regularly patrol the potholed streets, looking to steal aluminum from the sides of the shabby residences.

Earlier in the evening Leito had been

walking on the sidewalk, carrying a cell phone in one hand and a cigar in the other. Unusual for these parts, where the sound of gunshots is common, the neighborhood was hushed. Taking advantage of the temporary lull in hostilities, older residents in carpet slippers were out on their rickety wooden porches enjoying the summer evening. Leito said hello to his elderly neighbors before entering the side door of a brick bungalow at the corner of Plymouth Road and Montrose Street. He left the door slightly ajar because he was expecting company later.

The sparsely furnished house was dark and deserted. With only narrow slits for windows, barely any light penetrated the interior. The smell of marijuana was overpowering; the kitchen table was covered with shopping bags full of the stuff. A number of handguns were within reach near the side door in case of trouble. A TV with the sound turned off played in the corner.

A few days earlier, Leito had taken delivery of 20 pounds of pot on consignment from a friend who was too busy dodging a team of Colombian hit men to move the product. Leito was grateful for the favor, but there was a problem: Some of the weed was dry and rotten.

Desperate for cash, Leito gave the inferior marijuana, about three or four pounds, to the cousin of a childhood friend.

The price was a bargain—basement \$1,000 a pound, payment to be rendered later. Earlier that day the dealer had told Leito he wasn't paying for the pot. He said he was going to send some of his boys around that night to return the spoiled goods.

Around one in the morning four black men appeared at the side door of Leito's place. He must have felt comfortable in their presence, because he stepped outside to greet them without a gun. He also wasn't wearing his bulletproof vest. Initially the conversation seemed friendly, but soon it turned angry. A neighbor across the street heard shouts and curses. From her bedroom window she could view the side of Leito's house. Although there wasn't enough light to see any faces

clearly, she recognized Leito's voice. "I ain't taking that shit," she heard him say.

The neighbor turned away from the window but was drawn back by the familiar staccato of small-caliber machine-gun fire. She looked out and saw the four males spraying the corner with bullets. According to another neighbor, Leito tried to slap a machine gun out of one of his assailants' hands. Then he made a run for the lot across the street. He managed to get to the middle of the road before he was brought down by three bullets in the back. Immobilized, he lay on the ground and looked up at his attackers. "It doesn't have to be this way, man," he said. One of the gunmen stepped forward, stood over him and

death from prostate cancer the previous year. Reverend Lester presided over Leito's funeral, as he had the father's. While the two Leitos represented the two different visions of Detroit, in their final years they found common ground in the church. Both men had expressed a desire to be baptized, but only the father managed to do so, receiving the sacrament as he lay on his deathbed.

My father-in-law's funeral was packed with dignitaries who came to praise his efforts to improve his community, while his son's funeral looked more like a hustlers' convention. Elaborate floral arrangements covered the altar. Undercover cops searching for leads mingled with the crowd. Leito, laid out in his coffin, looked as if he might get up at any moment. Lester, wearing a red-and-black robe, read from scripture—

"What is your life but a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away?"—after which he turned his attention to the gangsters in attendance, a number of whom were in tears: "There are people in this room who know what happened to Leito, and you owe it to the family to come forward." Lester had done enough of these funerals to know that Leito's murderer was probably present that day. A procession of Hummers and Mercedeses carried Leito to the cemetery.

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pumped a final bullet into the right side of his head. He then reached into Leito's trouser pocket and took his cell phone before escaping on foot.

The police arrived with EMS almost immediately; detectives had been investigating another shooting in the neighborhood when they received the call. Paramedics ripped open Leito's shirt and started to work on him. But it was too late.

In the days after his death, whenever someone called Leito's cell phone, a voice nobody recognized would answer and say, "Your boy's gone. He ain't here no more," followed by the sound of dead air.

The family was devastated. Leito's two sisters hadn't gotten over their father's



GAME MASTERS (continued from page 80)

"The day somebody told me how much the inventors of Caribbean Stud were making, I became an inventor."

athletes, tend to age quickly. He decided it was time to try something easier. "That same day somebody told me how much the owners of Caribbean Stud were making," Webb says. "I became an inventor."

He began brainstorming game ideas. He'd played in so many dealer's-choice games over the years that he already had some idea that he was talented in this area—pro poker players like to invent games with deceptively wacky rules to gain an edge—and within a year he had registered his first patent: a three-card variant of poker with a number of options. That game, launched in 1995, eventually became Three Card Poker and established Webb as the man with the magic touch. Now, with Three Card Poker spreading worldwide, two new games starting to prove themselves, several more waiting in the wings and 30 patents registered or pending, Webb has become the Bill Gates of table-game inventors.

For two days we discuss cards—games theory, games politics, games patent law, games mathematics ("I can't do the math on my own games; I have to hire two guys to run computer programs")—and the cutthroat competition to get new games into casinos. "There are 300 approved table games in Nevada, but only 30 to 40 are available at any time," Webb says. "Of the rest, 200 will never make it to the casino floor." The reason? "Operators are not interested. They have a resistance to proprietary games: 'We spent all this money to build and market this hotel. You tell me I have to pay you for your game? Screw you.' You can introduce a game in Vegas or Atlantic City and have it taken off the floor a month later. And when that happens, the game is tainted. It requires five successes to overcome one defeat like that. In Nevada they don't really understand building a game for longevity. That's why we test in Mississippi, where they are willing to change, to try something new."

And that's why Webb and his wife—who have homes in Derby and Las Vegas—spend half their lives on the road, training the dealers themselves, shmoozing the casino bosses and making sure every new table is positioned, advertised and promoted. On opening day for a new game, the pair stands by the table, buttonholing gamblers and sweet-talking them into giving the game a try. All the while Webb keeps an eye on his cell phone (other casino managers might need him) and the dealer (to make sure no mistakes are being made) while calculating which virgin casino he needs to approach next. "We're very hands-on," he says. "I launch the games one at a

time, and it's a very slow process. You have to run a gantlet of regulators, table-games executives, general managers, shift managers. Then we have to sell it to the dealers. The dealers sell it to the players. A lot of games are introduced at G2E, the global gaming trade show. But I don't network. Player demand will make the game break through."

Invented games—proprietary games, as they're called—have a short history. Only three have broken through in a big way in the past 15 years. The first was Caribbean Stud, which was patented in 1989 and quickly became a cruise ship staple. It achieved popularity partly because it was the first poker game banked by the house: Winning bets are paid from a preset pay table, as in video poker.

"It's to make the ladies comfortable," Webb says. "With traditional table games, ladies are not comfortable. But you see a lot of them playing the newer games. The new games are easier for them to play than real poker or even blackjack, where they may be regarded as unserious players. They don't want to upset anybody."

In 1993 another house-banked poker variation called Let It Ride was introduced by Shuffle Master, the manufacturer of a casino shuffling machine, in an attempt to get more single-deck games into casinos. (If a game requires a single deck of cards, a machine is needed so that time is not wasted with constant hand shuffles.) Webb's Three Card Poker came along in 1995, and by 1998 these three games represented 80 percent of the proprietary market. And it's a lucrative market: Caribbean Stud earns its owners \$10 million to \$12 million a year, Let It Ride brings in about \$10 million, and Three Card Poker—the most widely available, with over 1,000 tables—grosses more than \$10 million a year in the U.S. alone, with additional profits coming from overseas.

Webb's games are designed, as all casino games must be, so that the longer a gambler plays, the more he or she is likely to lose. Yet games in casinos weren't always this way. Prior to 1986 casinos gave the gambler virtually even odds to beat the house. Some games not found in Las Vegas today are faro, lansquenette, rouge et noir, monte, rondo, Chinese fantan, red white and blue, Diana and zigarette—all of which are legal, all of which are specifically authorized by statute and many of which are still played in foreign gambling halls. They disappeared because, quite simply, they were fair. The only way casinos could make money off

them was to cheat. In 1986, when the last big Vegas mobster was found buried in an Indiana cornfield, the era of house cheating was over. Wall Street dates Vegas history from 1989, when gambling mogul Steve Wynn opened the Mirage with Michael Milken-backed junk bonds.

That's why the first thing Webb does after he invents a game is send it to a professional gaming analyst—a mathematician who runs computer simulations of several million hands, determining the precise advantage for the casino. Ideally, a new game should give the house a 20 percent hold, or profit. Creating a game with an excessively high hold or house edge—the house advantage on Caribbean Stud is 5.3 percent, but one expert estimates a 50 percent hold on the progressive bet—can get your game into the casinos but will frustrate players, who will gradually get burned out and start to drift away. A game with a low house edge has the potential to last a long time, but casinos will be reluctant to use it. An exception is blackjack, which gives the house only a 12 to 13 percent hold. (Technically, the house advantage for blackjack is as low as 1.2 percent, but bad players make up the difference.)

Webb's cardinal rule is to keep the new games simple. First, they have to be variations of games players are already familiar with. ("Every new game that makes it will be a type of blackjack or poker," he says.) They have to fit on a standard blackjack table. ("Casinos aren't going to tolerate a lot of new equipment or give you a lot of space. If craps or roulette were invented today, they wouldn't make it to the first tryout.") And they have to give the player some, but not too much, control over the outcome.

"If you're a serious gambler," says Webb, "play poker. These games are not for serious gamblers. These are games for people who want to relax. You need to give the player decisions but not arcane decisions. Most people who come to a casino aren't trying to change their life. They're trying to spend a few hassle-free hours."

The game Webb was pushing in Tunica, 2-2-1, is a simplified version of pai gow poker, a one-deck game played against the dealer. Pai gow poker, a cards version of an Asian dominoes game, took off in the 1980s, when American casinos became popular destinations for Japanese and Chinese tourists. The first time I saw 2-2-1, the game had the look of a winner; while it appears complicated, it can be learned in about 20 minutes, and it rewards skill. Three hands are played at a time—with three equal bets—and because it's rare to lose all three hands, players' money doesn't quickly disappear. It also has the potential to be a highly social game, since the players are allowed to show one another their cards and discuss how to play them. The only downside I could see is that all the possible combinations begin repeating themselves—but then, repetition is a

trademark of blackjack, and that game has never suffered in popularity.

Twenty years ago it would have been impossible for a guy like Webb to make money on a card game. Before Caribbean Stud, card games could be copyrighted, not patented, and the only reward for the inventor was the chance to name the game after himself. Hearts According to Scarne, for example, was named for John Scarne, the legendary casino consultant and gambling authority. In the 1980s the development of computer software changed U.S. intellectual-property law. Business methods and concepts had become proprietary, and games, like software, could be patented. It's now possible to own a 20-year patent on a casino-game concept that has numerous variations. "When I designed Three Card Poker," says Webb, "I didn't say a word about it to anyone. You can't talk about it until your patents are secure."

His principal theory is that casual gamblers, creatures of habit that they are, like games in which they have some perceived control over their betting. "Why is roulette popular?" Webb asks. "That's 60 percent of the business in Britain. If you had never seen roulette before and somebody tried to sell it to you, you would say, 'Why do I need this giant table? Why do I need this giant wheel? Why do I need so many numbers on the table?' Because you can generate those numbers and allow people to bet on them without having this giant layout. Well, you need all the numbers because people feel they have a system when they play. Actually placing the markers on the numbers allows players to feel in control of a game that is really pure chance. There must be choices in the game, even though the choice between betting on 23 and betting on seven is not really a choice at all. So you need apparent choices, limited choices. You can have a system only if you have a choice."

Webb launched Three Card Poker in spring 1995 at the Jackpot, a membership card club in Dublin, and it did well enough to get approved for trial at the tiny Isle of

Man casino that summer. When it outperformed the British version of Caribbean Stud in its first two weeks, Webb knew it was viable. But major casinos in Britain didn't want the game until it had succeeded in America, so Webb tried Vegas. Bally's agreed to offer it but canceled at the last minute, so Webb switched to the Stardust. "The dealers weren't trained adequately there, and as a result the game was pulled," Webb says. Trump Plaza in Atlantic City also pulled out of a deal to try the game, and Webb ended up at the tiny Sands, where the game lasted a month before failing. "That's when I discovered how valuable Mississippi is," Webb says. "Three Card Poker was a volatile game, and it was subject to dealer error. In Mississippi they

of its game. Mikohn Gaming Corporation, which had acquired PGI, tried to buy Three Card Poker from Webb even as PGI was suing him. Eventually Webb sold his game to Shuffle Master because he couldn't handle the costs of the lawsuit. In December 2002 he filed his own suit, accusing PGI and Mikohn, the current owner of Caribbean Stud, of anti-trust violations that essentially caused Webb to sell the American rights to his game at the bargain-basement price of \$3 million with no profit participation.

