

WWE DIVA ASHLEY MASSARO NUDE

PLAYBOY

ENTERTAINMENT

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PLUS 4-PAGE

BONUS

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OF THE WWE

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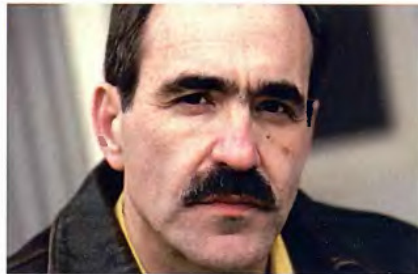




Does the woman to the left look familiar? She should: **Ashley Massaro** was a finalist in the 50th Anniversary Playmate search, then a Cyber Girl of the Week in 2004, under the pseudonym Mackenzie Ryan. Since her appearance in *PLAYBOY* Ashley has taken the crown in the WWE's RAW Diva Search, won the first-ever Bra & Panties Gauntlet match and become a *SmackDown!* diva. For all her hard work, we honor her with the cover pictorial, *Star Struck*. "She was really thrilled with the experience," says Senior Contributing Photographer **Arny Freytag**, who shot the spread. "She's being featured here, whereas in the ring, she's one of many characters in a bigger show." Freytag admires his subject's tone and definition. "But her best feature by far," he says, "is that beautiful face."



Golfing the same course is like sleeping with the same woman, which means golf and travel are a natural pair. For *Swing Fever* we sent **Kevin Cook** and a team of writers to five ultimate buddy-trip destinations. "This guide has the alpha and omega," Cook says. "To be putting in Scotland makes you feel as if you're playing in the past, and playing desert golf in Vegas is like swinging on the moon. Both are must-visits for anyone who golfs."



Boosting the Big Tuna is a grimy true-crime exclusive about the Outfit (the Chicago Mob), written by the co-author of *When Corruption Was King*, **Hillel Levin**. "Thanks to *The Sopranos*, *The Godfather* and characters like John Gotti, the East Coast Mafia has always gotten more attention," Levin says. "That was probably fine for the guys from the Outfit, who were smart enough to keep their mouth shut."



In *L.A. Confidential 2007*, former gossip columnist for *New York* magazine and author of the novel *4% Famous* **Deborah Schoeneman** takes a look at how the blogosphere scoops traditional media in scuttlebutt. "Celebrities are constantly misbehaving, and blogs get real-time reporting in a way old media never could," Schoeneman says. "I'm not sure if Cindy Adams knows who Perez Hilton is, but I think she should."



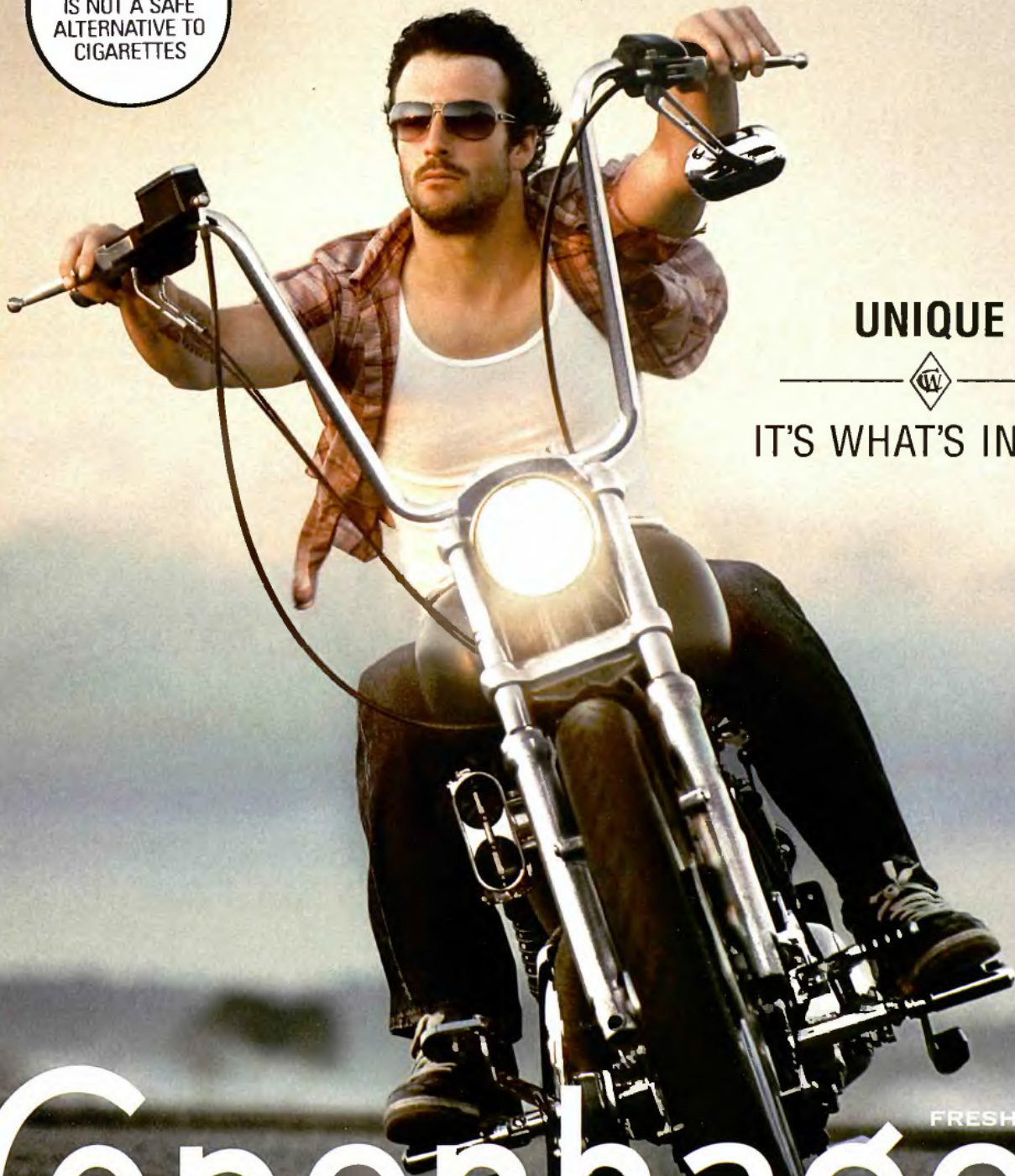
As the weather warms, we'll be bringing out our lightweight suits, this year in subdued colors with vibrant accessories. To showcase these suits in our *Spring and Summer Fashion Forecast* the *PLAYBOY* Fashion Department and photographer **Antoine Verglas** went to that pleasure-seekers playground St. Barthélemy. Counterintuitively, Verglas ignored the St. Barts beaches and focused on the industrial areas of the island instead. "I wanted to have a monochromatic background that wouldn't overwhelm the colors of the suits," he says. The images reflect the signature Verglas style of intimate, almost documentary photography. "I am fed up with the static of posed models in fashion spreads," he says. "I think all of the action in these photos is wonderfully cinematic."

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PLAYBOY

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John Mendell was a top-notch street burglar who allegedly robbed the secret lair of Chicago Mafia boss Tony "Big Tuna" Accardo. Then Mendell got iced. Nearly three decades later we present a true-crime exclusive as the man accused of his murder finally goes to trial, in a case dubbed Operation Family Secrets. **BY HILLEL LEVIN**
- 72 L.A. CONFIDENTIAL 2007**
A renegade group of gossip blogs, including Perez Hilton, Jossip and Gawker, has ripped up the Hollywood-reporting system. Our writer—a former gossip columnist for *New York* magazine's *Intelligencer*—takes a look at who's who, who's a liar, who's suing whom and how blogs have changed the way journalists cover celebrities. **BY DEBORAH SCHOENEMAN**
- 76 SWING FEVER**
Few men live near a legendary golf course; most will travel a great distance to get to one. For where there are great courses, there are also superb hotels, bars and beautiful women. We crash the ultimate greens parties. **BY STEVE AGER, KEVIN COOK AND SCOTT GUMMER**
- 100 DR. T TO THE RESCUE**
For years human growth hormone has been the jock's favorite steroid, and why not? Promoters in the antiaging industry claim it makes you bigger and stronger, increases your libido, restores your youthful looks and adds years to your life. Now it is being marketed as the ultimate elixir. An acclaimed writer quizzes doctors, pseudophysicians, patients and critics about the wonder drug. **BY PAT JORDAN**

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- 82 THE THIRD SENSE**
The Nobel Prize-winning novelist returns to *PLAYBOY* with a story about the potential ruin of domestic bliss. Keyed by the unmistakable scent of another woman, a wife sniffs out her husband's infidelity, leaving her to decide whether to confront her feelings or bury them. **BY NADINE GORDIMER**

the playboy forum

- 49 BREAKING THE LAW**
Patents are supposed to be reserved for inventions that are novel and useful; instead, under our outrageous patent laws, they are being doled out for broad, ill-defined concepts and turned into a system of legalized extortion. **BY LORI ANDREWS**

20Q

- 112 WILL ARNETT**
Most people know him as Gob, the inept magician from *Arrested Development*, but with five films due this year, that will change. The Canadian funnyman ponders Arnett backlash, his role as a ruthless figure skater in *Blades of Glory* and why it would be sweet to take Will Ferrell down. **BY ERIC SPITZNAGEL**

interview

- 55 BILL MAHER**
The political satirist whose name is synonymous with "politically incorrect" skewers the nation's movers and shakers on his hit HBO show, *Real Time With Bill Maher*. His unsparing criticism of President Bush and religion—not to mention his Steve Irwin Halloween costume—has made him no stranger to controversy. Now the host and best-selling author comes even cleaner with a candid discussion about the Iraq war, dating younger women and that stripper's pole in his home. **BY DAVID SHEFF**



COVER STORY

Wrestling glamazon Ashley Massaro is relatively new to the WWE, but already fans are crazy for the blonde contender and Starstruck, her signature move. We can't wait to see who she pins to the mat in the next WrestleMania. Senior Contributing Photographer Arny Freytag captures why Ashley hurts so good. The shapely athlete has our Rabbit in a firm wristlock.





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Arresting Miss April is a German Playmate of Italian ancestry who is positioned to conquer America.
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WWE diva Ashley Massaro shows off her best moves in this sexy pictorial. Plus, we feature bonus photos of the WWE's hottest women.

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Holly holds court at her regal birthday party, Jenny McCarthy hosts a fund-raiser, and the world celebrates Thanksgiving at the Mansion.
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Men's designers are pairing light-weight fabrics like cotton, silk and tropical wool with sophisticated weaves to craft hip suits that remain comfortable even as the mercury rises. **BY JOSEPH DE ACETIS**

this month on playboy.com

THE PLAYBOY.COM A-LIST

Bat 1,000 touring our top 10 minor league baseball stadiums.

BEST-DRESSED MAN ON CAMPUS

The search begins.