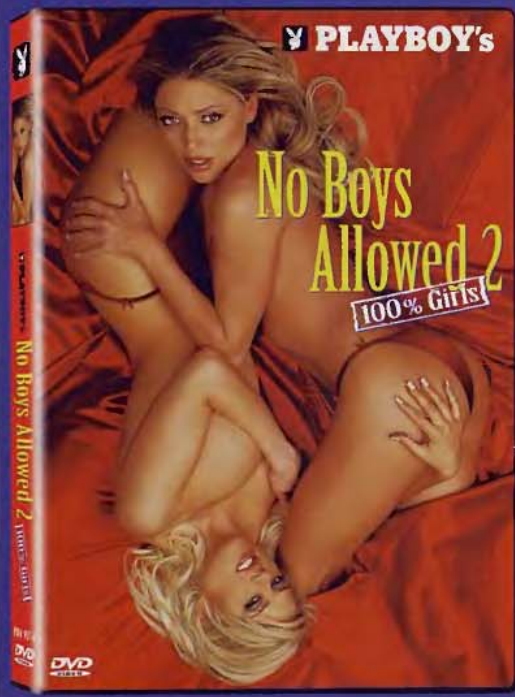
As his case slogs through the courts, Webb lives off his \$1.75 million in royalties. Three Card Poker has continued to gain popularity worldwide, but the more than \$10 million a year from its more

than 1,000 tables in North America currently goes to Shuffle Master. He has tested, along with 21+3 and 2-2-1, two other games—PlayBacc (a version of baccarat) and YesDice (simplified craps)—and is working on Jack-Black (a reverse blackjack game in which players share a hand against the casino), WayToGo (a red dog variation), NuFaro (a faro adaptation) and ShowMe Poker (a house-banked poker game). His hottest untested property is called Hit & Win, a rendition of blackjack that offers various odds on different blackjack combinations. "This one will make it," he insists.

When a new game is introduced for a

trial run, the first thing a casino wants to know is if players will accept it. "This is more important than the economics—more important than hold, more important than win per unit," says Rigot of the Borgata. "And if they do gravitate toward the game, the second thing you want to know is, Will they come back? Will they play it more than once? And the key is giving the customer a value for the experience. The game can't be too strong. I'll give you an example. There was a game in the casinos for a while called red dog, also called in between and acey-deucey. It's gone. You won't find it anywhere. The consumer rejected the game because it was too strong. It pressed the player too much." Translation: The game

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can't take the player's money too fast.

And the game can't take the casino's money too fast, either. A few months after Tunica I go in search of Henry Lo again. His number has changed, and he is hard to locate. It turns out that since I last saw him, 7 Card Thrill has failed in three more casino trials. Lo has run out of money and is driving a junker. He has borrowed money from his mother, sister and brother. He can't pay his rent, he says, and he can't leave Vegas to promote the game because he has no way to travel. He says all this with absolute delight. In fact, he bustles right over to the modest Boardwalk casino to meet me, and his first words are, "You want to play 7 Card Thrill? I have the layout, the cards, the...."

He motions to the big black case in his right hand. He could set up the game anywhere, he says. My hotel room, maybe? He has a new pay table and a new bonus bet, and he is looking for investors. I calm him down, and we go for drinks in the lounge instead.

He tells his tales of defeat in the way the Duke of Wellington must have described the battles before Waterloo—as mere learning stages. The Sahara terminated 7 Card Thrill after four and a half months because there was "not enough volume." Yet Lo knew that the shift manager frequently kept the game closed even on weekends. ("How can I get volume when the players show up and the game is closed?") Next he got a shot at Harrah's in the dusty resort town of Laughlin, on the Arizona border, where the mostly elderly tourists said they liked the game but didn't want to play it because it had no bonus bet; they wanted to be paid jackpots for royal flushes, four of a kinds and the like. So management took the game out, saying, "When you have a bonus bet, we'll take another look."

Lo cooled his heels for eight months, waiting for the Nevada gaming authorities to approve his bonus bet. When they did, he got a tryout at the Fiesta Rancho, a Vegas locals joint with light traffic. The game was canceled after two months because of "downsizing."

From there he went to the Fiesta Hen-

derson, and this time he was determined to "babysit" the game every moment it was open. "The players play longer when I hang around," Lo says. "And if the casino knows I'm there, it's more likely to keep the table open."

He ended up spending \$4,000 of his own money making bets for the dealers and players. The game started well for the casino, averaging a 20 percent hold for the first 29 days of the first month. But on day 30 several gamblers won big, and the total hold for the month dropped to 13 percent. The second month was better, with 19 percent. In the third month a familiar pattern emerged: The table wasn't open that often. "If you're a new game," Lo says, "you're the last to open and the first to close. There have to be a lot of people in the casino to open the game, and there weren't a lot of people in that casino."

The new version of 7 Card Thrill was finally done in by high rollers. The game pays \$5,000 for a hand with five aces—four aces and the joker—and two players hit it in the third month. "It wouldn't matter over the long run," says Lo, "because the house advantage takes over. But if you have low volume and the general manager is seeing \$5,000 payouts, there's no time to recover that money."

One afternoon in October 2003 a high roller came into the casino and started playing two hands at a time with \$500 chips. He won \$7,000 for the day. He returned the next day and lost \$6,000 before winning it back plus another \$8,000. It was the last straw for the Fiesta Henderson. The game closed. "Henry, I'm sorry," the table-games manager said, "but I can't lose my job."

Meanwhile, Derek Webb was happily fine-tuning his game. His experience testing 2-2-1 in Mississippi had inspired some improvements, and he planned to relaunch at his old friend Barry Morris's casino, Caesars Indiana. He also changed some of the rules to bring the house edge down from 2.3 percent to 1.2 percent. "We can do this because players

don't play anywhere close to the true house advantage," he says.

I'd never really asked Webb what his ultimate motivation is. After all, he has more than enough money from the games he's already invented. A life spent hanging out in casinos can't be that stimulating when you've done it as long as he has, and he had mentioned more than once that his wife was getting a little tired of traveling. So what's the attraction?

"You can become a multimillionaire—that's the attraction," he says. "And there's more to it than that. I obsess about it because I know how flawed the other games are. There are terrible games on the casino floor—terrible intellectually, mathematically and operationally."

He thinks for a minute and then comes to the point. "There's no respect for what someone like me does," he says. "The inventors of blackjack, roulette and craps are all forgotten. The only reason the state can license games is because someone invented them. You should respect the inventor."

Then his face brightens: "If you want to drive out to the airport with me...." He had yet another invention: the ViDiceo slot machine. Webb, apparently in an if-you-can't-beat-'em-join-'em mood, had figured out how to take the elements of a table game and put them inside a slot machine. It was ready and waiting in a storage facility. Webb had already shown it to all the slot-machine manufacturers, but none wanted to market it. "So it's something else I'm going to do by myself," he says. I can already see the wheels turning.

Two weeks later Webb was on the road again, launching the improved 2-2-1 in Indiana. I spoke to him on the phone and heard a lilt in his voice. It was working even better this time. He wasn't yet ready to call it a success, because that would be like betting too heavily on pocket aces and letting everyone know what he was doing. The thing about gamblers is that you don't know they've won until the end of the game.



I was beat, truly. Two nights running with less than three hours of sleep. But I was energized, too.

What I finally did was ease out of the car, slip down the block and cut through the neighbors' to our backyard, where the bulk of the house screened me from view.

I came up the cellar stairs from the garage, my father sunk into the recliner in the living room with the TV going—the news grim and grimmer—and my mother rattling things around in the kitchen. "You going to eat tonight?" she asked, just to say something. I ate every night—I couldn't afford not to. She had a cigarette at her lips, a drink in her hand—scotch and water. Dishes were set out on the table, a pot of something going on the stove. "I'm making chili con carne."

I had a minute, just a minute, no more, because I was afraid Cole would wake up to the fact that he was waiting for nothing, and then it would be the room upstairs, the hypnosis of the records, the four walls and the sloping ceiling and a gulf of boredom so deep you could sail a fleet into it. "No," I said, "I think I might go out."

She stirred the pot, went to set the cigarette in the ashtray on the stove and saw that another was there, already burning and rimmed red with lipstick. "Without dinner?" (I have to give her her due here—she loved me, her only son, and my father must have loved me too in his own way, but I didn't know that then or didn't care, and it's too late now to do anything about it.)

"Yeah, I might eat out, I guess. With Cole."

"Who?"

"Cole Harman. He was in high school with me?"

She just shrugged. My father said nothing, not hello or good-bye or you look half-starved already and you tell me you're going to miss dinner? The TV emitted the steady whip crack of small-arms fire, and then the correspondent came on with the day's body count. Four minutes later—the bells, the boots, a wide-collar shirt imprinted with two flaming outsize eyeballs under the greasy jacket, and my hair kinked up like Hendrix's—and I was out the door.

"Hey," I said, rapping at the window of the Bug. "Hey, it's me."

Cole looked up as if he'd been asleep, as if he'd been absorbed in some other reality altogether, one that didn't seem to admit or even recognize me. It took him a moment, and then he leaned across the passenger's seat and flipped the lock, and I went round the car and slid in beside him. I said something like "Good to see you, man," and reached

out for the soul shake, which he returned, and then I said, "So what's up? You want to go to Chase's, or what?"

He didn't reply, just handed me the tight white tube of a joint, put the car in gear and hit the accelerator with the sound of a hundred eggbeaters all rattling at once. I looked back to see my house receding at the end of the block and felt as if I'd been rescued. I put the lighter to the joint.

The night before, we'd gone to Chase's, a bar in town I'd never been to before, an ancient place with a pressed-tin ceiling and paneled booths gone the color of beef jerky with the smoke of a hundred thousand cigarettes. The music was of the moment, though, and the clientele mostly young—women were there in their low-slung jeans and gauzy tops, and it was good to see them, exciting in the way of an afterthought that suddenly blooms into prominence. (I'd left a girlfriend behind at college, promising to call, visit, write, but long distance was expensive, she was 500 miles away, and I wasn't much of a writer.) My assumption—my hope—was that we'd go back there tonight.

But we didn't. Cole just drove aimlessly, past bleached-out lawns and squat houses, down the naked tunnels of trees and into the country, where the odd field—crippled cornstalks, rotting pumpkins—was squeezed in among the housing developments and the creep of shopping malls. We smoked the joint down to the nub, employed a roach clip and alternated hits till it was nothing but air. An hour stole by. The same hits thumped through the radio, the same commercials. It was getting dark.

After a while we pulled up at a deserted spot along a blacktop road not two miles from my house. I knew the place from when I was a kid, riding my bike out to the reservoir to fish and throw rocks and fool around. There was a waist-high wall of blackened stone running the length of a long two blocks and behind that a glimpse of a cluster of stone cottages through the dark veins of the trees. We'd been talking about something comforting—a band or a guitar player—and I'd been drifting, wheeling round and round the moment, secure, calm, and now suddenly we were stopped out on the road in the middle of nowhere. "So what's the deal?" I said.

A car came up the street in the opposite direction and the lights caught Cole's face. He squinted, put a hand up to shield his eyes till the car had passed, and he craned his neck to make sure it was still moving, watching for the flash of brake lights as it rounded the curve at the cor-

ner behind us and vanished into the night. "Nothing," he said, a spark of animation igniting his voice as if it were a joke—the car, the night, the joint—"I just wanted you to meet some people, that's all."

"What people? Out here?" I gave it a beat. "You don't mean the little people, do you? The elves? Where are they—crouching behind the wall there? Or in their burrows—is that where they are, asleep in their burrows?"

We both had a laugh, one of those protracted, breast-pounding jags of hilarity that remind you just how much you've smoked and how potent it was. "No," he said, still wheezing, "no. Big people. Real people, just like you and me." He pointed to the faintest glow of light from the near cottage. "In there."

I was confused. The entrance to the place—the driveway, which squeezed under a stone arch that somebody had erected there at some distant point in our perfervid history—was up on the cross street at the end of the block, where the car had just turned. "So why don't we just go in the driveway?" I wanted to know.

Cole took a moment to light a cigarette, then he cracked the door, and the dark, pure, refrigerated smell of the night hit me. "Not cool," he said. "Not cool at all."

I made a real effort the next day, and though I'd had less than three hours' sleep, I made homeroom with maybe six seconds to spare. The kids—the students, my charges—must have scented the debauch on me, the drift away from the straight and narrow they demanded as part of the social contract, because they were more restive than usual, more boisterous and slippery, as if the seats couldn't contain them. There was one—there's always one, memorable not for excellence or scholarship but for weakness, only that—and he spoke up now. Robert, his name was, Robert Rowe. He was 15, left back once, and he was no genius, but he had more of a spark in him than the others could ever hope for, and that made him stand out—it gave him power, but he didn't know what to do with it. "Hey, Mr. Caddis," he called from the back of the room, where he was slumped in one of the undersize desks we'd inherited from another era, when the average student was shorter, slimmer, more attentive and eager. "You look like shit, you know that?"

The rest of them—this was only homeroom, where, as I've indicated, nothing was expected—froze for a moment. The interaction was delicious for them, I'm sure—they were scientists dissecting the minutest gradations of human behavior: Would I explode? Overheat and run for the lavatory like Mr. James, the puker? Ignore the comment? Pretend I hadn't heard?

I was beat, truly. Two nights running with less than three hours of sleep. But I was energized, too, because something 141

new was happening to me, something that shone over the bleakness of this job, this place, my parents' damaged lives, as if I'd suddenly discovered the high beams along a dark stretch of highway. "Yeah, Robert," I said, holding him with my eyes, though he tried to duck away. "Thanks for the compliment." A tutorial pause, flatly instructive. "You look like shit too."

The cottage, the stone cottage on the far side of the stone wall in the featureless mask of the night that had given way to this moment of this morning, was a place I felt I'd come home to after a long absence. I'd been to war, hadn't I? Now I was home. How else to describe it, what that place meant to me from the minute the door swung back and I stepped inside?

I hadn't known what to expect. We vaulted the stone wall and picked our way through a dark tangle of leafless sumac and stickers that raked at our boots and the oversize flaps of our pants, and then there was another, lower wall, and we were in the yard. Out front was a dirt bike with its back wheel missing, skeletal under the porch light, and there were glittering fragments of other things there too, machines in various states of disassembly—a chain saw minus the chain, an engine block decorated with lit candles

that flickered like votives in the dark cups of the cylinders, a gutted amplifier. And there was music. Loud now, loud enough to rattle the glass in the windowpanes. Somebody inside was playing along with the bass line of "Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da."

Cole went in without knocking, and I followed. Through a hallway and into the kitchen, obladi oblada life goes on, bra! There were two women there—girls—rising up from the table in the kitchen with loopy grins to wrap their arms around Cole, and then, after the briefest of introductions—"This is my friend John; he's a professor"—to embrace me, too. They were sisters, both tall, with the requisite hair parted in the middle and trailing down their shoulders: Suzie, the younger, darker and prettier one, and JoJo, two years older, with hair the color of rust before it flakes. There was a Baggie of pot on the table, a pipe and what looked to be half a bar of halvah candy but wasn't candy at all. Joss sticks burned among the candles that lit the room. A cat looked up sleepily from a pile of newspaper in the corner. "You want to get high?" JoJo asked, and I was charmed instantly—here she was, the consummate hostess—and a portion of my uncertainty and awkwardness went into retreat.

I looked to Cole, and we both laughed, and this was a laugh of the same quality and flavor as the one we'd shared in the car.

"What?" Suzie said, leaning back against the stove now, grinning wide. "Oh, I get it—you're already stoned, both of you, right? High as kites, right?"

From the living room—the door was closed, and I had to presume it was the living room—there was the sudden screech of the needle lifting off the record, then the superamplified rasp of its dropping down again, and "Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da" came at us once more. JoJo saw my quizzical look and paused in putting the match to the pipe. "Oh, that's Mike—my boyfriend? He's like obsessed with that song."

I don't know how much time slid by before the door swung open—we were just sitting there at the table, enveloped in the shroud of our own consciousness, the cat receding into the corner that now seemed half a mile away, candles flickering and sending insubstantial shadows up the walls. I turned round to see Mike standing in the door frame, wearing the strap of his bass like a bandolier over a shirtless chest. He was big, six feet and something, 200 pounds, and he was built, pectorals and biceps sharply defined, a stripe of hard blue vein running up each arm, but he didn't do calisthenics or lift weights or anything like that—it was just the program of his genes. His hair was long, longer than either of the women's. He wore a Fu Manchu mustache. He was sweating. "That was hot," he said. "That was really hot."

JoJo looked up vacantly. "What," she said, "you want me to turn down the heat?"

He gave a laugh and leaned into the table to pluck a handful of popcorn out of a bowl that had somehow materialized there. "No, I mean the—didn't you hear me? That last time? That was hot, that's what I'm saying."

It was only then that we got around to introductions, he and Cole swapping handclaps, and then Cole cocking a finger at me. "He's a professor," he said.

Mike took my hand—the soul shake, a pat on the shoulder—and stood there looking bemused. "A professor?" he said. "No shit?"

I was too stoned to parse all the nuances of the question, but still the blood must have risen to my face. "A teacher," I corrected. "You know, just to beat the draft? Like because if you—" and I went off on some disconnected monologue, talking because I was nervous, because I wanted to fit in, and I suppose I would have kept on talking till the sun came up but for the fact that everyone else had gone silent, and the realization of it suddenly hit me.

"No shit?" Mike repeated, grinning in a dangerous way. He was swaying over the table, alternately feeding popcorn into the slot of his mouth and giving me



Modell

"I can't talk now. We're downloading."

a hooded look. "So how old are you? What—19, 20?"

"Twenty-one. I'll be 22 in December."

There was more. It wasn't an inquisition exactly—Cole at one point spoke up for me and said, "He's cool"—but a kind of scientific examination of this rare bird that had mysteriously turned up at the kitchen table. What did I think? I thought Cole should ease up on the professor business—as I got to know him I realized he was inflating me in order to inflate himself—and that we should all smoke some of the hash, though I wasn't the host here and hadn't brought anything to the party.

Eventually we did smoke. That was what this was all about—community, the community of mind and spirit and style. And we moved into the living room, where the big speakers were, to listen to the heartbeat of the music and feel the world settle in around us. There were pillows scattered across the floor, more cats, more incense, Shop-Rite cola and peppermint tea in heavy homemade mugs and a slow, sweet seep of peace. I propped my head against a pillow, stretched my feet out before me. The music was a dream, and I closed my eyes and entered it.

A week or two later my mother asked me to meet her after work at a bar-restaurant called the Hollander. This was a place with pretensions to grander things, where older people—people my mother's age—came to drink manhattans and smoke cigarettes and feel elevated over the crowd that frequented taverns with sawdust on the floors, the sort of place my father favored. Teachers came to the Hollander, lawyers, people who owned car dealerships and dress shops. My mother was a secretary, my father a bus driver. And the Hollander was an ersatz place, with pompous waiters and a fake windmill out front.

She was at the bar, smoking, sitting with a skinny white-haired guy I didn't recognize, and as I came up to them I realized he could have been my father's double, could have been my father, but he wasn't. There were introductions—

his name was Jerry Reilly, and he was a teacher just like me—and a free beer appeared at my elbow, but I couldn't really fathom what was going on here or why my mother would want me to join her in a place like this. I played it cool, ducked my head and answered Jerry Reilly's interminable questions about school as best I could—yeah, sure, I guess I liked it; it was better than being executed in Vietnam, wasn't it?—without irritating him to the point at which I would miss out on a free dinner, but all I wanted to do was get out of there and meet Cole at the cottage in the woods. As expeditiously as possible. Dinner down, good-byes and thank-yous on file, and out the door and into the car.

my eyes to look at him. "Listen, John," my mother said finally, "I just wanted to say something to you. About Cole."

All the alarm bells went off simultaneously in my head. "Cole?" I echoed.

She gave me a look I'd known all my life, the one reserved for missteps and misdeeds. "He has a record."

So that was it. "What's it to you?"

My mother just shrugged. "I just thought you ought to know, that's all."

"I know. Of course I know. And it's nothing, believe me—a case of mistaken identity. They got the wrong guy is all." The fact was that Cole had been busted for selling marijuana to an undercover agent, and they were trying to make a felony out of it even as his mother leaned

on a retired judge she knew to step in and quash it. I put on a look of offended innocence. "So what'd you do, hire a detective?"

A thin smile. "I'm just worried about you, that's all."

How I bristled at this. I wasn't a child—I could take care of myself. How many times had her soft, dejected voice come at me out of the shadows of the living room at three and four in the morning, where she'd sat smoking in the dark while I roamed the streets with my friends? Where had I been? she always wanted to know. Nowhere, I'd tell her. There was the dark, the smell of her cigarette, and then, even softer: I was worried. And what did I do now? I worked my face and

gave her a disgusted look to show her how far above all this I was.

She looked to Jerry Reilly, then back to me. I became aware of the sound of traffic out on the road. It was dark beyond the windows. "You're not using drugs," she asked, drawing at her cigarette so that the interrogative lift came in a fume of smoke, "are you?"

The first time I saw anyone inject heroin was in the bathroom of that stone cottage in the woods. It was probably the third or fourth night I'd gone there with Cole to hang out, listen to music and be convivial on our own terms (he was living at his parents' house too, and there



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AT NEWSSTANDS NOW

That wasn't how it worked out. Something was in the air, and I couldn't fathom what it was. I kept looking at Jerry Reilly, with his cuff links and snowy collar and whipcord tie and thinking, No, no way—my mother wouldn't cheat on my father, not with this guy. But her life and what she did with it was a work in progress, as unfathomable to me as my own life must have been to my students—and tonight's agenda was something else altogether, something that came in the form of a very special warning, specially delivered. We were on our third drink, seated in the dining room now, steaks all around, though my mother barely touched hers and Jerry Reilly just pushed his around the plate every time I lifted

was no percentage in that). Mike greeted us at the door—he'd put a leather jacket on over a T-shirt, and he was all business, heading out to the road to meet a guy named Nicky, and they were going on into town to score and we should just hang tight because they'd be right back and did we happen to have any cash on us?—and then we went in and sat with the girls and smoked and didn't think about much of anything until the front door jerked back on its hinges half an hour later and Mike and Nicky came storming into the room as if their jackets had been set afire.

Then it was into the bathroom, Mike first, the door open to the rest of us lined up behind him: Nicky—short, with a full beard that did nothing to flesh out a face that had been reduced to the sharp lineaments of bone and cartilage—and the two sisters, Cole and me. I'd contributed \$5 to the enterprise, though I had my doubts. I'd never done anything like this, and I was scared of the consequences, the droning narration of the antidrug films from high school riding up out of some backwater of my mind to assert itself, to take over, become shrill

even. Mike threw off his jacket, tore open two glassine packets with his teeth and carefully, meticulously shook out the contents into a tablespoon. It was a white powder, and it could have been anything—baking soda, confectioners' sugar, Polident—but it wasn't, and I remember thinking how innocuous it looked, how anonymous. In the next moment Mike sat heavily on the toilet, drew some water up into the syringe I'd seen lying there on a shelf in the medicine cabinet last time I'd used the facilities, squeezed a few drops into the powder, mixed it around and then held a lighter beneath the spoon. Then he tied himself off at the biceps with a bit of rubber tubing, drew the mixture from the spoon through a ball of cotton and hit a vein. I watched his eyes. Watched the rush take him and then the nod. Nicky was next, then Suzie, then JoJo and finally Cole. Mike hit them, one at a time, like a doctor. I watched each of them rush and go limp, my heart hammering at my rib cage, the record in the living room repeating over and over because nobody had bothered to put the changer down, and then it was my turn. Mike held up

the glassine packet. "It's just a taste," he said. "Three-dollar bag. You on for it?"

"No," I said, "I mean, I don't think I—"

He studied me a moment, then tossed me the bag. "It's a waste," he said, "a real waste, man." His voice was slow, the voice of a record played at the wrong speed. He shook his head with infinite calm, moving it carefully from side to side as if it weighed more than the cottage itself. "But hey, we'll snort it this time. You'll see what you're missing, right?"

I saw. Within the week I was getting off too, and it was my secret—my initiation into a whole new life—and the tracks, the bite marks of the needle that crawled first up one arm and then the other, were my testament.

It was my job to do lunch duty one week a month, and lunch duty consisted of keeping the student body out of the building for 45 minutes while they presumably went home, downtown or over to the high school and consumed whatever nourishment was available to them. It was necessary to keep them out of the junior high building for the simple reason that they would destroy it through an abundance of natural high spirits and brainless joviality. I stood in the dim hallway, positioned centrally between the three doors that opened from the southern, eastern and western sides of the building, and made my best effort at chasing them down when they burst in howling against the frigid collapse of the noon hour. On the second day of my third tour of duty, Robert Rowe sauntered in through the front doors, and I put down my sandwich—the one my mother had made me in the hour of the wolf before going off to work herself—and reminded him of the rules.

He opened his face till it bloomed like a flower and held out his palms. He was wearing a T-shirt and a sleeveless parka. I saw that he'd begun to let his hair go long. "I just wanted to ask you a question is all."

I was chewing tuna fish on rye, standing there in the middle of all that emptiness in my ridiculous pants and rumpled jacket. The building, like most institutions of higher and lower learning, was overheated, and in chasing half a dozen of my charges out the door I'd built up a sweat that threatened to break my hair loose of its mold. Without thinking, I slipped off the jacket and let it dangle from one hand; without thinking, I'd pulled a short-sleeve button-down shirt out of my closet that morning because all the others were dirty. That was the scene. That was the setup. "Sure," I said. "Go ahead."

"I was just wondering—you ever read this book, *The Man With the Golden Arm*?"

"Nelson Algren?"

He nodded.



Art Spiegelman

"Before we begin, what do you think about reality TV?"

"No," I said. "I've heard of it, though."

He took a moment with this, then cocked his head back till it rolled on his shoulders, and he gave me a dead-on look. "He shoots up."

"Who?"

"The guy in the book. All the time." He was studying me, gauging how far he could go. "You know what that's like?"

I played dumb.

"You don't? You really don't?"

I shrugged. Dodged his eyes.

There was a banging at the door behind us, hilarious faces there, then the beat of retreating footsteps. Robert moved back a pace, but he held me with his gaze. "Then what's with the spots on your arms, then?"

I looked down at my arms as if I'd never seen them before, as if I'd been born without them and they'd been grafted on while I was napping. "Mosquito bites," I said.

"In November? They must be some tough-ass mosquitoes."

"Yeah," I said, shifting the half-eaten sandwich from one hand to the other so I could cover up with the jacket. "Yeah, they are."