THE 21ST QUESTION

Get the final word from *Blades of Glory* star Will Arnett.

BATTLE OF THE SEXIEST

Each week two newsworthy women go head-to-head in the web's hottest poll.

BRACKET BUSTER

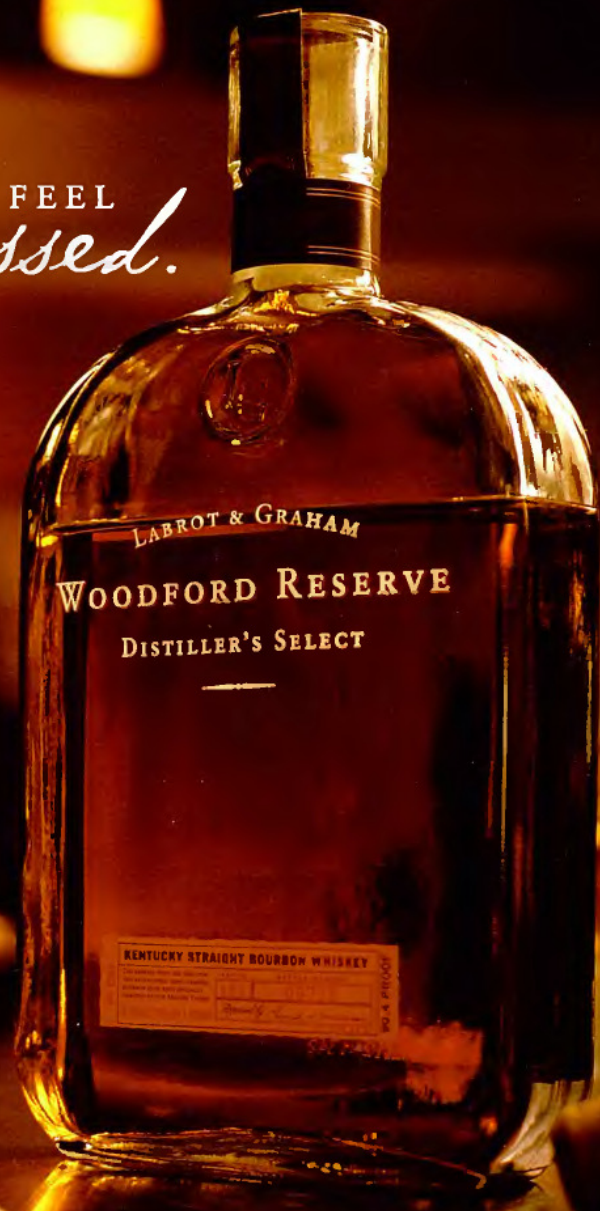
Beat our Playmate prognosticator and win big in our annual college-hoops contest.



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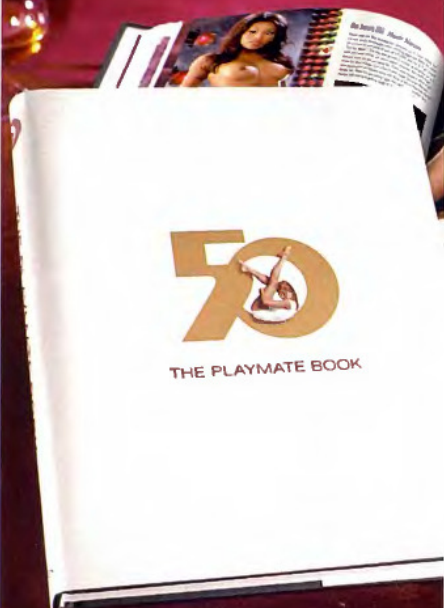
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HERE'S to the GIRLS



Beginning with Marilyn Monroe and including more recent legends like Pamela Anderson and Anna Nicole Smith, this history of PLAYBOY Centerfolds profiles every Playmate from the 1950s through the newest beauties of the new millennium. Includes fantastic nude photos as well as updated personal information about their lives—just enough to spark your memory or pique your interest to see more. Hardcover. 9" x 12". 464 pages.

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THE WORLD OF PLAYBOY

HEF SIGHTINGS, MANSION FROLICS AND NIGHTLIFE NOTES

A CHAT WITH ELLEN

When Hef and the girls visited the set of the hit daytime talk show *Ellen* to speak with comedienne Ellen DeGeneres about love, life and *The Girls Next Door*, the foursome shared superstar billing with Dustin Hoffman and Sean "Diddy" Combs.



WHAT'S THAT SMELL?

Stephen Dorff, Colin Farrell and Carmen Electra were among the celebrities who flocked to an Axe Lab party at the Mansion, suggesting that the olfactory sense may be the most powerful one of all.



JACKPOT!

Playboy unveiled a seductive new line of Playboy slot machines with a party at the Mansion hosted by PMOY Kara Monaco. The new slots are without a doubt the sexiest one-armed bandits ever to hit casinos and can be found in the pit of Las Vegas's Palms as well as other casinos worldwide.



A DECEMBER TO REMEMBER

Merry Playmates Courtney Culkin and Lindsey Vuolo helped cover girl Cindy Margolis launch the red-hot Christmas issue at midtown Manhattan's Frederick's.



BILLBOARD BABES

Kendra, Holly and Bridget were star presenters at this year's Billboard Music Awards, where they handed out awards to the year's top acts.

HANGIN' WITH H&F



(1) Playmates and pals celebrate Holly's birthday with a Marie Antoinette theme. Hef lets them eat cake—and ice cream, too. (2) Hef's growing boys, Cooper and Marston, enjoy a traditional Mansion Thanksgiving. (3) Fred Dryer and his daughter Caitlin at Thanksgiving dinner. (4) Hef and his girls support Jenny McCarthy's fund-raiser for autistic children. (5) Jenny's beau, Jim Carrey, at the same event. (6) Kendra gives San Diego Charger Shawne Merriman a tour of the Mansion. (7) Tom Leykis's Bunny Ball live from the Mansion. (8) *Celebrity Paranormal Project* star Bridget with co-star David Caradine at the show's launch party at Social Hollywood. (9) Victoria Fuller, Jonathan Baker and their daughter attend Thanksgiving dinner. (10) Playmate Brande Roderick wows fans at Glamourcon. (11) *PLAYBOY* cover girl Mia St. John and Playmate Colleen Shannon, also at Glamourcon. (12) Playmates Pilar Lastra and Amanda Paige with actor Nick Cannon at the Axe Lab party. (13) *ET*'s Kevin Frazier interviews Hef during a cover shoot for the newly redesigned *On DirecTV* magazine.



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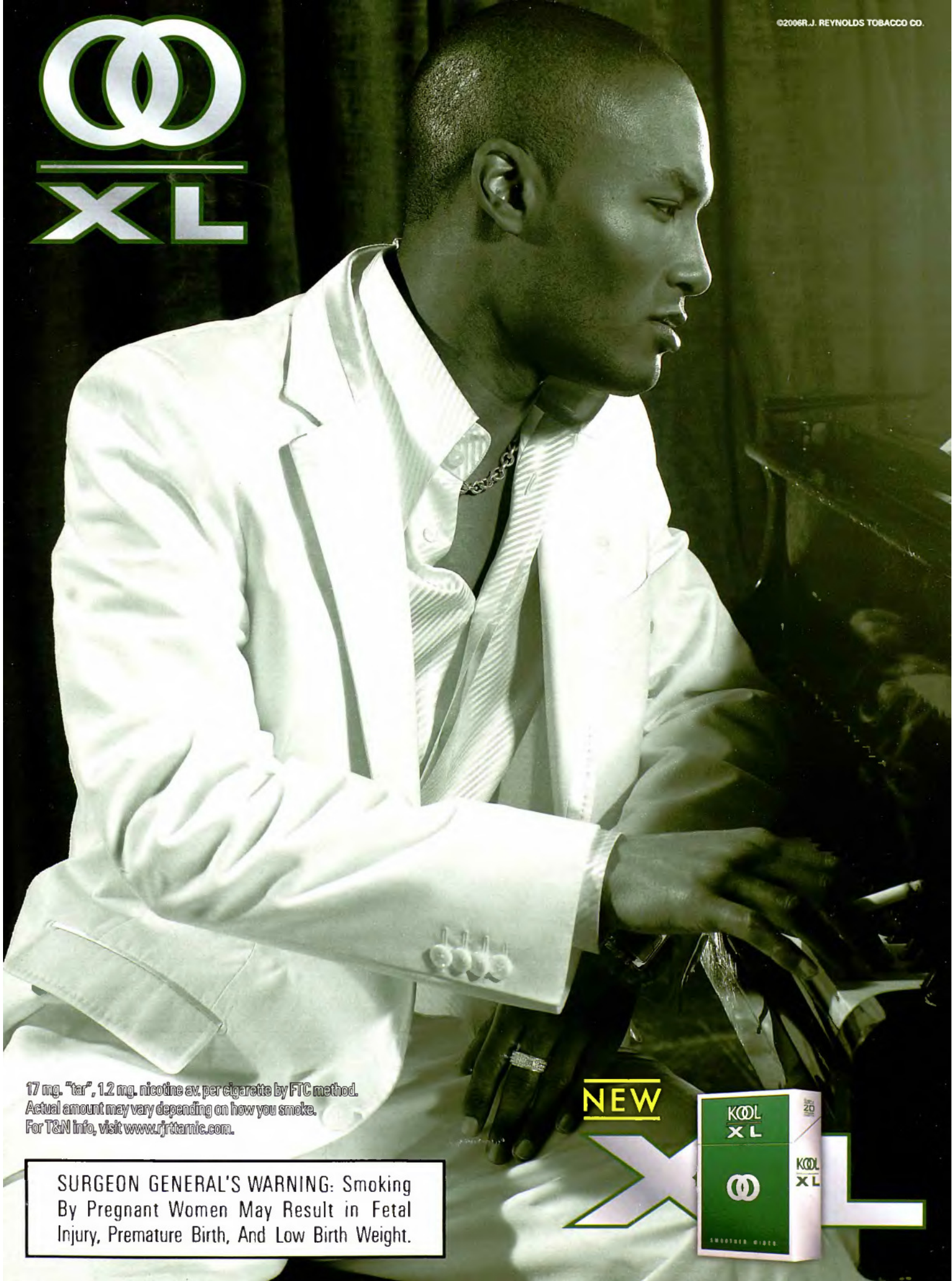
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PASSIONATE PAM

In my 25 years of enjoying your magazine, I have never stared so long at a cover as I did with January's shot of Pam Anderson (*The Passion of Pam*). What man, given a real shot, wouldn't want her, and what woman doesn't crave the power she projects? Some of us will never tire of her.

John Smith
Coatesville, Pennsylvania

Thank you for a Pam-tastic start to the new year, and my warmest thanks



The power of Pam: her 12th cover.

to Anderson for her continuing representation of Canadian beauty. I hope she finds the love she desires.

David Czuba
Montreal, Quebec

How dare you compare Pam Anderson to Marilyn Monroe. Shame!