Mike liked the country. He'd grown up in the projects on the Lower East Side, always pressed in by concrete and black-top, and now that he was in the wilds of northern Westchester he began to keep animals. There were two chickens in a rudely constructed pen and a white duck he'd hatched from the egg, all of which met their fate one bitter night when a fox or, more likely, a dog sniffed them out. He had a goat, too, chained to a tree from which it had stripped the bark to a height of six feet or more, its head against the palm of your hand exactly like a rock with hair on it, and when he thought about it he'd toss it half a bale of hay or a loaf of stale bread or even the cardboard containers the beer came in. Inside he had a 50-gallon aquarium with a pair of foot-long alligators huddled inside it under a heat lamp, and these he fed hamburger in the form of raw meatballs he'd work between his palms. Every once in a while someone would get stoned and expel a lungful of smoke into the aquarium to see what effect it would have on a pair of reptiles and the things would scabble around against the glass enclosure, hissing.

I was there one night without Cole—he was meeting with his lawyer, I think; I remember he'd shaved his mustache and trimmed his hair about that time—and I parked out on the street so as to avoid suspicion and made my way over the stone wall and through the darkened woods to the indistinct rumble of live music, the pulse of Mike's bass buoyed by the *chink-chink* of a high hat, an organ fill and cloudy vocals. My breath steamed around me. A sickle moon hung over the roof of the cottage, and one of

the cats shot along the base of the outer wall as I pushed through the door.

Everyone was gathered in the living room, JoJo and Suzie stretched out on the floor, Mike and his band, his new band, manning the instruments. I stood in the doorway a moment, feeling awkward. Nicky was on keyboards, and a guy I'd met a few times—Skip—was doing the drumming. But there was a stranger—older, in his late 20s, with an out-of-date haircut and the flaccid beginnings of jowls—up at the mike singing lead and playing guitar. I leaned against the door frame and listened, nodding my head to the beat, as they went through a version of "Rock & Roll Woman," Mike stepping up to the microphone to blend his voice effortlessly with the new guy's on the complex harmonies, and it wasn't as if they were rehearsing at all. They could have been onstage playing the tune for the hundredth time. When the song finished I ducked into the room, nodding to Mike and saying something inane like "Sounding good, man."

As it turned out, the new guy—his name was either Haze or Hayes, I never did get that straight—had played with Mike in a cover band the year before and then vanished from sight. Now he was back, and they were rehearsing for a series of gigs at a club out on Route 202, where eventually they'd become the house band. I sat there on the floor with the girls and listened and felt transported—I wanted to get up and sing myself, ask them if they could use a saxophone to cut away from the guitar leads, but I couldn't work up the nerve. Afterward in the kitchen, when we were all stoned and riding high on the communion of the music, Haze launched into "Sunshine of Your Love" on his acoustic guitar, and I lost my inhibitions enough to try to blend my voice with his, with mixed results. But he kept on playing, and I kept on singing, till Mike went out to the living room and came back with the two alligators, one clutched in each hand, and began banging them together like tambourines, their legs scrambling at the air and tails flailing, the white miniature teeth fighting for purchase.

Then there was parent-teacher night. I got home from work and went straight to bed, and then, cruelly, had to get back up, put the tie on all over again and drive to school right in the middle of cocktail hour, or at the tail end of it, anyway. I make a joke of it now, but I was tentative about the whole thing, afraid of the parents' scrutiny, afraid I'd be exposed for the impostor I was. I pictured them grilling me about the rules of grammar or Shakespeare's plays—the ones I hadn't read—but the parents were as hopeless as their offspring. Precious few of them turned up, and those who did looked so intimidated by their surroundings I had

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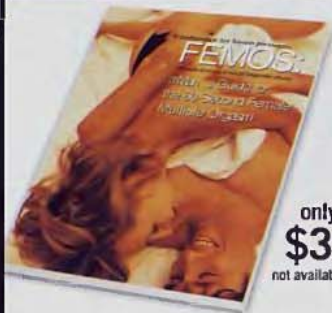
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the feeling they would have taken my word for practically anything. In one class—my fifth period—a single parent turned up. His son—an overweight, well-meaning kid mercilessly ragged by his classmates—was one of the few in the class who weren't behavioral problems, but the father kept insisting that his son was a real hell-raiser, "just like his old man." He sat patiently, work-hardened hands folded on the miniature desk, through my fumbling explanation of what I was trying to accomplish with this particular class and the lofty goals to which each and every student aspired and more drivel of a similar nature, before he interrupted me to say, "He gives you a problem, you got my permission to just whack him one. All right? You get me?"

I was stuffing papers into my briefcase just after the final bell rang at 8:15, thinking to meet Cole at Chase's as soon as I could change out of my prison clothes, when a woman in her 30s—a mother—appeared in the doorway. She looked as if she'd been drained of blood, parchment skin and a high, sculpted bluff of bleached-blond hair gone dead under the dehumanizing wash of the overhead lights. "Mr. Caddis?" she said in a smoker's rasp. "You got a minute?"

A minute? I didn't have 30 seconds. I wanted nothing but to get out of there and get loose before I fell into my bed for a few hours of inadequate dreamless sleep and then found myself right here all over again. "I'm in a hurry," I told her. "I have—well, an appointment."

"I only want a minute." There was something about her that looked vaguely familiar, something about the staring, cola-colored eyes and the way her upper teeth pushed at her lip, that reminded me of somebody, somewhere—and then it came to me: Robert Rowe. "I'm Robert's mother," she said.

I didn't say anything, just parked my right buttock on the nearest desk and waited for her to go on. Robert wasn't in any of my classes, just homeroom. I wasn't his teacher. He wasn't my responsibility. The fat kid, yes. The black kid who flew around the room on the wings beating inside his brain, chanting "He's white, he's right" for hours at a time, the six-months-pregnant girl whose head would have fallen off if she stopped chewing gum for 30 seconds, yes and yes. But not Robert. Not Robert Rowe.

She was wearing a dirty white sweater, misbuttoned. A plaid skirt. Loafers. If I had been older, more attuned, more sympathetic, I would have seen that she was pretty, pretty still, and that she was desperately trying to communicate something to me, some nascent hope grown up out of the detritus of welfare checks and abandonment. "He looks up to you," she said, and her voice choked as if suddenly she couldn't breathe.

This took me by surprise. I didn't know how to respond, so I threw it back

at her, stalling a moment to assimilate what she was saying. "Me?" I said. "He looks up to me?"

Her eyes were pooling. She nodded.

"But why me? I'm not even his teacher."

"Ever since his father left," she began, but let that thought trail off as she struggled to summon a new one, the thought—the phrase—that would bring me around, that would touch me in the way she wanted to. "He talks about you all the time. He thinks you're cool. That's what he says, 'Mr. Caddis is cool.'"

Robert Rowe's face rose up to hover before me in the seat of my unconscious, a compressed little nugget of a face with the extruded teeth and Coca-Cola eyes of this woman, his mother, Mrs. Rowe. That was who she was, Mrs. Rowe, I reminded myself, and I seized on the proper form of address in that moment: "Mrs. Rowe, look, he's a great kid, but I'm not, I mean—well, I'm not his teacher, you know that—"

The room smelled of adolescent fevers and anxieties, of socks worn too long, unwashed hair, jackets that had never seen the inside of a dry cleaner's. There was a fading map of the United States on the back wall, chalkboards so old they'd faded to gray. The linoleum was cracked and peeled. The desks were a joke. Her voice was so soft I could barely hear her over the buzz of the fluorescent lights. "I know," she said. "But he's not...he's getting Fs—Ds and Fs. I don't know what to do with him. He won't listen to me—he hasn't listened to me in years."

"Yeah," I said, just to say something. He looked up to me, sure, but I had a date to meet Cole at Chase's.

"Would you just, I don't know, look out for him? Would you? That's all I ask."

I suppose there are several layers of irony here, not least of which is that I wasn't capable of looking out for myself, but I buried all that at the bar, and when I saw Robert Rowe in homeroom the next morning, I felt nothing more than a vague irritation. He was wearing a tie-dyed shirt—starbursts of pink and yellow—under the parka, and he'd begun to kink his hair out in the way I wore mine at night; but that had to be a coincidence, because to my knowledge he'd never seen me outside of school. It was possible, of course. Anything was possible. He could have seen me coming out of Chase's or stopped in my car along South Street with Mike or Cole, looking to score. I kept my head down, working at my papers—the endless, hopeless, scrawled-over tests and assignments—but I felt his eyes on me the whole time. Then the bell rang and he was gone with the rest of them.

I was home early that evening, looking for sustenance—hoping to find my mother in the kitchen, stirring something in a pot—because I was out of

money till payday and Cole was lying low because his mother had found a bag of pot in his underwear drawer and I felt like taking a break from the cottage and music and dope. Just for the night. I figured I'd stay in, read a bit, get to bed early. My mother wasn't there, though. She had a meeting. At school. One of the endless meetings she had to sit through, taking minutes in shorthand while the school board debated yet another bond issue. I wondered about that and wondered about Jerry Reilly, too.

My father was home. There was no other place he was likely to be—he'd given up going to the tavern or the diner or anyplace else. TV was his narcotic. And there he was, settled into his chair with a cocktail, watching *Victory at Sea* (his single favorite program, as if he couldn't get enough of the war that had robbed him of his youth and personality), the dog, which had been young when I was in junior high myself, curled up stinking at his feet. We exchanged a few words—Where's Mom? At a meeting. You going to eat? No. A sandwich? I'll make you a sandwich? I said no—and then I heated a can of soup and went upstairs with it. For a long while I lay on the floor with my head sandwiched between the speakers, playing records over and over, and then I drifted off.

It was late when I woke—past one—and when I went downstairs to use the toilet my mother was just coming in the door. The old dog began slapping his tail on the carpet, too arthritic to get up; the lamp on the end table flicked on, dragging shadows out of the corners. "You just getting in?" I said.

"Yes," she said, her voice hushed. She was in her work clothes: flocked dress, stockings and heels, a cloth coat, no gloves, though the weather had turned raw.

I stood there a moment, listening to the thwack of the dog's tail, half asleep, summoning the beat of an internal rhythm. I should have mounted the stairs, should have gone back to bed; instead, I said, "Late meeting?"

My mother had set her purse down on the little table inside the door reserved for the telephone. She was slipping out of her coat. "We went out for drinks afterward," she said. "Some of us—me and Ruth, Larry Abrams, Ted Penny."

"And Jerry? What about him—was he there?"

It took a moment, the coat flung over the banister, the dog settled back in his coil, the clank of the heat coming on noisy out of all proportion, and then she turned to me, hands on her hips, and said, "Yes, Jerry was there. And you know what—I'm glad he was." A beat. She swayed slightly, or maybe that was my imagination. "You want to know why?"

There was something in her voice that should have warned me off, but I was awake now, and instead of going back upstairs to bed I just stood there in the

dim arc of light the lamp cast on the floor and shrugged my shoulders. She lifted her purse from the telephone stand and I saw that there was something else there, a metal case the size of the two-tiered deluxe box of candy I gave her for Christmas each year. It was a tape recorder, and she bent a moment to fit the plug in the socket next to the phone outlet. Then she straightened up and gave me that look again—the admonitory look, searing and sharp. "I want you to listen to something," she said. "Something a friend of Jerry's—he works for the Peterskill police department; he's a detective—thought you ought to hear."

I froze. There was no time to think, no time to fabricate a story, no time to wriggle or plead, because my own voice was coming at me out of the miniature speaker. "Hey," I was saying, "you coming over or what? It's like past nine already, and everybody's waiting—"

There was music in the background, cranked loud—"Spinning Wheel," the tune of that fall, and we were all intoxicated by David Clayton-Thomas and the incisiveness of those punched-up horns—and my mind ran through the calendar of the past week, Friday or Saturday at the cottage in the woods, Cole running late, the usual party in progress...

"Yeah, sure," I heard Cole respond. He was at his mother's—it was his mother's birthday. "Just as soon as I can get out of here."

"Okay, man," I said. "Catch you later, right?"

That was it. Nothing incriminating, but incrimination wasn't the point of the exercise. It took me a moment, and then I thought of Haze, his sudden appearance in our midst, the glad-handing and the parceling out of the cool, and then I understood why he'd come to us—the term *infiltrated* soared up out of nowhere—and just who had put him up to it. I couldn't think of what to say.

My mother could, though. She clicked off the tape with a punch of her index finger. "My friend said if you knew what was good for you you'd stay clear of that place for a while. For good." We stood five feet apart. There was no embrace—we weren't an embracing family—no pat on the back, no gesture of any kind. Just the two of us standing there in the half-dark. When she spoke finally her voice was muted. "Do you understand what I'm telling you?"

As soon as I got out of work the next day I changed my clothes and went straight to the cottage. It was raining steadily, a cold gray rain that drooled from the branches of the trees and braided in the gutters. Cole's Bug was parked on the street as I drove up, but I didn't park beside him—I drove another half mile and parked on a side street, a cul-de-sac

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where nobody would see the car. Then I put my head down and walked up the road in the rain, veering off into the woods the minute I saw a car turn into the street. I remember how bleak everything looked, the summer's trash revealed at the feet of the denuded trees, the weeds bowed and frost-burned, leaves clinging to my boots as if the ground were made of paste. My heart was pounding. It was a condition we called paranoia when we were smoking, the unreasoning feeling that something or somebody is about to pounce, that the world has become intractably dangerous and your own vulnerability has been flagged. But no, this wasn't paranoia: The threat was real.

The hair was wet to my scalp and my jacket all but ruined by the time I pushed through the front door. The house was quiet, no music bleeding through the speakers, no murmur of voices or tread of footsteps. There was the soft, fading scratch of one of the cats in the litter pan in the kitchen, and that was it—nothing, silence absolute. I stood in the entryway a moment, trying to scrape the mud and leaves from my boots, but it was hopeless, so finally I just stepped out of them in my stocking feet and left them there at the door. I suppose that was why Suzie and Cole didn't hear me coming—I hadn't meant to creep up on them, hadn't meant anything except to somehow come round to telling them what I knew, what I'd learned, warning them, sparing them, and as I say my heart was going and I was risking everything myself just to be there, just to be present—and when I stepped into the living room they gave me a shock. They were naked, their clothes flung down beside them, rolling on a blanket in sexual play or the pre-

lude to it. I suppose it doesn't really matter at this juncture to say that I'd found her attractive—she was the pretty one, always that—or that I felt all along that she'd favored me over Cole or Nicky or any of the others. That didn't matter. That had nothing to do with it. I'd come with a warning, and I had to deliver it.

"Who's that?" Suzie's voice rose up out of the stillness. Cole was atop her, and she had to lift her head to fix her eyes on me. "John? Is that you?"

Cole rolled off her and flipped a fold of the blanket over her. "Jesus," he said, "you picked a great moment." His eyes burned, though I could see he was trying to be cool, trying to minimize it, no big thing.

"Jesus," Suzie said, "you scared me. Do you always creep around like that?"

"My boots," I said. "They just—or actually, I just came by to tell you something, that's all—I can't stay...."

The rain was like two cupped palms holding the place in its grip. The gutters rattled. Pinpricks needled the roof. "Shit," Cole said, and Suzie reached out to gather up her clothes, shielding her breasts in the crook of one arm. "I mean, shit, John. Couldn't you wait in the kitchen, I mean for like 10 fucking minutes? Huh? Couldn't you?"

I swung round without a word and padded out to the kitchen even as the living room door thundered shut at my back. For a long while I sat at the familiar table with its detritus of burnt joss sticks, immolated candles, beer bottles, mugs, food wrappers and the like, thinking I could just write them a note—that would do it—or maybe I'd call Cole later, from home, when he got home, that was, at his mother's. But I couldn't find a pencil—nobody took notes here, that was for sure—and finally I just pushed myself

up, tiptoed to the door and fell back into my boots and the sodden jacket.

It was just getting dark when I pulled up in front of the house. My father's car was parked there at the curb, but my mother's wasn't, and it wasn't in the driveway, either. The rain kept coming down—the streets were flooding, broad sheets of water fanning away from the tires and the main road clogged with slow-moving cars and their tired headlights and frantically beating wipers. I ran for the house, kicked off my boots on the doorstep and flung myself inside as if I'd been away for years. My jacket streamed, and I hurried across the carpet to the accompaniment of the dog's thwacking tail and hung it from the showerhead in the bathroom. Then I went to the kitchen to look in the refrigerator, feeling desolate and cheated. I didn't have a habit, despite the stigmata of my arms—I was a neophyte still, a two- or three-times-a-week user—but I had a need, and that need yawned before me, opening up and opening up again as I leaned over the sink. The cottage was over. Cole was over. Life, as I'd come to know it, was finished.

It was then that I noticed the figure of my father moving through the gloom of the backyard. He had on a pair of galoshes I'd worn as a kid, the kind with the metal fasteners, and he was wearing a yellow rain slicker and one of those winter hats with the fold-down earmuffs. I couldn't quite tell what he was doing out there, raking dirt or leaves, something to do with the rain, I guessed—the driveway was eroding, maybe that was it. It never crossed my mind that he might need help. And Robert Rowe never crossed my mind either, nor the fact that his speech had been garbled and slow at the noon hour and his eyes drifted toward a point no one in this world could see but him.

No. I was hungry for something. I didn't know what. It wasn't food, because I mechanically chewed a handful of saltines over the sink and washed them down with half a glass of milk that tasted like chalk. I paced round the living room, snuck a drink out of my mother's bottle—Dewar's, that was what she drank; my father stuck with vodka, the cheaper the better, and I'd never acquired a taste for it. I had another drink and then another. After a while I eased myself down in my father's chair and gazed around the room where I'd spent the better part of my life, the secondhand furniture, the forest-green wallpaper gone pale around the window frames, the peeling sheet-metal planter I'd made for my mother in shop class, the plants within it long since expired, just curls of dead things now. Finally I got up and turned on the TV, then settled back in my father's chair as the jets came in low and the village went up in flames.



"Before you go, who's better at this—me or Trump?"



I was concerned that I not look like fucking Opie, so I spent six months studying kali and shooting guns.

on. *The Legend of Bagger Vance* tanked. All the *Pretty Horses* really tanked. And everyone in the industry was whispering, "I heard *The Bourne Identity* is in trouble" because we had done two rounds of reshoots and the release had been postponed. I thought, Well, this fucking movie is gone, and that's three movies in a row that I've tried to headline, so that's it. I hadn't been offered a movie in 12, 18 months—some little independent things but no class projects. The writing was on the wall within the industry, and I'd come to terms with that.

PLAYBOY: Then along comes *Ocean's Eleven*, in which you and other big stars share screen time, and it's a hit. Was it a relief not to have the weight of the whole movie on your shoulders?

DAMON: On *Ocean's Eleven* I remember going to the set to watch even when I wasn't working, because it was fun. I didn't want to go anywhere else. But yeah, it's a weird thing trying to carry a movie—a different kind of responsibility and a little unsettling. For instance, Leonardo DiCaprio was wildly inventive from a young age. To limit his options is like cutting one of his legs out from under him. He's a character actor, really, and that's how I see myself. It's a stunning realization that nobody is secure in this business. You start to meet people who can't pay their mortgages and you think, But you were on the cover of *Premiere* eight years ago. And you assume that Tom Cruise is secure, but I guarantee you that guy isn't secure either, because there are always footsteps behind you.

PLAYBOY: *Ocean's Eleven* was an ensemble movie, but *The Bourne Identity* was you front and center, and it was a big hit. What impact did it have on your career options?

DAMON: I was in London doing the last performances of the play *This Is Our Youth*, and *The Bourne Identity* opened in America on a Friday. Saturday morning I was awakened by this flurry of excited phone calls from L.A.: "Oh my God, it's a fucking hit!" By Monday I had 30 big movie offers. That was a really good experience, because I thought, Now I get it. This is a real business. You can be friendly with people, even be friends with them, but that doesn't mean they have to do you any favors like suddenly putting you in their movie.

PLAYBOY: Unless you're in another hit. Affleck also had a big spy flick, *The Sum of All Fears*, around the same time, but yours did better.

DAMON: Both of us were pulling for our own and the other's movie, and the stakes had gotten so high. During press interviews, people would ask, "Whose movie is going to do better?" and I was like, "I don't fucking care, as long as we're both okay." I honestly don't care much anymore about the media stuff. Each of us got really leery talking about the other or about our friendship, because it felt cheapened when we saw it in print. At this point I just acknowledge to myself that I love him and he's going to be in my life forever.

PLAYBOY: Now you've done a sequel called *The Bourne Supremacy*.

DAMON: I think what people loved about the first movie was the characters. One thing I like about this movie is that every act of violence comes at a price for the character. When he does these things, he's haunted and it takes a piece of him. He's not a paint-by-numbers spy. I don't think we could have done this story line if it weren't a sequel, because it's pretty dark. The director, Paul Greengrass, uses the same handheld-camera technique that his movie *Bloody Sunday* has, which always ratchets up the paranoia a bit.

PLAYBOY: In the first *Bourne* movie, your character has amnesia. How's his memory this time?

DAMON: There's no way to talk about this movie without fucking it up. Well, he doesn't have his whole memory back. He's still working from these fragments, which we needed as a plot point so we'd have somewhere to go. Every character is developed from the first movie, but some of them turn out to be slightly different than you thought they were.

PLAYBOY: Are you a gun guy offscreen, like your character in the *Bourne* movies?

DAMON: I don't like guns, and I really am scared of them—not scared in the sense that I wouldn't pick one up; I mean just respectful. Too many things can go wrong with a gun in your house, so I don't own one, but I'm pretty good with them, because for the movie I did hundreds of hours of training with a former SWAT team shotgunner who had worked with Benicio Del Toro on *Traffic*. I was concerned, especially in the first *Bourne*, that I not look like fucking Opie, so I spent six months studying a Filipino martial arts form called kali. Then I worked with guns—holding, shooting—so that for the brief moments I hold one in the movies it looks as if I've done it a thousand times before.

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PLAYBOY: Was doing this *Bourne* sequel your call, or did you have to fulfill a contract?

DAMON: I didn't want to do one of those cynical sequels that are just an attempt to make money. I was always skeptical that a second movie would happen, because I didn't see where it could go. Suddenly there was a great director, screenwriter and producer, so I couldn't see why we shouldn't do it. I had never done a sequel, but I felt we had a chance to make it better than the first one. I hope we did. We took it places a big-budget studio movie doesn't normally go, and I'm proud of that. And the message is really good.

PLAYBOY: What is the message?

DAMON: Essentially, at the end of the day—and this will pack them into the seats—it turns into a story of atonement. You can't make a sequel to an action movie and not have action in it, so there's plenty of that. But basically you're expecting revenge, and you get atonement, which is a bit of a left turn, especially in this day and age.

PLAYBOY: You've just started the second *Ocean's Eleven* caper, *Ocean's Twelve*. What's the fun this time?

DAMON: It has everyone from the first movie and Catherine Zeta-Jones, too. There will be a lot of cameos, but it's still very much George and Brad, with the rest there to add certain colors throughout. It's the perfect sequel to *Ocean's Eleven*.

PLAYBOY: How do you observe the handling of fame by co-stars such as George Clooney and Brad Pitt?

DAMON: They're really regular guys, just fun to be around. If you came from another planet and sat with them and they left the room, you would be shocked if somebody told you they were the two biggest movie stars in the world. They don't put that out there. They don't covet it. Look at George's career in the past five years—three Steven Soderbergh movies, two movies with the Coen brothers, plus he's directed a movie. It's those kinds of decisions I admire. You hear other people say, "Well, this is going to be a big studio hit. I should do it," and suddenly they're playing a game you never win, because the ball will drop on you, and it doesn't matter who you are. It almost dropped on me a couple years ago. I'm getting a second shot at that kind of rarefied air. So this time I'm enjoying doing movies I love.

PLAYBOY: Are you happy with *Project Greenlight*, the reality-TV show you and Affleck produce, which documents the highs and lows of a novice filmmaker shooting a movie from start to finish?

DAMON: Steven Soderbergh was shooting a car scene the other day. When stuff went wrong, he said, "We've just had our *Project Greenlight* moment." We still haven't done what we set out to do. We have a good TV show, but the whole point was to drive people to make interesting, viable movies. Miramax put up almost \$4 million for the first two movies, *Stolen Summer* and *The Battle of Shaker Heights*, and we didn't make the money back for them. This year, their good point was, "If you want to be faith-

ful to the reality of the business, then you have to bring us a movie we would really make for that amount of money." So we tried to encourage people to send a horror film, a romantic comedy or something that can realistically be made for that amount of money.

PLAYBOY: And something on which Miramax could recoup their money.

DAMON: The script submissions are just coming in, and once they're culled Ben and I will read the top 50. We really believe in this idea. People thought we were setting up these filmmakers to fail, but we don't sit around thinking up ways to spend hundreds of hours of our own time, without getting paid, just to play a practical joke on some guy from Des Moines.

PLAYBOY: Where's the *Good Will Hunting* follow-up project from you and Affleck that we've been hearing about?

DAMON: It's in the same place it's been for the past seven years, which is that we both want to do it. We saw each other a couple weeks ago in L.A., and we could feel the horse pulling on the reins because we really miss the experience of starting a small kernel of an idea and seeing it go all the way to being a movie. Like on *Good Will Hunting*, the motto for this one is "Let it write itself."

PLAYBOY: Considering how well your first collaboration went, do the two of you ever let people's high expectations paralyze you?

DAMON: Neither of us looked forward enough to that two-by-four in the face to actually sit down and take the time to write it, especially when we were getting paid to act—which had always been the goal for us. We know we're going to get killed, so we're just going to do it and not worry what the perception is.

PLAYBOY: After *Ocean's Twelve* you will work on *The Informant*, also with Steven Soderbergh. You're playing a real-life mole for the FBI in a corporate price-fixing scam. Is this the kind of character-actor role you've been looking for?

DAMON: It's the best role I've seen since *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. Steven and I were just talking today about how people in Hollywood rise to a certain station, then sit there and defend their little beach-head, and slowly their careers keep losing ground. One thing I've always loved about Sean Penn is that he swings for the fences no matter what. I've made a couple of scared swings up there. I don't want to do that anymore.

PLAYBOY: In his 1999 *Playboy Interview*, Affleck jokingly said of you, "He gives a really great blow job." Care to return the compliment?

DAMON: I do give great head. I definitely give a better blow job than Ben. I mean, I'm not lucky enough to be able to blow myself, but if I could, I'd never leave the house.