Victoria Snow
Austin, Texas

Neal Gabler understands what makes Pam Anderson so breathtaking: She is comfortable in her own skin and with her role as the reigning sex goddess.

William Bradley
Newington, Connecticut

OIL MAN

Your interview with T. Boone Pickens (*Playboy Interview*, January) certainly displays his skills as a booster, but for those without much experience in the oil industry, a little history is useful. As a corporate raider, Pickens did force oil companies to stop wasting money. But he also pressured companies like Unocal and Phillips Petroleum to raise their debt-to-cash-flow ratio, using the borrowed money to pay off sharehold-

ers like himself, which left the companies struggling after the price collapse in 1986. He wagered on higher natural gas prices and lost. His expectations for oil prices will almost certainly prove to be equally misguided. Although political events may drive oil prices sharply higher for a time, the idea that oil production has peaked is based on curve fitting by a few retired geologists who don't understand statistical analysis. Oil as an asset has always proved to be a poor long-term investment.

Michael Lynch
Amherst, Massachusetts
Lynch is president of Strategic Energy & Economic Research.

Is Pickens off his rocker? The man seems to know nothing about what happens to people after he steals companies and fires everybody. He is a classic conservative Republican fat-cat clown whose only concern is hoarding cash. There's a lot of that going around lately.

Johnny Cummings
Boston, Massachusetts

Pickens claims the U.S. has the cheapest gas in the industrialized world. In fact, a number of other countries have cheaper gas; it has sold in Venezuela for 12 cents a gallon. Sure, Europe has seen \$7 a gallon, but we pay almost that much when you consider the income taxes required to keep a foreign military presence to protect supply lines. Pickens says he wants the U.S. to be oil independent, but that seems impractical given that it would require at least a 60 percent reduction in consumption, or taking six of 10 cars off the road. Pickens promotes nuclear power as an option. There's a lot of evidence that modern U.S. plants are safe, reliable and well run, but no one knows the true cost to build, operate and deactivate a plant and then permanently dispose of the spent fuel, because there is a lack of accurate cost data. Nuclear plants produce 20 percent of our electric power; to sustain that will require 50 new plants by 2030. The fundamental question is economic. Is it better to spend billions to build plants that will last a few decades but generate radioactive waste, or develop renewable supplies that are available indefinitely?

Scott Pugh
Annapolis, Maryland
Pugh, a retired Navy captain and nuclear-sub commander, is a director of the Association for the Study of Peak Oil & Gas-USA.

AT THE BORDER

Jimmy Breslin puts a human face on the hypocrisy that is U.S. immigration policy (*The Immigration Mess*, January). For more than a decade we have worked to integrate the North American market, with great success. At the same time, we have sought to prevent the integration of labor. To finesse this contradiction we dramatically increase our presence on the U.S.-Mexico border. Although this has had no detectable effect on the rate of undocumented in-migration, it has reduced the rate of out-migration. Having run the gauntlet, migrants hunker down and stay longer. As a result, the rate of out-migration has dropped by half. I cannot decide which is more absurd—building a 700-mile fence along a 2,000-mile border or spending billions of public dollars to increase the size of America's undocumented population.

Douglas Massey
Princeton, New Jersey
Massey, a professor at Princeton, is author of Beyond Smoke and Mirrors: Mexican Immigration in an Age of Economic Integration.

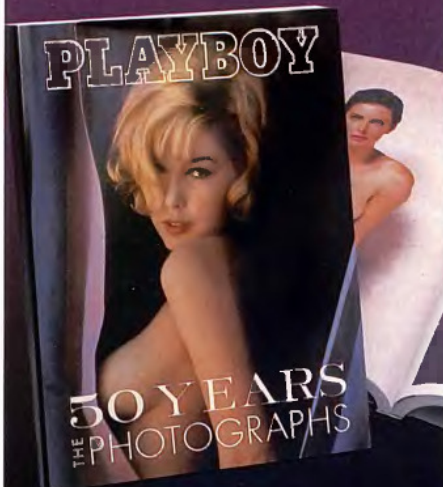
Over the past 40 years, as the U.S. workforce has grown older and better educated, our labor markets have attracted younger, less-educated immigrant workers. They come to replace Americans who seek new opportunities in an economy that puts a premium on knowledge and training. But our broken immigration system has not kept pace with these changes. Since 1965 feckless politicians have passed a dizzying array of laws aimed at keeping people out and making it easier to deport those who are here but have done very little to create



Should the fences be removed—or extended?

a system that is any good at letting in the people we need. Congress has made a significant adjustment to the annual quotas on legal immigration only once in the past 42 years. Despite 500,000 undocumented workers arriving every year, the government offers only 5,000

A HALF CENTURY OF HISTORY- MAKING IMAGES!



If you read **PLAYBOY** only for the articles, here's what you've been missing. This elegant anniversary volume captures six decades of sex, art and American culture as seen through the eyes of Andy Warhol, Bruce Weber, Helmut Newton and more of the world's greatest photographers. More than 250 of the most memorable images ever published in the magazine appear in six chapters (The Celebrities, The Personalities, The Playmates, The Lifestyle, The Art of **PLAYBOY** and The Covers), each featuring an introduction by longtime **PLAYBOY** insider James R. Petersen. Hardcover. 9" x 12". 240 pages.

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permanent visas for less-skilled workers and a smattering of temporary work permits, which are not available to most employers. So the workers risk life and limb to find a way through the back door. In a vicious cycle of incompetence, politicians spend billions to secure the borders from the undocumented workers their own policies have created. Immigration isn't just a law-enforcement issue; it is a valuable resource and a permanent component of our labor market that must be better managed.

Benjamin Johnson
Washington, D.C.

Johnson is director of the Immigration Policy Center (immigrationpolicy.org).

Breslin is full of crap. I left California to escape the devastating effects of illegal immigration. I resent that illegal immigrants get paid in cash, then send their pregnant partners to the welfare offices. I resent paying for the defense and incarceration of illegal immigrants who commit crimes. I resent the refusal of illegal immigrants to assimilate. I resent corporate America labeling everything it produces in Spanish. I resent the absurd argument that illegal immigrants fill jobs Americans do not want. There are plenty of poor Americans who want to work. They just can't support their families on \$10 an hour before taxes, and they don't want jobs that don't offer workers' comp or other safeguards. You have only to walk into any emergency room, public school, welfare office or courthouse in almost any corner of the country to see the true cost of illegal immigration.

Jim Loughner
Woodstock, Georgia

Rather than putting up a fence, we might better spend our tax dollars helping Mexico improve its infrastructure. This could create jobs to help slow the influx of immigrants, as well as assist a neighbor in need of basic necessities such as clean water.

Elliot Marcus
Eugene, Oregon

Breslin's argument seems to be that we make it too difficult for immigrants to break the law. A 700-mile fence has some value—it eliminates 700 miles we have to patrol.

Jeffrey Benincasa
Arlington, Massachusetts

MEETING SALINGER

I enjoyed Neil Cohen's article about discovering a letter J.D. Salinger wrote to an old girlfriend (*Love, Jerry*, December). I also possess a letter from Salinger, written after my friend Mick and I visited him in 1974. We both liked Holden Caulfield and could relate to him, so one day we decided to drive up

to see Salinger. He lived on 100 acres in a small town in New Hampshire. As we nervously approached his house atop a long, hilly, unpaved driveway, the drapes of the front window opened and closed. A dog barked. We retreated, but as we did, there was J.D. himself, rolling past in a Ford Bronco. He told us he was on his way to the post office and asked us if there was anything we wanted. We told him no, we were just friends of Holden's and fans of his and thought it would be swell to meet him. My father, a retired journalist, encouraged me to write about the encounter for *The New Yorker*. Knowing that Salinger values his privacy, I wrote to ask for his okay. His response was kind and encouraging, but he asked that I keep the details of our meeting unpublished. A long time has passed, so I hope he will forgive this fond remembrance.

John Mitten
Manchester, New Hampshire

SPORTS NUTS

Chris Berman, Bob Ley and Tom Mees are the best anchors in ESPN



Craig Kilborn and Dan Patrick ham it up.

SportsCenter history because they focus on the game, not their images (*The Greatest Show in Sports*, January).

Gerald Festa
Pacific Palisades, California

I'm surprised nobody mentions my favorite *SportsCenter* moments: the clever, hilarious and star-studded commercials for the show.

Daniel Van Vechten
Morrisville, New York

Robin Roberts and Linda Cohn should have been your cover models. Roberts says she's ready.

Charlie Johnson
Plainview, Texas

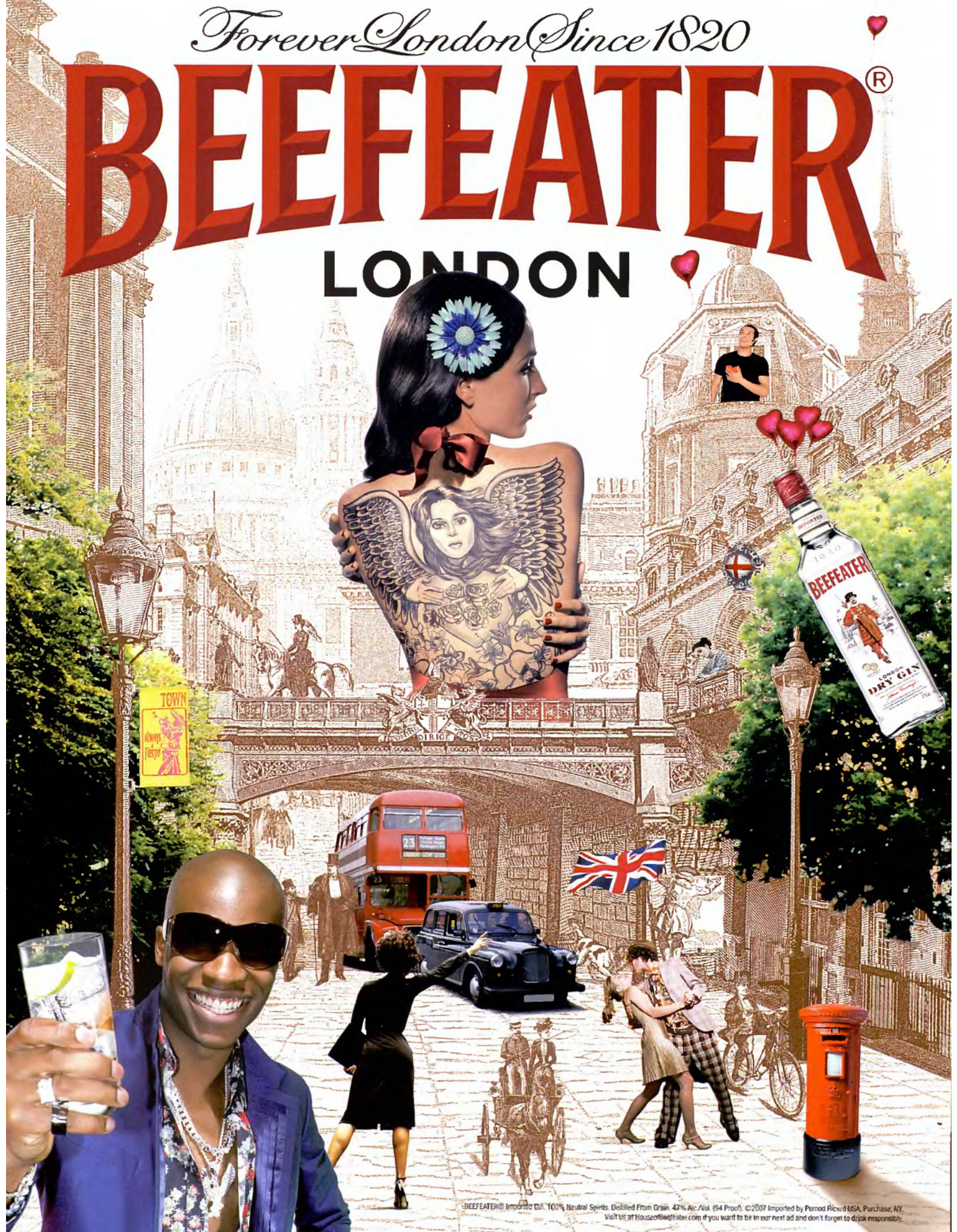
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PLAYBOY

after hours

babe of the month

Lisa Gleave

WITH A CANVAS LIKE THIS, WHO NEEDS PAINT?

They're words any man wants to hear from Lisa Gleave: "This will be a chance to explore my wild side." It would be nice if she said them while contemplating a tarty number at Victoria's Secret or tugging at her bikini strings on a beach in the south of France, but she's merely reading the menu at a sushi restaurant. Still, it means we're having lunch with Lisa Gleave, displaced Australian guardian of briefcase number three on *Deal or No Deal*, and that ain't bad. Her wild side in this case is gustatory; she'll have the spicy tuna. It's a departure from the "nice, bland" Aussie fare she grew up on and still likes, but she's an L.A. girl now and feels she really ought to get with the program. She has at least been body-painted, a rite of passage for this town's elite blondes. "The airbrush is cold," she says. "It tickles. They're putting stencils up against your boobs, your butt and other parts my mum won't let me mention. I was in the middle of a six-hour application for an episode of *CSI: NY*, lying naked on a cold metal table, when I met Gary Sinise. He smiled and was polite." You may also remember a body-painted Lisa from *Accepted*, in which she and real-life pal Alejandra Gutierrez play flanking eye candy to *PLAYBOY* favorite Diara Baird. "Alejandra and I were meant to be there for only one day, as the body-painting babes," Lisa recalls. "But the director liked us so much he kept putting us in more scenes." And in that way a starlet was born.



"I was lying naked on a table when I met Gary Sinise."

toon in, turn on



The Girl Goes in the Picture

VINTAGE CARTOONS SEXED UP DIGITALLY

How do you improve a classic Bill Ward gag? *Femme Fatales* magazine called on pinup Aria Giovanni. "They chose me because I'm naturally curvy," she says. "I had fun playing a character—and I love frilly retro lingerie."

sex stars

Telltale Signs

THE NEED-TO-KNOW ON BEDROOM ASTROLOGY

If you buy zodiac hooey, a girl's birth date will tell you everything—even her sexual tendencies. The following profiles, adapted from Myrna Lamb's *The Astrology of Great Sex*, are grossly oversimplified and for novelty purposes only.

Aries (March 21–April 19): A bit vain about her oral skills. Seeks clean sheets and teeth.

Taurus (April 20–May 20): The queen of hand jobs. Avoid smearing her with cold or sticky food.

Gemini (May 21–June 20): Goes for edible panties and anal beads. Don't bother hiding your porn.

Cancer (June 21–July 22): She's all about her breasts; neglect them at your peril.

Leo (July 23–August 22): Costumes, props, role-playing—she's a born performer. Between acts, applaud.

Virgo (August 23–September 22): Fears disease and boredom.

Doesn't mind porn films if they have a lot of "story."

Libra (September 23–October 22): Already knows whether she likes anal sex. Appreciates a simple thank-you.

Scorpio (October 23–November 21): Likes a quickie. Everything turns her on. Sex is her religion. Don't skimp on the cunnilingus.

Sagittarius (November 22–December 21): Masturbates a lot. Up for sex in the woods or the butt. Or both at the same time.

Capricorn (December 22–January 19): Likes your natural smell. Bring flowers. Keep your hands to yourself in public.

Aquarius (January 20–February 18): She'll cook you dinner and chat your ear off. Sex takes 30 minutes or less.

Pisces (February 19–March 20): Orgasms at the drop of a hat. Likes to do it on a boat.

drink of the month



Glass de la Concorde

A POTENT HERBAL HELPER FROM LA PLUS BELLE AVENUE DU MONDE

Civilized people usually avoid bright-green beverages. But this is no ordinary bright green—it's Chartreuse, a bittersweet, grassy liqueur beloved of Europhiles yet unknown to most Americans. If you can't have April in Paris, try to have a little Paris in you this April (recipe from *Drinks*, by Vincent Gasnier).

Champs-Élysées

- 2 tablespoons cognac
- 1 tablespoon green Chartreuse
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 2 dashes bitters

Stir all ingredients with ice in a cocktail shaker and strain into a chilled martini glass.

rabbit to the rescue

A Hero and His Hat

NEW LIDS FOR NEW YORK'S BRAVEST



In January Wesley Autrey saved a man from an onrushing subway train, but his Playboy cap suffered a serious smudge. As a small acknowledgement of a large act, we sent Autrey three spiffy new hats and a Mansion invite.

"ACTION-PACKED ACTION!"

-ELBERT CAPRI, *Entertainment Inquirer*

"INCREDIBLY MINI!"

-RICKY ST. JOHN, *The National American*

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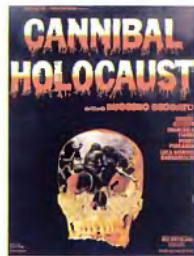
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CHET STEELE

at the drive-in



Rob Zombie's Grind House 101

RENT THESE FIVE CLASSICS BEFORE YOU SEE THE TARANTINO-RODRIGUEZ BLOCKBUSTER

A quick and dirty guide to exploitation cinema from Rob Zombie, who guest-directed a segment of *Grindhouse*.

Ilsa, She Wolf of the SS (1975) "It's intensely violent, and Nazis are unpleasant, but the sex element puts it over the top and makes it fun to watch. For *Grindhouse* I've directed a fake trailer for *Werewolf Women of the SS*."

Coffy (1973) "Some films in the blaxploitation subgenre, like *Shaft* or *Super*

Fly, were big hits. I prefer the ones with Pam Grier and Sid Haig, and this is by far the best. It's Pam at the top of her game—the Afro didn't get any bigger."

The Last House on the Left (1972) "It's a rape, murder and revenge story. Wes Craven directed it, but I don't consider it horror—to me, it's just pure grind house."

Cannibal Holocaust (1980) "This is by far the most extreme movie ever made. It's just...sickening. I remember watch-

ing it in some gross theater, and I just couldn't believe what I was seeing."

Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill! (1965) "A lot of grind house is bad—bad movies made by bad filmmakers. But Russ Meyer was very talented. When people see his movies for the first time, they say, 'Holy shit, these are fucking good.' *Faster, Pussycat!* was his crowning achievement, and it's his mildest film. It has no nudity. It's the *Citizen Kane* of grind house."

stranger than fiction

The Greatest Story Ever Sold

CLIFFORD IRVING
FOOLED THE WORLD



In 1972 Clifford Irving won notoriety by falsely claiming he was co-writing the autobiography of Howard Hughes. This month his story (sort of) hits the big screen in *The Hoax*.

Playboy: A lot of people believed you, including your publisher, McGraw-Hill, which advanced you \$765,000. Were you having fun?

Clifford Irving: Oh yes, that was the whole point. But it's like crossing Niagara Falls on a tightrope—when the rope starts to fray, it's not so fun anymore.

Playboy: Were you surprised that you had to go to jail?

Irving: I was, and I regretted what I'd done. Not because I thought I had done a terrible thing but because I realized I had done a stupid thing.

Playboy: Is it true that the hoax enabled your marital infidelity?

Irving: Yes, my girlfriend at the time was Nina van Pallandt, a singer, and I would actually set up "meetings" with Hughes to coincide with her travels. We met in Mexico, California, New York, wherever I had to go for research.

Playboy: Was the story in your book significantly different from Hughes's life?

Irving: I gave him a more exciting life than he'd had. In my book he's friends with Hemingway. He becomes a bush pilot in Ethiopia. The editors reading it would say, "Jesus, this reads like a novel." I'd say, "Yes, isn't it amazing?"

Playboy: When your subject is crazy, people will believe all kinds of stories.

Irving: Hughes was a little nuts, yeah. But I go under the assumption that you can understand the world only if you've realized that it's half mad and that nobody knows what they're doing. People don't hear well, and they don't see well. If you grasp the essential madness of life, everything becomes possible and nothing is as upsetting as it was before.

Playboy: How do you feel about *The Hoax*, the movie based on your story?

Irving: I read the script, and it's completely inaccurate. It's total fiction.

nonrunners



Please Kill Me

OVER-THE-TOP EDITORIAL
CARTOONS FINALLY SEE PRINT

David Wallis's *Killed Cartoons: Casualties of the War on Free Expression* collects gags that newspaper honchos deemed too risky to run. *The Charlotte Observer* spiked Doug Marlette's grim sketch of Jesus carrying an electric chair (top); Clay Bennett's jab at Slick Willie was too suggestive for the *St. Petersburg Times*.



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employee of the month

High Rate of Interest

BUYING A HOME? MORTGAGE BROKER JANIE ANDREWS CAN SAVE YOU A FEW SMACKERS

PLAYBOY: How does mortgage brokering work?

JANIE: I call a client and try to get him a lower interest rate than the one he's paying. It sounds boring, but I love it.

PLAYBOY: What does it pay?

JANIE: I can easily make \$10,000 a month. I work to be independent and have fun on my own time. I'm all business at my job, and I go wild after hours—it's as if I have an alter ego.

PLAYBOY: We guess your work attire is different from what you wear when you go out to play.

JANIE: At work I wear big clothes and keep my hair pulled back—the sexy librarian look. When I go out, it's big hair and small clothes. I'm five-foot-10, so I wear short skirts to show off my legs.

PLAYBOY: Please tell us you show off other parts, too.

JANIE: Yes, I love my double Ds.

PLAYBOY: Who doesn't?

JANIE: Ha! They do make it easier for me to close the deal.

PLAYBOY: What do you like to do when you're out on the town?