PLAYMATE NEWS



BIG-SCREEN BETTIE

"I was never the girl next door," Bettie Page once said—and she was right. Often called the greatest pinup of all time, the legendary brunette model with



You Bettie your life: Gretchen Mol (left) as Bettie Page (above) in the pinup's biopic.

unbelievable life story. The rest of the dirty details will be revealed in *The Ballad of Bettie Page*, a biopic starring Gretchen Mol (left). Aside from chronicling Bettie's rise as a 1950s icon, the film will cover the now infamous investigation by Senator Estes Kefauver that linked Bettie to juvenile delinquency and porn. (In 1957 she mysteriously vanished from the public eye, only to resurface more than 30 years later.) Will Mol do justice to the model who once said, "I love to swim in the nude and roam around the house in the nude. You're just as free as a bird!?" We can't wait to see her try.

the voluptuous figure first appeared in *PLAYBOY* as Miss January 1955. Photographer Bunny Yeager had posed Bettie, wearing nothing but a Santa Claus hat, for a stock photo. When Yeager heard about the new men's magazine called *PLAYBOY*, she sold the photo to Hef for \$100. That's just one piece of Bettie's

15 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

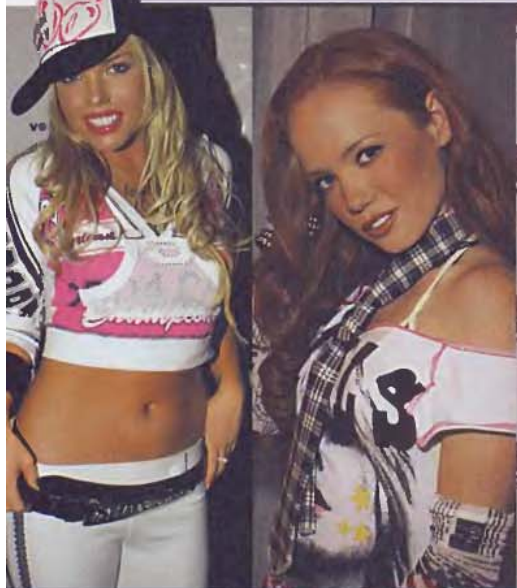
Miss August 1989? That's Gianna Amore. Considering her name, it's not surprising that Gianna grew up in a "super-Italian" household in Rhode Island before our scouts asked her to pose. Her data sheet reveals that her least favorite pickup lines were "You're so beautiful, I'll give you anything you want" and "Do you like my house? When are you moving in?"



LOOSE LIPS

"We are worried about what will happen if this country goes crazy. Neither of us wanted kids. Now we have 2,000 and no stretch marks to show for it."—Susie (Scott) Krabacher, who along with her husband spends three weeks of every two months in Haiti, helping underprivileged children

PLAYMATE PAPARAZZI PARADE



Centerfold head turners, from far left: Calleen Shannon at the Leather & Laces party in Houston; Heather Carolin on the set of *Strip Paker Invitational*; Angel Boris at the Fashion Wire Daily Presents *Who's Next in the World of Fashion* event; Stephanie Adams at Marquee in New York; Jenny McCarthy getting ready to walk the runway in a Heathcette fashion show.



HOT SHOT



CAROL AND
DARLENE BERNAOLA

THREE THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT VICTORIA VALENTINO

1. She was a professional singer-songwriter in the 1960s and is still tearing up the stage. "In February I sang at a book-launch party in Montreal. There were more than 700 people in the audience," she says.

2. Victoria writes articles for the society pages of local German and Hungarian newspapers.

3. She has a cable-access show and is hoping it lands on a major women's network this year. "I interview women who've stepped outside the box," she says.



VICTORIA DOWN UNDER

Does Victoria Silvstedt ever take a bad picture? No, as we learned when dozens of photos from her Australian holiday landed on our desk. We narrowed the shots down to these: with Jamie Foxx; sunbathing; at SeaWorld.



DONNA MICHELLE 1945-2004

We were stunned to learn that Playmate of the Year 1964 Donna Michelle passed away in April. Here, thoughts on Donna from those who knew her best:

"Donna was one of the most unforgettable women I've ever known. We had a passionate, all too brief affair."—Hugh Hefner

"I had an idea for a cover with a girl posing in the shape of the Rabbit Head, but I thought no model would be able to do it. I asked Donna, and she did it with great ease."—PLAYBOY Art Director Art Paul



MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

By Patrick Warburton

"My favorite is Marilyn Monroe because of her depth, complexity and beauty. She was always the whole package. She had so many different looks. She

was a combination of innocence, sexiness and trouble.

There was something about her that was vulnerable; men everywhere wanted to save her."



PLAYMATE GOSSIP

The *New York Post* reported that Mets star Mike Piazza spent \$500,000 on an engagement ring for Alicia Richter. *Star* magazine says it's worth \$98,000. But is there a ring at all? "It's absolutely false. Mike loves her, but they aren't engaged," Piazza's agent says.... Tiffany Taylor, Penelope Jimenez, St. Pauli girl Berglind Icey, Divini Rae and Marketa Janska partied at the Mansion (below).... Bebe Buell performed at the late Joey Ramone's birthday bash in New York.... Alice Denham, who



"We got the memo about the black dresses!" wrote the acclaimed novel *My Darling From the Lions*, is working on a memoir, *Sleeping With Bad Boys: Literary New York at Mid-Century*, in which she'll discuss her relationship with James Dean, Hef and more.... In memory of PLAYBOY

photographer Pompeo Posar, Helena Antonaccio sent us personal snapshots (right) from the 1960s and the 1990s. "As a Playmate who was discovered by Pompeo, I have memories that will last forever," she says. "He was a classy gentleman, an artist who viewed a woman's anatomy as art. I am blessed that I met him and became one of his Playmates and part of his art. I love you, Pompeo. Thank you."



Pompeo and Helena.

cyberclub

See your favorite Playmate's pictorial in the Cyber Club at cyber.playboy.com.

NFL PREVIEW

(continued from page 104)

sucks Ryan Leaf-style. (Feeling the heat, Eli?) A healthy Jeremy Shockey and Kurt Warner will come in handy. Free agents Carlos Emmons, Barrett Green and Fred Robbins will bolster the defense. **CRYSTAL BALL:** Coughlin will crack the whip, but this is a bitch of a division.

NFC NORTH

GREEN BAY PACKERS

LAST SEASON: Another good year in Green Bay (10-6) led to a heartbreaking three-point loss to the Eagles in the playoffs. **OUTLOOK:** Forget Lombardi—these Packers win with offense, finishing second in the NFC in yards and points in 2003. The big hitters return. Running back Ahman Green (1,883 rushing yards) is a true weapon, and Brett Favre is Brett Favre. His 208 consecutive starts is an NFL record for QBs. Will the streak come to an end this year? The Pack's defense was plain cheesy in 2003, and at press time they'd signed just two free agents (safety Mark Roman from the Bengals and cornerback Chris Watson from the Lions) to try to remedy the situation. Their draft picks (notably cornerback Ahmad Carroll out of Arkansas) may take time to fit in. **CRYSTAL BALL:** Given coach Mike Sherman's record, the Packers should take the division. But it won't be easy.

CHICAGO BEARS

LAST SEASON: Lucky for the Bears, Chicago loves its football—no matter how boring the offense gets. A 7-9 season pushed QB Kordell Stewart and coach Dick Jauron out of town. **OUTLOOK:** A new head coach in Lovie Smith, a new starting QB in Rex Grossman and highly touted draft picks in defensive tackles Tommie Harris and Tank Johnson should sharpen this team's claws. The games to watch are the two against archrival Green Bay, which has taken 18 of the past 20 versus the Bears. A sweep of Green Bay would please Bears fans as much as a playoff berth would. It'll take clutch play from project Grossman, who should make Chicago fans forget about Shane Matthews. But will he bring back memories of Jim McMahon? **CRYSTAL BALL:** Da Bears will slip past the Vikings for second place, but a coveted playoff spot will remain out of reach.

MINNESOTA VIKINGS

LAST SEASON: The Vikings kicked off 2003 with six straight wins and then fell apart, winning only three more games all year. They saved their worst for last, falling to lowly Arizona in the final week and missing out on the playoffs as a result. **OUTLOOK:** This club was the Chiefs of the NFC in 2003: a stellar offense (first in the league in yards) and a sieve-like defense.

The Vikings figure to be equally explosive and inconsistent this year. QB Daunte Culpepper and receiver Randy Moss can make incredible plays, but Culpepper can't seem to win the big game, and Moss is a head case. As for the defense, free-agent safety Tyrone Carter should bring toughness to the secondary, and top draft pick Kenechi Udeze (USC) will be all over opposing quarterbacks. But the additions won't be enough to plug the leaks. Expect a lot of scoring at the Metrodome, on both ends of the field. **CRYSTAL BALL:** The Vikes will struggle to break .500.

DETROIT LIONS

LAST SEASON: The Lions improved to 5-11 under popular coach Steve Mariucci. Given this team's dearth of talent, that's saying something. **OUTLOOK:** A draft-day bonanza, including touted wide receiver Roy Williams and linebacker Teddy Lehman, might bring relief. Snappy QB Joey Harrington will have talent to throw to in Williams, former Ram Az-Zahir Hakim and sophomore Charles Rogers (coming off a collarbone injury). Mariucci needs to get his Lions past the Thanksgiving game in decent shape because the late-season schedule could sink them: Indy, Green Bay and two games against Minnesota. **CRYSTAL BALL:** Detroit sports fans will be counting the days until the Pistons' season starts.

AFC WEST

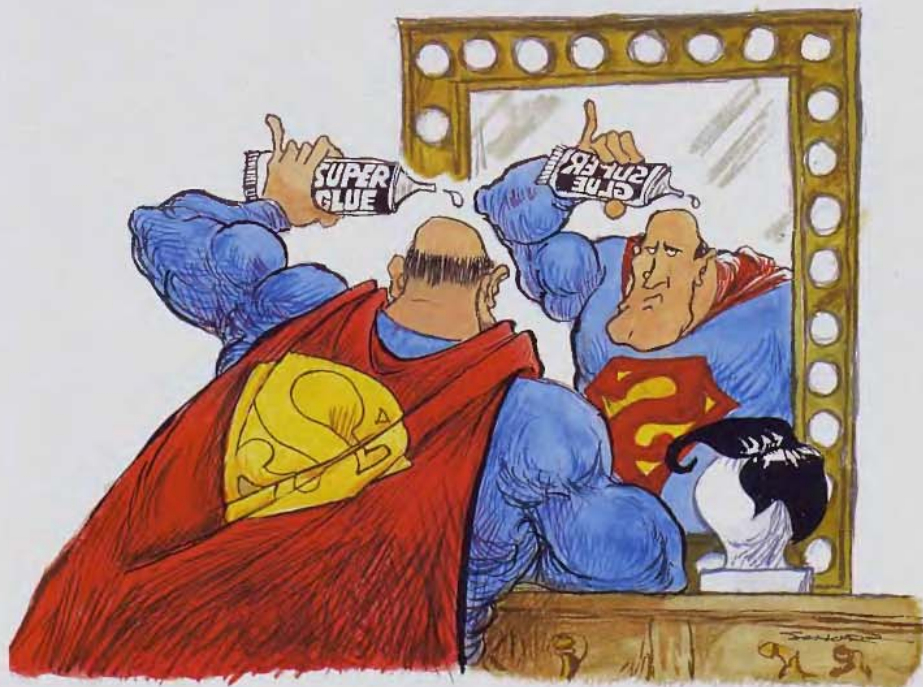
DENVER BRONCOS

LAST SEASON: After a strong regular season (10-6), Denver was humiliated by the Colts on wild-card weekend. **OUTLOOK:** It was the kind of offense-for-defense trade that gets football geeks buzzing: The

Broncos swapped super running back Clinton Portis for the Redskins' Champ Bailey, arguably the league's best cover guy. The team also added elite defenders in end Marco Coleman from Philadelphia, tackle Luther Ellis from Detroit and safety John Lynch from Tampa Bay. On paper, coach Mike Shanahan's defense rivals any in the NFL. Former 49er Garrison Hearst should help fill the void left by Portis, while QB Jake Plummer will lead the offense; the Broncos were 9-2 with him in the lineup last season, including decisive victories over Kansas City and Indianapolis. **CRYSTAL BALL:** How good are the Broncos? Despite games at K.C. and Tennessee and at home against Indianapolis in the final three weeks of the season, they win this division.

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

LAST SEASON: The 9-0 start and 13-3 record overall jazzed the fans. But the Chiefs never had the look of a contender because the defense was as dreadful (29th in yards allowed) as the offense was dazzling (second in yards gained). **OUTLOOK:** Expect more fireworks in Arrowhead. The only noteworthy additions to the defense are tackles Lionel Dalton (formerly of the Redskins) and Junior Siavii, a second-round pick out of Oregon. Offensively, the Chiefs go to battle with the same impressive weaponry: Priest Holmes (an NFL-record 27 TDs in 2003), Trent Green (second in the league in passing yards), tight end Tony Gonzalez and special-teams star Dante Hall (five TD returns). **CRYSTAL BALL:** The question is whether the Chiefs will score points as fast as they give them up. We see a wild card in this club's future, but we wouldn't bet the ranch on it.