JANIE: Dance at clubs. Sometimes I'll wear a blonde wig just to be mysterious. I love change, which is why I can't be in a committed relationship. I understand why guys don't like sleeping with the same person all the time—I don't either.

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.

chris cross



Mole in the Family

THE FBI'S MOST FAMOUS MOB INFILTRATOR CRACKS EVERYONE'S FAVORITE GANGSTERS

The Sopranos is back for its last season; we ask Joe Pistone, the real-life Donnie Brasco, how he'd get inside:

"The weak link is Tony Soprano's nephew, Christopher, played by Michael Imperioli. He likes broads and has a drug problem, so those are two ways to get close to him. In some of the episodes I've seen, he wants to break into the movie-production business to impress his uncle and show he can go legit. That's the angle I'd go with—it has the advantage of your not having to portray yourself as a bad guy. You play to his vanity. Now, this won't be a one-shot deal. You're not just going to meet him one night and say, 'Hey, I'm Donnie Brasco, and I'm a big movie producer.' You'll put things in place. You're going to have contacts in the business or set up a deal. You'll arrange a scenario in which you're in a restaurant or you're out in L.A. and you'll have these guys come up to you, saying, 'Hey, Donnie, great script you sent me. I'm looking forward to your next project.' He'll be impressed. You'll establish your expertise, and then he'll defer to you because you're the man. That's the important thing in undercover: You have to have something he wants."

Joe Pistone's most recent book is Donnie Brasco: Unfinished Business.

to the victor

Pianist Envy

A SCENE FROM AN OSCARS AFTERPARTY

"These girls weren't talking to anyone else; they were just lining up patiently, occasionally checking their watches, waiting to have a chat with Adrien Brody.

I asked one guy, something of a Hollywood insider, what was going on with Brody and company.

'That's a fuck queue,' he said.

I gulped. 'A what?'

'A fuck queue. The girls are waiting to talk to Adrien Brody in the hope that he will take them home and fuck 'em. Maybe he's going to choose someone from the queue and maybe not.' My informant shrugged. 'But the girls live in hope.'

To be fair to Adrien Brody, he looked mildly embarrassed and apparently discomfited by the whole thing. I looked at him in sympathy (well, sort of)."

—from Sean Thomas's *Millions of Women Are Waiting to Meet You: A Memoir*

buenas noches



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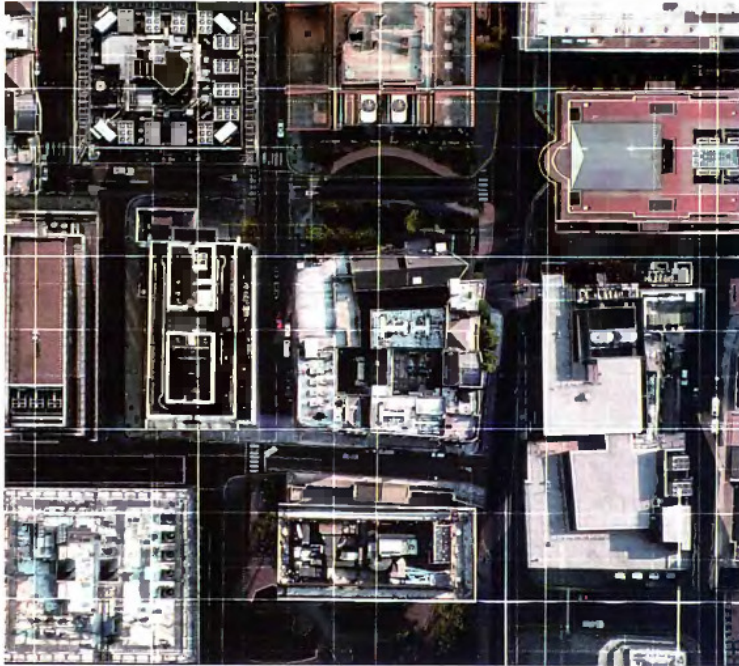
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For those about to...
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R A W D A T A

SIGNIFICA, INSIGNIFICA, STATS AND FACTS



Someone to Watch Over Us

Percentage of Americans who think federal agencies have intruded on privacy rights during terrorism investigations: **66**
 Percentage who oppose congressional hearings on how the Bush administration has handled surveillance and other terrorism-related issues: **45**

Hard Time

The U.K.'s department of internal affairs, the Home Office, settled out of court with **198** arrested heroin addicts who had claimed that jailing them "cold turkey" amounted to assault and a violation of human rights. Each prisoner and former inmate was paid; some received as much as **\$9,500**.



Get Yourself Waxed

You can have a wax replica of yourself made by Madame Tussauds for **\$270,000**.

what they're thinking

We Wouldn't Call Them Swingers

A survey by *Golf Digest* and *Golf for Women* found that **31%** of their female readers would abstain from sex for one year for an opportunity to play Augusta National, which does not admit women as members of the club.

The Real Cost of the Irish Flu

According to researchers at the San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center, hangovers cost America's economy about **\$148 billion** annually in worker absenteeism and poor job performance.

National Debt


The average American spent **\$100.60** for every **\$100** of take-home pay this past October.

Going Soft

31% of spa customers are men, says the International Spa Association.

Grass Is Greener

Based on government estimates of U.S. marijuana production and a producer price of about **\$1,600** a pound, the total value of all the pot grown annually has been calculated to be just less than **\$36 billion**. Here is how marijuana compares with the country's top three legal cash crops:

			
Marijuana	Corn	Soybeans	Hay
\$35.8 billion	\$23.3 billion	\$17.6 billion	\$12.2 billion

Stand and Deliver

Commercial delivery services like UPS and FedEx pay through the nose for making stops in New York City, with an average of **7,000** parking tickets slapped on their vehicles every day. In 2005 delivery companies paid more than **\$102 million** in fines to the city.

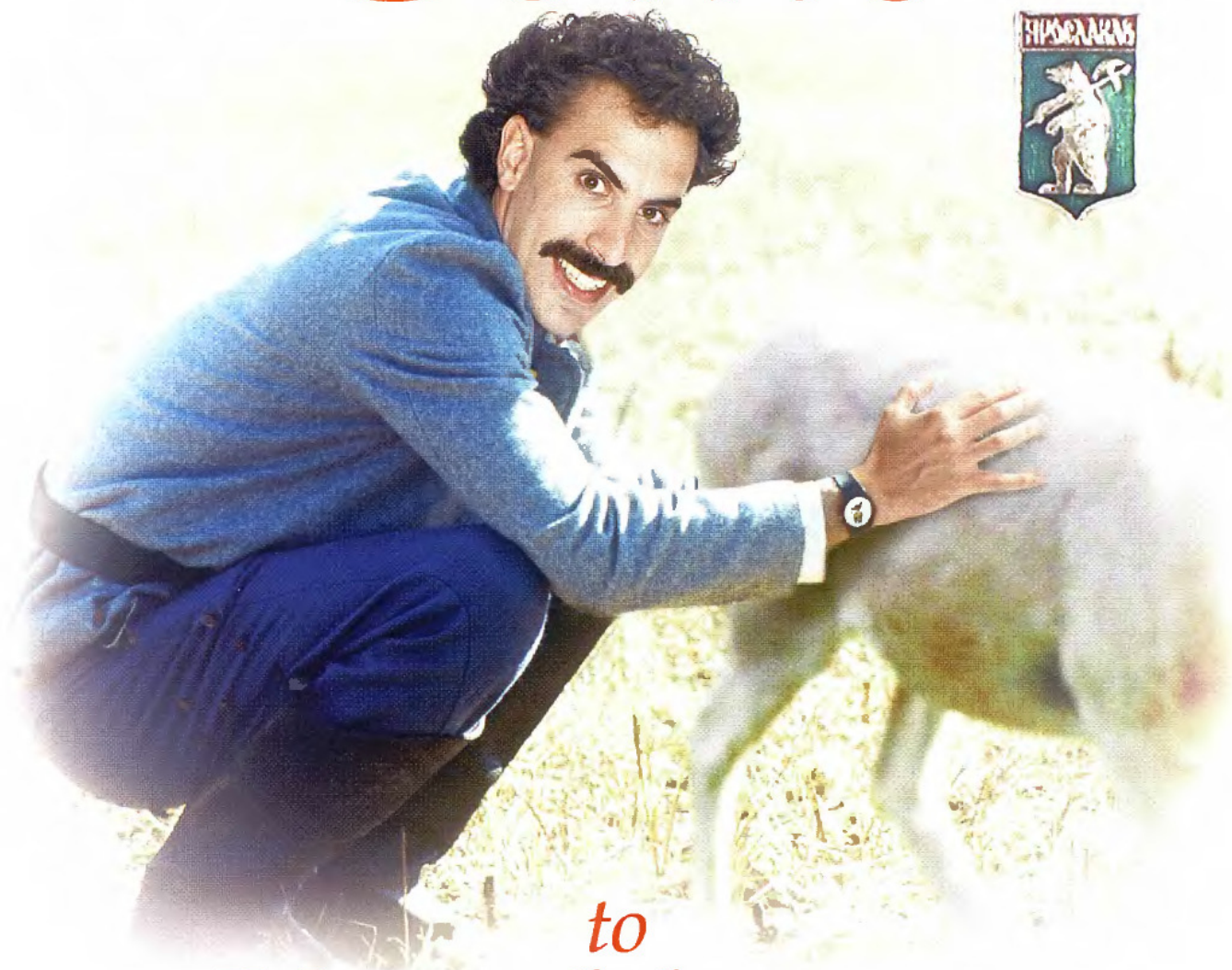
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Winning bid on eBay for a bra Jessica Alba wore during the filming of *Sin City*.

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R E V I E W S

m o v i e s



movie of the month

[THE HOAX]

A Howard Hughes con goes way wrong

The funky, loose new comedy-drama *The Hoax* charts the rise and fall of a classic American con job perpetrated by novelist Clifford Irving in the early 1970s (see *After Hours*, page 22). He exploded a cultural bombshell by concocting what he promised would be "the book of the century," an authorized biography of billionaire Howard Hughes. But when the reclusive, eccentric Hughes came out of self-imposed hiding to expose the book as a complete phony, Irving, his wife and a fellow conspirator were indicted for intent to defraud and served jail time. Directed by Lasse Hallström (*The Cider House Rules*), the fact-based film stars an energized Richard Gere as the tightly wound daredevil Irving, along with the impressive Alfred Molina, Hope Davis, Marcia Gay Harden, Stanley Tucci and Julie Delpy. Says the Swedish-born director, "I was on a natural high making this movie, which reminds me of the free-form, playful, ironic films Woody Allen and Milos Forman made in the 1970s." He was equally turned on by tackling the mercurial and elusive Howard Hughes, who "appears" in the film via old newsreels, still photos and archival recordings. "I have always been fascinated by this recluse who had all these great adventures, his pick of all the girls in Hollywood, and all that power and money but who collapsed into a very flawed human being who wasn't able to cope with the world," Hallström says. —Stephen Rebell

"Hughes collapsed into a very flawed human being."

now showing

BUZZ

Grindhouse

(Kurt Russell, Rose McGowan, Rosario Dawson) Quentin Tarantino and Robert Rodriguez unleash a 1970s-style double feature. Russell stars in Tarantino's "Death Proof" as a psychotic stuntman, and Rodriguez's zombie flick "Planet Terror" has McGowan as a pissed-off amputee sporting a machine gun for a leg.