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 32, 35-36, 106-111, 112-113, 157 and 160-161, check the listings below to find the stores nearest you.



cole.com. *La Perla Black Label*, 866-LA-PERLA. *La Petite Coquette*, thelittleflirt.com. *Lubiam*, available at Macy's West. *Marc Ecko Collection*, available at Nordstrom. *Nautica*, 866-282-4264. *Perry Ellis*, perryellis.com. *Playboy Jewelry*, playboystore.com. *René Lezard*, 616-538-6000. *Ron-n-Ron*, ron-n-ron.com.

GAMES

Page 32: 989 Sports, 989sports.com. *Activision*, activision.com. *Atari*, atari.com. *Blizzard Entertainment*, blizzard.com. *Capcom*, capcom.com. *Vivendi Universal Games*, vugames.com. *Wired: Nokia*, nokia.com.

MANTRACK

Pages 35-36: *Archos*, archos.com. *Creative Technology*, creative.com. *Dovo*, classicshaving.com. *eShave*, eshave.com. *IRiver*, iver.com. *JVC*, jvc.com. *Mario Badescu Products*, mariobadescu.com.

INSIDE THE ENTOURAGE

Pages 106-111: *Arnold Brant*, arnoldbrant.com. *Blue Guru*, 212-925-6931. *Christopher Deane*, 212-219-7788. *Clai-borne*, 800-581-7272. *Country Gentleman*, available at Lord & Taylor. *C.P. Company*, 212-966-8994. *D&G*, 212-965-8000. *Devon Sedlacek*, sedlacekdesign.com. *Diesel Footwear*, 877-7-DSL-FTW. *Dolcepunta*, 212-397-4300. *Dubuc*, 212-929-2400. *Gianluca Isaia*, available at Saks Fifth Avenue. *Guess*, guess.com. *Hugo Hugo Boss*, 800-HUGO-BOSS. *J. Crew*, jcrew.com. *Jack Victor*, 800-724-2923. *J.M. Weston*, 877-4-WESTON. *John Bartlett*, available at Bloomingdale's. *Johnston & Murphy*, johnstonmurphy.com. *Just Cavalli*, 702-632-7777. *Kenneth Cole*, kenneth

Seiko, seikousa.com. *Stuart Weitzman*, 310-860-9600. *Studio Chereskin*, available at Macy's. *TagHeuer*, 866-260-0460. *Ted Baker*, 212-343-8989. *Torino Belts*, torinobelts.com. *Versace*, versace.com. *Wolford*, 800-WOLFORD. *Zang Toi*, available at Nordstrom.

SLICK KICKERS

Pages 112-113: *310 Motoring Footwear*, 800-780-9990. *Adidas*, adidas.com. *Aldo*, 888-311-ALDO. *Diesel*, 877-7-DSL-FTW. *Globe Shoes*, globeshoes.com. *Hugo Hugo Boss*, 800-HUGO-BOSS. *Nautica*, 866-282-4264. *Nike*, niketown.com. *Penguin*, 646-443-3520. *Pony*, 866-221-PONY. *Reebok*, reebok.com. *Tommy Hilfiger*, tommy.com.

ON THE SCENE

Page 157: *BMW*, bmwusa.com.

POTPOURRI

Pages 160-161: *1800*, 1800tequila.com. *Bonjour*, bonjourproducts.com. *Callaway*, ercfusion.com. *Canon*, canonusa.com. *Gibson Audio*, gibsonaudio.com. *Philips*, philipsusa.com. *Pimp*, tokyoflash.com. *Playing Politics*, playingpolitics2004.com. *Scorpion Mezcal*, scorpionmezcal.com. *SkinMedica*, available through your dermatologist. *TaylorMade*, taylormadegolf.com.

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OAKLAND RAIDERS

LAST SEASON: A year after Bill Callahan took this team to the big game, Oakland limped to a 4-12 record. **OUTLOOK:** New coach Norv Turner wasn't exactly the second coming of Don Shula in his seven years in Washington (49-59), and he inherits a team that was 30th out of 32 teams in yards allowed. The defense will benefit from three linemen from recent Super Bowl winners—Warren Sapp (Tampa Bay), Ted Washington and Bobby Hamilton (New England). Meanwhile, five different quarterbacks played for the Raiders last year. At press time, Rich Gannon (who's pushing 40) and Kerry Collins were to compete for the starting job. Offensive tackle Robert Gallery, the team's top draft pick, will be their Luca Brasi. **CRYSTAL BALL:** Injuries will do this team in once again.

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

LAST SEASON: The new uniforms were gorgeous. Everything else was ugly. San Diego finished 4-12. **OUTLOOK:** Maybe the Chargers should stay out of the QB biz. They drafted Ryan Leaf and passed on Michael Vick. Will Philip Rivers make them forget they traded Eli Manning to get him? Coach Marty Schottenheimer will choose between rookie Rivers, who was 12 years old the last time the coach won a playoff game, and Drew Brees. If they both suck, there's 41-year-old Doug Flutie. Aside from LaDainian Tomlinson (league-leading 2,370 total yards in 2003, second in NFL history), the Chargers have little to build around, and it won't help that they lost receiver David Boston to Miami. The defense? Please. **CRYSTAL BALL:** San Diego will top last year's record, for whatever that's worth.

AFC NORTH

CINCINNATI BENGALS

LAST SEASON: Under new coach Marvin Lewis, the Bengals made the big leap to respectability (8-8). **OUTLOOK:** Here it is, football fans—our pick for this season's Cinderella team, this year's version of the 2003 Panthers. The Bengals made some no-guts, no-glory moves during the off-season, ditching QB John Kitna (3,591 yards, 26 TDs in 2003) in favor of former USC gunslinger Carson Palmer and sending veteran running back Corey Dillon packing as well. Rudi Johnson and rookie Chris Perry (Michigan) will spearhead the ground attack. After some growing pains early on, this talented offense should start to click. But the real difference this year will be on defense: The Bengals nabbed six highly regarded players on that side of the ball, including big-play cornerback Keiwan Ratliff. Coach Lewis, who built Baltimore's Super Bowl defense, knows how to coach these kids. **CRYSTAL BALL:** With all that young talent, the

Bengals will win a division title for the first time in 14 years.

BALTIMORE RAVENS

LAST SEASON: Led by Jamal Lewis, who turned out one of the greatest rushing seasons ever (2,066 yards), the Ravens finished 10–6 before losing to Tennessee in the wild-card game. **OUTLOOK:** The most newsworthy addition to the Ravens? Former Giants coach Jim Fassel, who joins up as the offensive coordinator behind head man Brian Billick. Baltimore fans are hoping Fassel can jump-start the Kyle Boller-led air attack—only five teams had fewer TD passes last year. The bulk of the offensive line returns, good news for the running game. The question is whether Lewis can stay focused. The running back is facing federal drug charges involving a cocaine-dealing ring. Meanwhile, there's not much new to say about the Ray Lewis-led defense. It will be awesome as usual. **CRYSTAL BALL:** In today's NFL, it's tough to continue winning without a top quarterback.

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

LAST SEASON: This team ruled the field with one of the greatest rosters in history. Terry Bradshaw, Mean Joe Green—wait, that was 30 years ago. Bill Cowher's team fell short again (6–10). **OUTLOOK:** Jerome Bettis is on the decline, but free-agent pickup Duce Staley should carry his weight in the backfield. Staley can catch passes underneath coverage, presenting a big problem for defenses, which will have their hands full with the NFL's top receiving corps (Plaxico Burress, Hines Ward, Antwaan Randle El). The question is, Who will throw them the ball? Incumbent Tommy Maddox will duke it out with top draft pick Ben Roethlisberger, who will be either the next Bradshaw or the next Mark Malone. Whoever takes the snaps had better put points on the board—the defense is mediocre at best. **CRYSTAL BALL:** If one of the QBs steps up, the Steelers could surprise.

CLEVELAND BROWNS

LAST SEASON: Another disappointing year in Cleveland (5–11). **OUTLOOK:** The Browns gave up on their supposed QB of the future, Tim Couch, in favor of Jeff Garcia. The former 49er—who will benefit from the addition of rookie tight end Kellen Winslow Jr.—should improve an anemic offense (281.5 yards per game last season, 26th in the NFL). A couple of defensive additions could keep the games closer. Safety Sean Jones, a second-round pick, adds life to an uninspired secondary, and free-agent defensive end Ebenezer Ekuban will help stop the run—the Browns were 23rd last year in rushing yards allowed. **CRYSTAL BALL:** The playoffs? No way. They'll have to shoot for respectability.

NFC SOUTH

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

LAST SEASON: An 8–8 finish, middle-of-the-road in almost every respect. **OUTLOOK:** Football pontificators have talked up the Saints for years. This season the team will live up to the hype. The offense will be anchored once again by imitable running back Deuce McAllister (1,641 yards in 2003), QB Aaron Brooks (24 TDs, eight interceptions) and receiver Joe Horn. They'll score plenty of points, and unlike last year, the defense will hold opposing teams at bay. Coach Jim Haslett, clearly on the hot seat, will count on two new defensive linemen to stop the rush: high-priced free agent Brian Young and first-round pick Will Smith (Ohio State). **CRYSTAL BALL:** The Saints will win a division title for the first time since 1991.

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

LAST SEASON: The Bucs went from Super Bowl champs to a losing year (7–9). **OUTLOOK:** Chucky's back, and he's upset. During the off-season Jon Gruden persuaded new general manager Bruce Allen to jettison at least 14 players and bring in around 20 new faces. Among the departed are trash-talking receiver Keyshawn Johnson and defensive tackle Warren Sapp, who will be replaced by Darrell Russell, formerly with the Redskins. Key veteran offensive producers Brad Johnson and fullback Mike Alstott return, but the team's best running back, Michael Pittman, is likely to be suspended for multiple games after pleading guilty to a felony count of endangerment. As always, though, if this team is going to win, it will win on defense. **CRYSTAL BALL:** Gruden will yank his hair out trying to keep the Buccaneers in contention.

CAROLINA PANTHERS

LAST SEASON: An 11–5 record is one thing, but Jake Delhomme throwing three TDs in the Super Bowl? Come on. **OUTLOOK:** No, you weren't dreaming—Carolina made it to the big game. But so did the 1998 Falcons. The good news: The Panthers didn't lose any key players. The bad news: They didn't add any to compensate for a tougher schedule. It remains to be seen if coach John Fox will let QB Delhomme carry more of the load or continue to have him hand the ball to Stephen Davis and DeShaun Foster. Is this team for real? Even the NFL doesn't believe in the Panthers—they'll appear on *Monday Night Football* only once, while the Eagles, Cowboys, Rams and Packers will get the spotlight three times each. **CRYSTAL BALL:** Delhomme may be going to Disney World in February, but he'll have to pay for the ticket himself.

ATLANTA FALCONS

LAST SEASON: Eleven losses and one busted Michael Vick fibula made for a chilly winter in Atlanta. **OUTLOOK:** The Falcons have a new coach (Jim Mora Jr.) and a new GM (Rich McKay), but not much else has changed. Perhaps more than any other team, Atlanta is a one-trick pony. Sure, there's talent: T.J. Duckett, Warrick Dunn, Peerless Price. But if Vick doesn't shine, this team won't win. And it remains to be seen whether he can stay in the pocket—and stay healthy. Coach Mora, the former 49ers defensive wizard, has his work cut out with this defense. The pathetic corps gave up 381.8 yards a game last year. **CRYSTAL BALL:** Vick can leap over tall buildings, but he'll need more than that to move the Falcons up in this division.



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PLAYBOY

on the scene

WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHERE IT'S HAPPENING AND WHO'S MAKING IT HAPPEN

— VICIOUS CYCLE —

BMW's GS series has always defied convention. Neither cruiser nor sport bike, the adventure tourer could just as easily go from Paris to Dakar as down to the Kwik-E-Mart on a midnight munchies run. Now, 24 years after the GS debuted, BMW has rebuilt it from the ground up, offering a host of hidden delights (such as gas-saving microprocessors), guilty pleasures (antilock brakes you

can disable to get sideways on dirt tracks) and trick accessories (collapsible aluminum saddlebags). The R 1200 is superlight at 496 pounds, smooth as silk thanks to a counterbalanced opposed-twin engine and plenty powerful (100 horsepower). We test-drove it across South Africa and would have happily extended the trip to Helsinki. Price: \$15,100. No, that isn't a typo. —JAMES R. PETERSEN

BILL CASH



That headlight is not squinting: The asymmetrical oval design is pure BMW. The modest but effective windshield adjusts through five positions.



The lightweight, compact instrument cluster does almost as much as your laptop. In addition to displaying the usual speed, mileage and revs, the flat panel reports time, gear, fuel level, oil temperature and trip distance—practically everything but how your stock portfolio is doing.



A 100-horsepower opposed-twin engine, six-speed transmission and BMW's trademark bombproof shaft drive give the R 1200 GS even more zip than its forebears had.

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 154.