Our call: A crazy-cool cast, break-neck action sequences, gonzo humor and relentless splatter make this the most hellaciously raucous must-see sleaze-and-gore fest we're likely to see this year.



Blades of Glory

(Will Ferrell, Jon Heder, Will Arnett, Jenna Fischer) Expect mighty laughs with Ferrell and Heder playing rival champion figure skaters whose brawling gets them banned from men's singles competition. Years later the disgraced duo bury the hatchet and exploit a loophole that lets them compete again—by skating as a pair.

Our call: This one easily skates past its comic competition with an idiotproof funny premise, a shrewd supporting cast and Ferrell knocking out *Talladega Nights*-level humor.



I Think I Love My Wife

(Chris Rock, Kerry Washington, Gina Torres) Directing again for the first time since 2003's *Head of State*, Rock also co-wrote and stars in this romantic-comedy twist on 1972's *Chloe in the Afternoon*. He plays a married dad who fantasizes about other women when Washington, an old pal's sexy mistress, tests his willpower.

Our call: Rock-heads who rush cineplexes expecting one of his balls-out comedy assaults may leave wondering why he appears to be going for Will Smith-type likability on-screen.



Rescue Dawn

(Christian Bale, Steve Zahn, Jeremy Davies) In director Werner Herzog's gripping fact-based movie, Bale plays a gung-ho Vietnam-era pilot who is gunned down over Laos. He is captured by the Vietcong, masterminds an escape with his fellow prisoners and tries to survive a trek through dangerous Southeast Asian jungles.

Our call: Strong acting, canny direction, stunning cinematography and a hell of a survival story don't quite add up to a full-on Herzog masterpiece, but this will do until the real thing comes along.



dvd of the month

[CASINO ROYALE]

Daniel Craig may be the best James Bond ever

The cinematic stewards behind Ian Fleming's iconic spy franchise have built a better Bond. Daniel Craig's 007 debut goes back to Fleming's first Bond novel and rediscovers, to startling effect, the licensed killer lurking beneath the urbane sophisticate. Craig is an explosive brute, whether snapping off a bartender's "Shaken or stirred?" query with "Do I look like I give a damn?" or pursuing Sebastien Foucan in a jaw-dropping foot chase through a Madagascar construction project. This origin story charts Bond's elevation to double-0 status, and only Judi Dench, as M, returns from the previous films. There's genuine emotion in Craig's liaison with Eva Green, the most delicately lovely Bond girl ever. Bond is back, and we can't wait for the next one. Also available on Blu-ray. **Best extra:** The "Bond Girls Are Forever" featurette, even if it's too brief. **☆☆☆** —Greg Fagan



BORAT (2006) Kazakhstani reporter Borat visits U.S. peoples and wants to make romance explosion on Pamela Anderson. Also he wrestle naked with fat man and make tears in eyes. Sacha Baron Cohen gets big high five. **Best extra:** Crazy-in-head publicity tour. **☆☆½**



—Buzz McClain

ENTOURAGE: SEASON THREE, PART 1 (2006) Vinny Chase and his boys (including Emmy winner Jeremy Piven) return to take on every major talent agent in L.A. and piss off a big studio chief. **Best extra:** Go on location in Vegas and hug it out with the cast, bitches. **☆☆**



—Bryan Reesman

ERROL FLYNN: THE SIGNATURE COLLECTION VOLUME 2 Dashing Errol Flynn shows why he is a swashbuckling legend in these five new-to-DVD adventure titles, including *The Charge of the Light Brigade* (1936), *The Dawn Patrol* (1938),



Dive Bomber (1941) and *Adventures of Don Juan* (1948, pictured). Flynn's portrayal of boxer James J. Corbett in *Gentleman Jim* (1942) is one of his finest roles. **Best extra:** Flynn's radio-show adaptation of *Jim*. **☆☆☆**

—Matt Steigbigel

BABEL (2006) In this ambitious drama, a random gunshot wounds Cate Blanchett, who's vacationing in Morocco with husband Brad Pitt; Moroccan cops go after the shepherd boy who fired the shot. Circumstance forces the couple's nanny to take their two young kids to Mexico for a wedding, and in Tokyo a deaf-mute schoolgirl goes through a painful bout with adolescence. Also available on Blu-ray and HD DVD. **Best extra:** Only a trailer here. **☆☆** —G.F.



W.C. FIELDS COMEDY COLLECTION VOLUME TWO The bulbous-nosed funnyman just wants an afternoon off in the sublime sitcom *The Man on the Flying Trapeze* (1935). Also included in this five-film set are *The Old Fashioned Way* (1934, pictured) and *Poppy* (1936). **Best extra:** A documentary featurette. **☆☆**

—Brian Thomas



SCANNER

CHILDREN OF MEN (2006) In a dystopian future where there hasn't been a newborn in 18 years, Clive Owen must drag the one pregnant girl to safety. Don't blink or you'll miss top-billed Julianne Moore. **☆☆½**

ERAGON (2006) It's *Lord of the Rings* lite as a young adventurer seeks to revive the dormant age of dragons and topple a tyrant (John Malkovich). The effects sparkle, but the bored characters make the climax fizzle. **☆☆**

BOBBY (2006) Emilio Estevez's ensemble piece with too many subplots dramatizes the night Bobby Kennedy was assassinated. The dynamic cast includes Anthony Hopkins, Demi Moore, Sharon Stone and more. **☆☆½**

BOSOM BUDDIES: THE FIRST SEASON (1980) This pioneering jiggle sitcom stars Tom Hanks in drag trying to get Donna Dixon into his dress. Tame stuff now, but Dixon is luscious. **☆☆½**

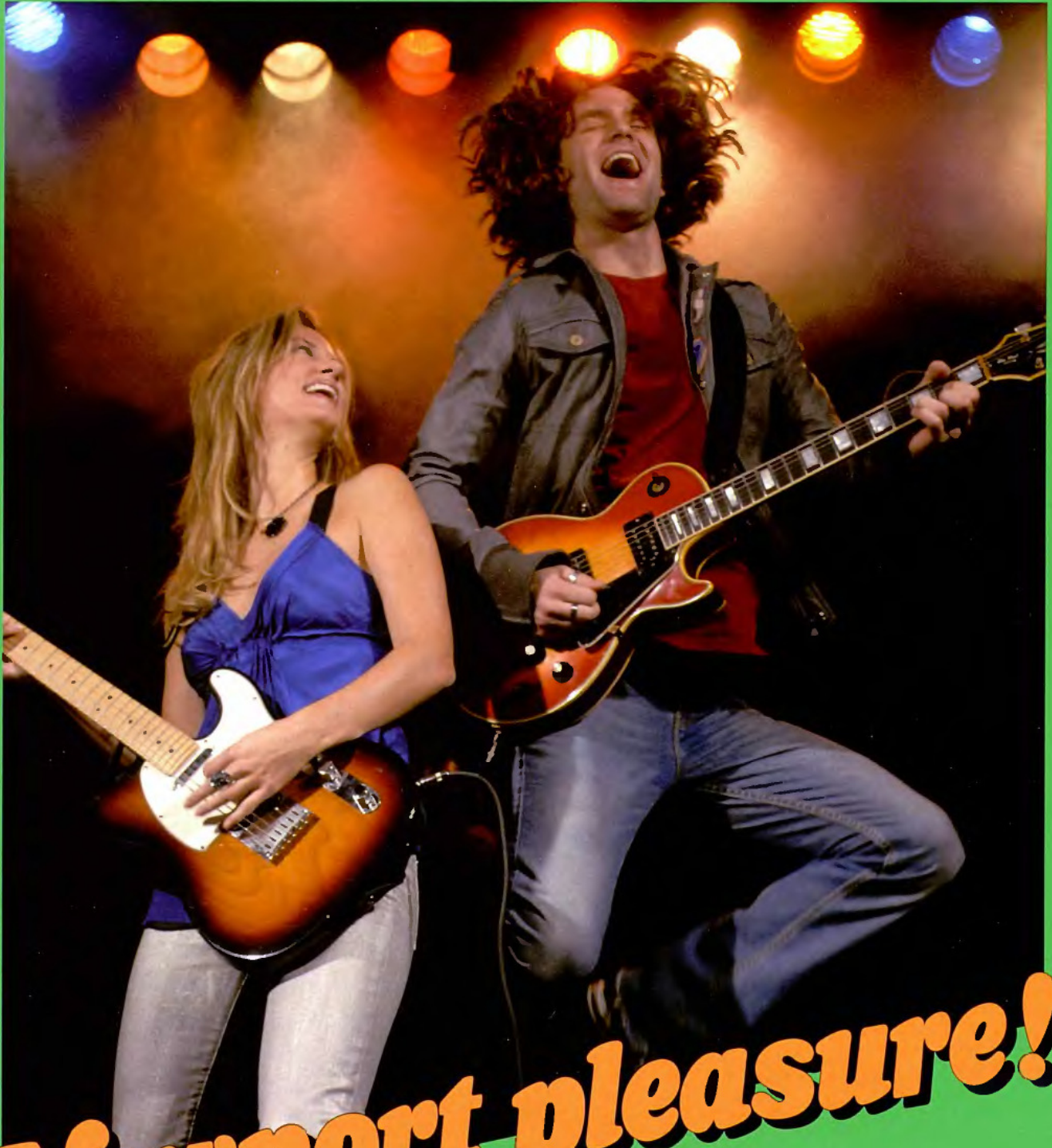
SHORTBUS (2006) This pansexual playground boasts real on-screen sex, but a story would have been nice. These NYC bohemians appear to have zero interests beyond genital bumping; oddly that's not enough. **☆☆½**

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

tease frame



Now that *Charmed* has cast its final spell, **Rose McGowan** is free to return to racier on-screen antics, as when she lost her blouse in *Going All the Way* (pictured). In this month's *Grindhouse* she plays a gun-wielding gal who takes on a zombie army.



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planet rock

[FRESH AIR]

French chill kings Air talk about Darwin, iTunes and their *Pocket Symphony*

Q: When you write music, do you think in English?

A: Yes, English is lighter, less consequential, less emotional for us. If you say, "I love you," it's natural and light. If you say, "Je t'aime," it's heavy—too heavy. And we get too picky in French. France is a poetry culture, and so much good poetry has already been written. We can't compete with song lyrics by people like Serge Gainsbourg. Also, English is the language of computers and machines and astronauts. It has that symbolism for us.

Q: Each of your LPs, including this one, is quite different from its predecessor. How do you evolve?

A: Between albums we do many things. After *Talkie Walkie* we made some music for TV and the film *Marie Antoinette*, and we made a record with Charlotte Gainsbourg. On that project we discovered we were able to play together well on guitar and piano. That affected how we composed *Pocket Symphony*. Also, we never rerecord anything, and we discard a lot of what we record. We figure the bad ideas will die and the good ones will stay with us—it's a Darwinian concept of recording.

Q: You release great singles, but you are also known for creating cohesive albums. Do you worry the album era is ending?

A: I don't know how long we can keep making albums. This may be the last time we do it. We are right on the edge now. We may be releasing one track a month on iTunes in the future. But we like to improvise, so we will tour and then see what the story is when we are ready to record again. Who knows what will be going on in a year and a half?



[BACK TO THE FUTURE]

The world's first digital reissue label plans to release 75 titles this year

Anthologyrecordings.com is the future of music distribution—a virtual label with a true identity as opposed to endless postings by anonymous bands. A trove of out-of-print and obscure treasures, Anthology's offerings include dub, no-wave and vintage rock. (Pictured here are globe-spanning psych-rock LPs from Peru's Traffic Sound, Germany's My Solid Ground, San Francisco's Fifty Foot Hose and Sweden's Parson Sound.) "Sure, there are bit torrents and blogs where you can grab some great rare albums," says founder Keith Abrahamsson, "but

nobody's doing legitimate digital reissues." Abrahamsson grew up obsessing over certain labels, especially SST. "I was way into Descendents, Black Flag and Hüsker Dü, and that label had a whole culture around it," he says. Now he's fostering his own cult-label identity: "Often I end up randomly calling a number and saying, 'Is this the same so-and-so who was in a hard-rock band in 1971?' It's a great feeling to be able to speak with the people who made these incredible—and criminally unheard—records and then be able to turn some fresh ears on to them."



audio parts

[HOT TUNES]

Time is precious and music plentiful. So here are 20 songs to learn and sing from upcoming and recent albums—and what's cool about them.

"Intervention," **Arcade Fire** Organ-based hymn from the Church of David Byrne.

"Bruiser (Miami 4000)," **The Phoenix Foundation** Winsome Kiwi robopop.

"Horisont," **Audionom** From Sweden. Raucous and hypnotic at the same time.

"Sickos," **Harlem Shakes** Hipster sock-hop rock with pomp and synth chimes.

"Chop Suey," **Busy P** Squelchy chop-up of 2 Live Crew, from Ed Banger compilation.

"Superstar Tradesman," **The View** An uplifting never-look-back punk anthem.

"Nowhere Warm," **Kate Havnevik** Piano-based atmospheric from Norway.

"Forever Young," **Youth Group** Bummed-out guitar cover of 1980s prom favorite.

"A to Z," **Dawn of Man** D.C.-scene intensity from buddies of TV on the Radio.

"Sailboat," **Bob & Gene** Reissue of a Buffalo teen duo's rare soul scorcher.

"Conductor 71," **Fujiya & Miyagi** This Brit trio—huh?—makes whimsical krautrock.

"It's Natural to Be Afraid," **Explosions in the Sky** A sprawling noise-rock epic.

"Breaker," **Low** Slowcore heroes go all Radiohead, using minimalist electronics.

"If You Leave Me Now," **Daniel Ágúst** Funereal synth pop from ex-GusGus singer.

"Sparks of Love," **Cyann & Ben** Brooding, contemplative French shoegazing.

"Rats," **Cheeseburger** Does Bon Scott-era AC/DC the way the White Stripes do Zep.

"Dirty Dirt," **Bunny Rabbit** Peaches, M.I.A., Lady Sovereign...Bunny Rabbit.

"Chills," **Peter, Bjorn and John** Shows "Young Folks" was no fluke.

"Myth Takes," **!!!** Fluid—but not slap—bass, rockabilly reverb, whispered vocals.

"North American Scum," **LCD Sound-system** "Daft Punk Is Playing at My House" part two.

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game of the month

[PRAISE ZEUS]

Kratos maims and defiles his way through ancient Greece. Again

The first installment of *God of War* was a bloodthirsty romp in which you lived out the adventures of a well-oiled killing machine determined to put the hurt on a god. Featuring a near-effortless control scheme that immediately made players feel incredibly powerful but also rewarded subtlety and experimentation, it was a heady blend of mythology, moral ambiguity, puzzle solving and good old-fashioned ultraviolence. Having defeated Ares and become the god of war himself, Kratos is back in *God of War II* (PS2), but luckily for gamers everywhere, all is not well. Once again he must take up his trusty Blades of Chaos and do reprehensible things to set the world right. Enhanced graphics and a slew of new monsters, moves and settings (fistfight on the back of a flying griffin, anyone?) cement this as not only the last great game for the reliable warhorse that was the PS2 but possibly the best. **★★★★** —*Scott Alexander*



BULLET WITCH (360) This game's star, the lovely Alicia Claus, graced November's *Women of Video Games 2006* pictorial, and she looks just as good in action as a gun-toting, spell-casting agent of death. The game's visuals are a great mix of sexuality and destruction, but unfortunately, its repetitive gameplay and aiming difficulties left us somewhat frustrated. Still, she's hot, the concept's unique, and if you're into the Japanese violent-cute aesthetic, you'll have fun. **★★½**—*Scott Stein*



VIRTUA FIGHTER 5 (PS3) Equal parts home-theater showpiece and painstakingly balanced one-on-one brawler, this martial-arts epic awed us with its HD graphics and 5.1 surround sound that are even fiercer than the 17-strong cast of assorted kung fu misfits. If you've ever wanted to see masked Mexican wrestlers slam doe-eyed, crane-kicking Asian temptresses into shimmering puddles of water surrounded by dusty desert ruins, then welcome to paradise. **★★★★½** —*Scott Steinberg*



DEF JAM: ICON (PS3, 360) The brilliant premise of the Def Jam games is that you can brawl as hip-hop stars (this time including the Game, Ludacris and Big Boi). This gorgeous next-gen version takes that one step further by integrating music into each showdown. Time your attacks to the music track that's playing and you'll be able to, say, roast your foe on the flames shooting from a busted gas pump. Choosing different music for each level adds replay depth. **★★★★½** —*John Gaudiosi*



MOTORSTORM (PS3) Climb behind the wheel of a souped-up motorbike or buggy in this beautifully dirty off-road adventure that fetishizes no-holds-barred mud racing. Cutoffs and crashes are just as important as speed and strategy, and the PS3's power provides near-photorealistic vehicles and tracks with real-time cinematic destruction. Our favorites are the TV-like "crash cams" that cause a strange phenomenon we can only call "joy wincing." **★★★** —*Marc Saltzman*



trend watch

[PLAYING THE NEWS]

Games that give you something to think about as you twitch

Not all video games are about saving the princess or powering up; some leap from mere entertainment to political statements. These so-called newsgames offer serious points about topics from airport security to the McDonaldization of the world. Here's a sampling.

THE ARCADE WIRE: AIRPORT SECURITY

(addictinggames.com/airportsecurity.html)

From Ian Bogost, Georgia Tech's master of agenda games, this title has you managing an angry mob trying to get through airport security. Keep an eye out for the "threat to public safety" du jour (like, say, snakes or shampoo), and toss them in the trash can before a passenger sets off the alarm.



MCDONALD'S VIDEOGAME (mcvideo

game.com)

Neither created nor endorsed by McDonald's, this game has you run the company by abusing your employees, coercing local governments to protect your interests and bribing South American officials to kick off massive deforestation—that is, if you want any kind of profit margin.



AYITI: THE COST OF LIFE (costof

life.org)

This UNICEF-backed game lets you manage the lives of a family of five in rural Haiti. The Global Kids and gameLab creation tasks you with juggling the overwhelming concerns of health, debt and education in a cartoon world. Not easy.



SUPER COLUMBINE MASSACRE RPG!

(columbinegame.com)

Centered on the 1999 shootings at Columbine High School, this title puts you in the shoes of Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold. Its goal is to shake your assumptions about what spurred that day's violence, both in the lives of the duo and in society. The game was a finalist at this year's Slamdance festival, but protestors got it pulled before final judging began. —*Brian Crecente*

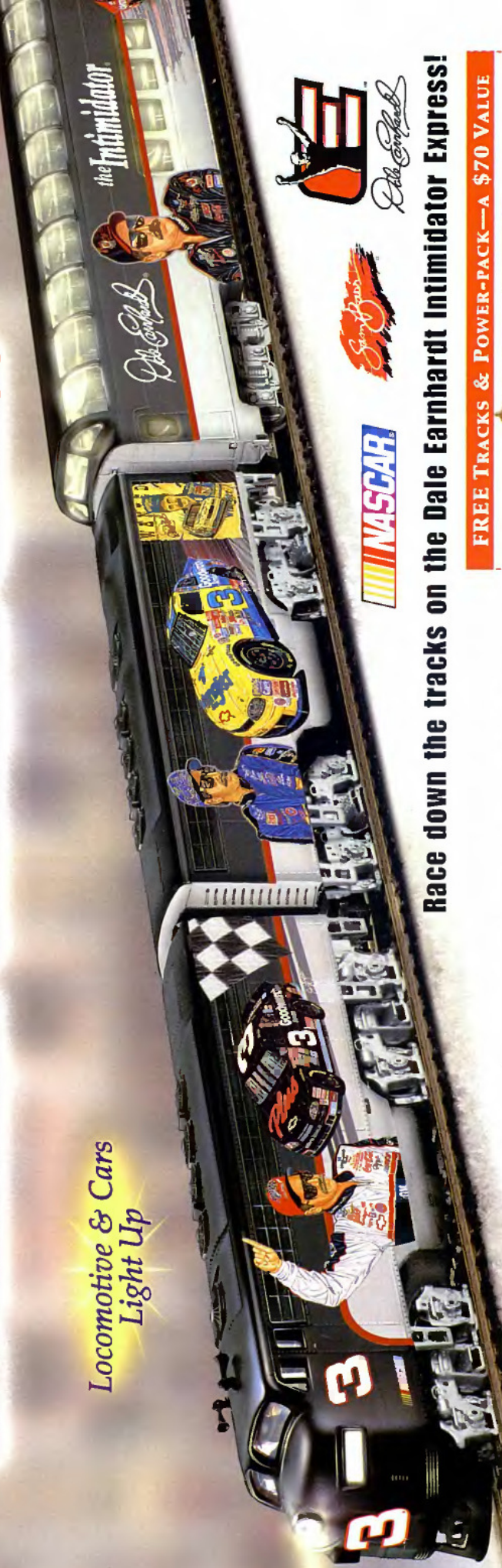


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notes on survival

[CHILDHOOD AT WAR]

At 13 Ishmael Beah fought in his government's army. After the war, he fought to get his life back

PLAYBOY: Tell us about the effects of civil war.