Grapevine

Puss 'n' Boots

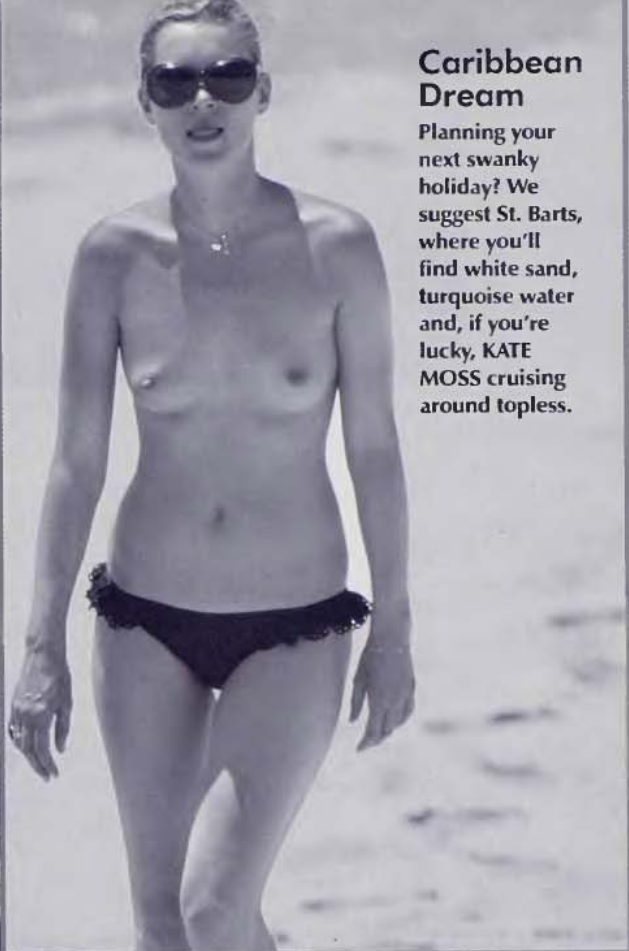
We'll never forget *Lost in Translation*'s opening shot: SCARLETT JOHANSSON in sheer pink panties. As a guest performer with the Pussycat Dolls, the future superstar proved she's a seductress onstage as well.



PHOTOGRAPH BY [unreadable]

Caribbean Dream

Planning your next swanky holiday? We suggest St. Barts, where you'll find white sand, turquoise water and, if you're lucky, KATE MOSS cruising around topless.



Apprentice Star to Bra: You're Fired!

Getting axed by the Donald didn't stop KATRINA CAMPINS (right) and EREKA VETRINI from hanging out. As Kat said, "A woman who claims she doesn't use her sex appeal to sell hasn't learned to use it to her advantage."



ROB RICH



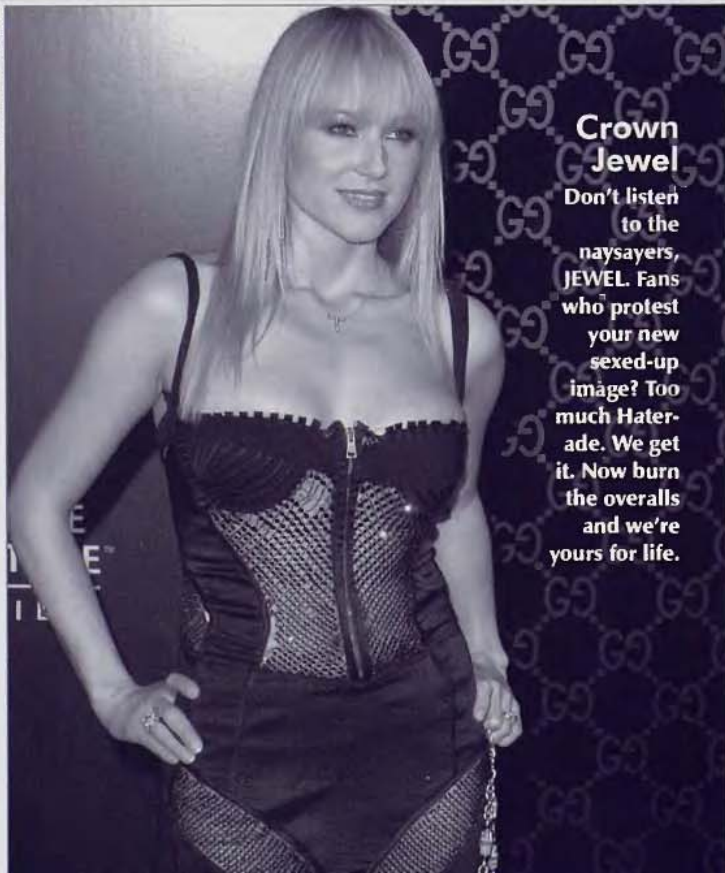
Garner's Gaffe

On *Alias*, JENNIFER GARNER plays an international spy. Here, our cameras spy something that clearly wasn't in the script.



The Skimpy Life

Not one to be upstaged by sis Paris (or anyone else), NICKY HILTON dazzled on the Rock & Republic World Invasion fashion runway.



Crown Jewel

Don't listen to the naysayers, JEWEL. Fans who protest your new sexed-up image? Too much Haterade. We get it. Now burn the overalls and we're yours for life.



Long-Stem Rose

Model ARIEL ROSE is blooming: She's appeared in everything from *American Pie 2* to reality show *The Fifth Wheel*.

STYLING: GARY SWANSON/REX USA

STYLING: GARY SWANSON/REX USA

STYLING: GARY SWANSON/REX USA

Potpourri



GET THE PICTURE

Now you can carry a two-megapixel camera, a camcorder, an MP3 player and a USB drive without needing any pockets (see Miss Exhibit A, left). The latest in Philips's line of key-chain-size products, the Key019 (\$249, doyourthing-philips.com) packs an amazing amount of functionality into a tiny package. Pop off the end and you'll find a built-in USB port that plugs right into your computer, so you can transport files to and from the gadget's 128-megabyte internal memory (around 24 minutes' worth of video). Though the Key019 is too small to have a regular LCD screen, its viewfinder doubles as a microdisplay for reviewing photos and video or paging through song lists.

ON THE JUICE

Good news, amigos—1800 has upgraded its tequilas to 100 percent agave products. The best way to enjoy the *añejo* (below right, \$40) is on the rocks with a slice of orange. Scorpion mezcals are also 100 percent agave (though a different strain). Try the *reposado* (below left, \$50) in a margarita. The twist: Each bottle comes with a real scorpion inside. Go ahead. We dare you.



GENTLEMEN'S CLUBS

These drivers look flashy, but as we learned in kindergarten, it's what's on the inside that counts. The all-titanium R7 by TaylorMade (left, \$600, taylormadegolf.com) has a set of tiny weights in the head that you can adjust to reduce or enhance hooks, fades and trajectory. Just screw off the bottom, shift the weights around as desired and—voilà—no more blaming your shanks on the club. Callaway Golf's ERC Fusion model (right, \$625, ercfusion.com) is a composite driver that melds carbon and titanium inside the clubhead. The point? The weight is redistributed to achieve what the pros call "optimum launch conditions." You'll just call it awesome.

TEMP WORKER

The line between searing and burning is a fine one indeed. Stay on the fair side of it with Bonjour's Culinary Laser Thermometer (\$90, williams-sonoma.com). Expressly designed for testing the temperatures of cooking surfaces, it has laser accuracy that ensures your culinary masterpieces don't end up charred beyond recognition. It doesn't work as well for gauging the hotness of, say, blondes and brunettes, but we're guessing you already have that covered.



JUKE JOINT 2004

Until recently, if you wanted to listen to a jukebox you had to go to a bar. Portable MP3 players have changed all that, but we feel they still lack a certain *je ne sais quoi*. Gibson's newly reconceived Wurlitzer Digital Jukebox (\$2,000, gibsonaudio.com), however, has *quoi* to spare. Fill the 80-gigabyte hard drive with MP3s and you can blast them through the 145-watt Klipsch speaker system for more than a month straight without repeating a song. To go mobile, just pop out the hard-drive "brain" and plug in some headphones.



HOUSE OF CARDS

Most people play poker with their friends, but sitting down with your enemies can be just as fun. Playing Politics cards (\$8, playingpolitics2004.com) include full decks for Democrats or Republicans. The cards bear caricatures of the usual suspects, along with pithy statements about each one's record. For example, Alan Greenspan (nine of spades): "If you understood what I said, you weren't listening close enough." Ollie North (eight of hearts): "Typical Republican. Had a great-looking secretary and never touched her."



GEEK CHIC

Face it, the 21st century was much cooler back in the 1970s. If we were living in that decade's future, we'd all be wearing skintight jumpsuits, riding jet packs and keeping time with watches just like these. Straight from Japan, Pimp watches reject the dial in favor of an LED system. Yes, that means you get to learn to tell time all over again. (The vertical line on the left represents hours; the other dots represent minutes.) They're available in 18-karat-gold plate (left, \$160) or stainless steel (right, \$143). Pick them up at tokyoflash.com.



PHOTO A-GO-GO

Digital photo printers let you put a processing lab in your office. Now you can put one in your briefcase. Canon's tiny CP-330 photo printer (\$279, canon-usa.com) can print directly from any Canon Powershot or PictBridge-enabled digital camera. A rechargeable battery allows you to pump out four-by-six prints wherever you want—whether in the bedroom, in the boardroom or on Mont Blanc.



OIL OF NO WAY

Whether from skiing, surfing or squinting to check out the beautiful babe across the bar, real men have wrinkles. They look good, until your face begins to resemble a road map of Miami. TNS Recovery Complex (\$125 for a half ounce, skinmedica.com) is a new formula that lifts what's sagging without any harsh side effects. The secret ingredient? Foreskin. (No, really. It contains skin cells cultured in a lab from baby boys' snipped bits.) Now that's what we call human resources.



Next Month



OLYMPIC GLORY: IT'S ALL GREEK TO US.



DOES YOUR VOTE COUNT?



HOW TO DRESS LIKE THE NEW PLAYBOY.



PAINTED LOVE: THE MANSION'S WORKS OF ART.

WOMEN OF THE OLYMPICS—EVERYONE WILL BE WATCHING THE ATHENS SUMMER OLYMPICS, BUT WE HAVE SOMETHING YOU WON'T SEE ON TV: THE WORLD'S SEXIEST FEMALE COMPETITORS PREPPING FOR ACTION JUST LIKE THE ANCIENT GREEKS—IN THE BUFF. AN EXPLOSIVE, CONTROVERSIAL PICTORIAL STARRING EIGHT OF THE WORLD'S ATHLETIC GODDESSES.

THE GOOGLE GUYS—ON THE EVE OF AMERICA'S HOTTEST IPO, MEET THE MEN WHO STARTED GOOGLE, **SERGEY BRIN** AND **LARRY PAGE**. THE COUNTRY'S NEWEST BILLIONAIRES DISCUSS THE SITE'S EARLY DAYS, HOW GOOGLING BECAME AN INTERNATIONAL PASTIME, THE CONTROVERSIES SURROUNDING ITS SEARCH RESULTS AND WHY GOOGLE—UNLIKE MANY ONCE-HOT DOT-COMS—IS HERE TO STAY. *PLAYBOY* INTERVIEW BY **DAVID SHEFF**

HACK THE VOTE—WE TRUST ATMS FOR OUR BANKING. WE TRUST INTERNET AUCTIONEERS WITH OUR CREDIT CARD NUMBERS. WHY NOT TRUST OUR VOTE TO COUNTING MACHINES? IN THEORY, TOUCH-SCREEN VOTING IS A MARVEL. BUT MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WILL VOTE THIS NOVEMBER ON MACHINES THAT REQUIRE A LEAP OF FAITH—FAITH THAT THE POLL WORKERS HAVE SET UP THE CONTRAPTIONS CORRECTLY. WILL WE HAVE SEPTEMBER 2002 DÉJÀ VU? BY **DAN BAUM**

PLAYBOY'S COLLEGE FOOTBALL PREVIEW—LSU AND USC WERE CO-NATIONAL CHAMPIONS LAST SEASON. WHAT WILL THEY DO FOR AN ENCORE? OUR PIGSKIN WIZARDS PICK THE COUNTRY'S BEST TEAMS AND PLAYERS. BY **GARY COLE**

YOU'RE KILLING ME! THE PLAYBOY COMPENDIUM OF OUTLAW HUMOR—AN A-TO-Z ENCYCLOPEDIA HONORING COMICS, WRITERS AND ARTISTS WHO HAVE WORKED ON THE EDGE, INCLUDING **LENNY BRUCE**, **SAM KINISON**, **RICHARD PRYOR**, **R. CRUMB** AND **HOWARD STERN**. GO AHEAD, BUST A GUT. BY **JAMIE MALANOWSKI**

HEF'S PAINTED LADIES—CONFUCIUS CALLED PAINTINGS POEMS WITHOUT WORDS. HEF CALLS THEM TYPICAL PARTY GUESTS. MEET THE MANSION'S NOTORIOUS PAINTED PRETTIES, REVELERS WHO WEAR BODY PAINT—AND NOTHING ELSE. GO BEHIND THE SCENES AS THEY GET PRIMED, COATED, COLORED AND AIRBRUSHED FOR YOUR VIEWING PLEASURE. IT'S A MASTERPIECE.

PLUS: FICTION BY **JOHN EDGAR WIDEMAN**, **ARTHUR SCHLESINGER** ON POWER, CENTERFOLD **PEGGY McINTAGGART** ON SEX, HOW TO ASSEMBLE THE QUINTESSENTIAL BAR, THE NEW PLAYBOY FASHION AND MISS SEPTEMBER, **SCARLETT KEEGAN**.

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