ISHMAEL BEAH: When war broke out in Sierra Leone, everything began to change. The simple and caring world I had known as a child became a place of suspicion, and the landscape itself was soon littered with dead bodies. Mornings were no longer greeted with the singing of birds but with gunshots and the laments of mothers who had lost their children.

PLAYBOY: What are the circumstances necessary to make a boy a killer?

BEAH: First you destroy everything the boy knows: family, friends, community, home. He is traumatized after this, so the rest is easy. He is vulnerable and easily manipulated. For my part, I was physically still a boy when I was a soldier, but psychologically I was not who I once was.

PLAYBOY: Who or what is responsible for what happened to you?

BEAH: I believe the culture of my country collapsed because of endemic political corruption, which gave rise to the war and the destruction of so many lives.

PLAYBOY: What most facilitated your rehabilitation?

BEAH: Knowing that there are people who care regardless of what happened, that there are people who can still see my humanity.



PLAYBOY: Do you now consider the United States your home?

BEAH: It is my second home. I received an education here and have some family here, but what makes me who I am today, what helped me survive the war, I owe to my upbringing in Sierra Leone.

PLAYBOY: What is your sense of how Americans view Africa?

BEAH: I think there is often too much attention paid to the negative things happening there. There should be some balance. For example, there are people living next door to neighbors who killed their families, and they have forgiven them. For the most part, people aren't capable of such acts elsewhere.

PLAYBOY: What persuaded you to write your story?

BEAH: I thought it important not only to show how this appalling phenomenon of recruiting children for war happens and what its effects are—firsthand—but also to show that these children can regain their lives as I have.

PLAYBOY: What motivates you today? What gives you hope?

BEAH: The fact that I am alive gives me hope, and I celebrate every moment. Surviving the war was nothing short of a miracle.

[AMNESIA WILL SET YOU FREE]

The Raw Shark Texts is the latest in unforgettable fiction

Once authors had appropriated the vocabulary of psychoanalysis, mid-20th century crime novelists perfected the genre of the amnesia narrative—with the diagnosis and cure of an unreliable narrator's baffling forgetfulness substituting for the investigation and solution of a crime.

The most unsettling versions of these stories, though, have always suggested that it isn't merely the missing pieces of the narrator's identity that must be known but the very nature of the world in which he lives. In this sense Steven Hall's *The Raw Shark Texts* has more in common with works like Flann O'Brien's nightmarish *The Third Policeman* (and the Wachowski brothers' *The Matrix*) than with a classic clunked-on-the-noggin story. Here, Eric Sanderson awakens one day to find he has no idea who he is. Following clues provided by someone who signs his correspondence "the first Eric Sanderson," he discovers he has suffered from recurring memory loss since the death of his girlfriend



three years earlier. Even more disturbing, he learns he is being pursued by a "memory shark," called a Ludovician, that feeds on memories and other aspects of identity. Sanderson's cat-and-mouse search for the shark unveils a hidden world—solid, real and vividly imagined

by Hall. It's true, at times, as we race toward the explication of Sanderson's mysterious history and the breaking of the amnesiac loop in which he's been trapped, that the story owes more to the flash of the Wachowskis than to Borges and Calvino, who provide epigraphs to the novel's sections, and that the love affair that blossoms between Sanderson and Scout, his traveling

companion, seems similarly made for the movies. But Hall pulls it all off with such élan and good humor (and the most charmingly irreverent disregard for coherent plotting since the early work of Jonathan Lethem) that ultimately you're happy to have climbed into his conceptual shark cage. ★★★½ —Christopher Sorrentino

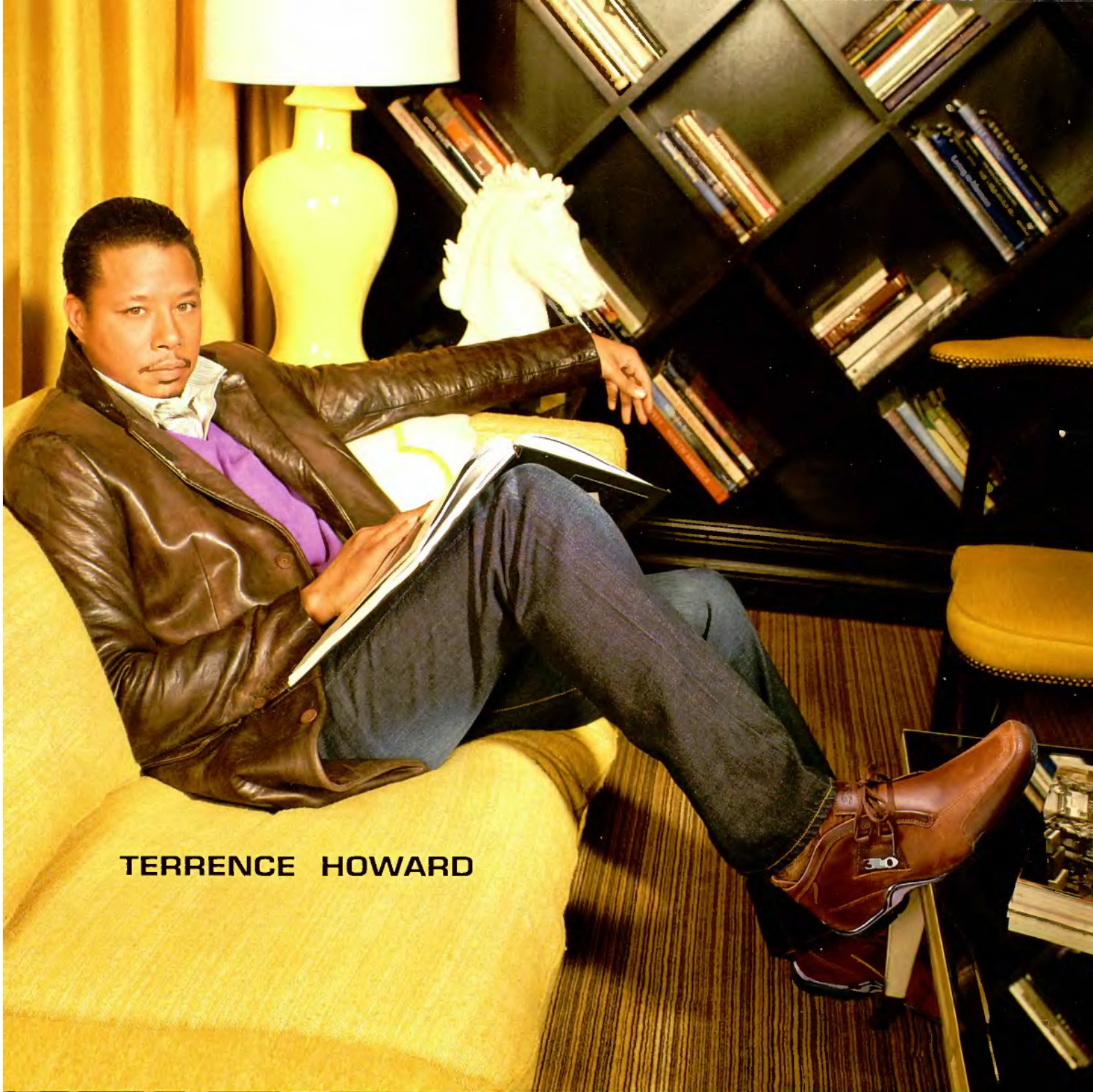
potboiler

[A BLACK BOOK]

Murder, kidnapping and a literary answer to whodunit

This unsettling Irish noir from Man Booker Prize winner John Banville (pseudonymously slumming it here as Benjamin Black) traces a conspiracy from a basement morgue to the upper stratum of the Catholic Church. But don't worry; no clues are found in the works of Da Vinci. When secrets are uncovered, there is no sense of relief. In this capable thriller—complete with a dead blonde and a hero who boozes too much—Banville is more concerned (and adept) with the moral ambiguities of his richly drawn characters. And like Quirke, the pathologist protagonist who asks too many questions, the reader is apt to get an unexpected gut punch now and again. ★★★ —Andrew Bradbury





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Snow Job

Our mission: to throw the ultimate spring-skiing bachelor party weekend in Aspen

THE GROOM WAS no idiot. He was a smart and ambitious man, and he liked the finer things in life (his fiancée, for example). The bachelor party we'd throw him couldn't be any half-ass affair, so we headed to Aspen, Colorado for two days of fun in the Rockies. We began by renting the Mountain Valley Retreat (rates vary, mc-cartneyprop.com), a six-bedroom playhouse with all the amenities—grill, hot tub, sundeck overlooking town. On day one we woke early and met Bob of Aspen Mountain Powder Tours (aspensnowmass.com), who took us literally over the top—cat skiing on the back side of Aspen Mountain. We had 10,000 vertical feet of virgin powder to ourselves for the day. Après-ski began at 39 Degrees at the Sky Hotel (theskyhotel.com), an unbeatable spot with outdoor fireplaces, a heated pool and lounge chairs. For dinner we hit Nobu's Matsuhisa Aspen (nobumatsuhisa.com), naturally. A live band at the Belly Up Aspen (bellyupaspen.com) flowed into late-night drinks at Eric's Bar (no website; ask around town), where a gorgeous brunette whipped us at eight ball. In the morning we gorged on ribs for breakfast at Hickory House Ribs (hickoryhouseribs.com), en route to Aspen Highlands, where we hiked the bowl, a must-do-before-you-die experience. The view from atop Highland Bowl may be the most breathtaking in the Rockies. Then you ski down. Margaritas at our pad led into dinner at Elevation (try the venison chop, elevationaspen.com) and finally a weekend-wrap party back at Eric's. His ya-yas officially out, the groom was now ready for the altar. Mission accomplished.



April Is the Cruellest Month...?

IT IS if you're T.S. Eliot—great poet, hardly Mr. Laughs. Three tips for making April merry:

Spring cocktail: We call this house cocktail the spring fling—two shots gin and a half shot cassis over ice in a rocks glass; top with soda and garnish with a lemon wedge.

Spring lamb: Summit Creek Natural Lamb is a Colorado company that delivers four-star-quality lamb to your door (\$120 for two eight-bone racks, summitcreeklamb.com). Wash the winter dust off the grill and fire it up.

Spring read: Got a few minutes to kill while your dinner's cooking? Arriving in bookstores April 5 is *Tommy's Honor: The Story of Old Tom Morris and Young Tom Morris, Golf's Founding Father and Son*, courtesy of PLAYBOY contributor Kevin Cook (see his scriverings on page 76).

Nick of Time

RECENT INVENTIONS such as pivoting heads and multiple blades have proved to be mercifully forgiving when you're groggy and in a rush. Still, proponents of the double-edge safety razor are more loyal than Cubs fans. Although their method requires more care, it offers less irritation and longer blade life. With a razor, brush, stand and bowl, the Merkur Futur Shaving Set puts a 21st century face on early 20th century technology (\$200, nashvilleknifeshop.com).



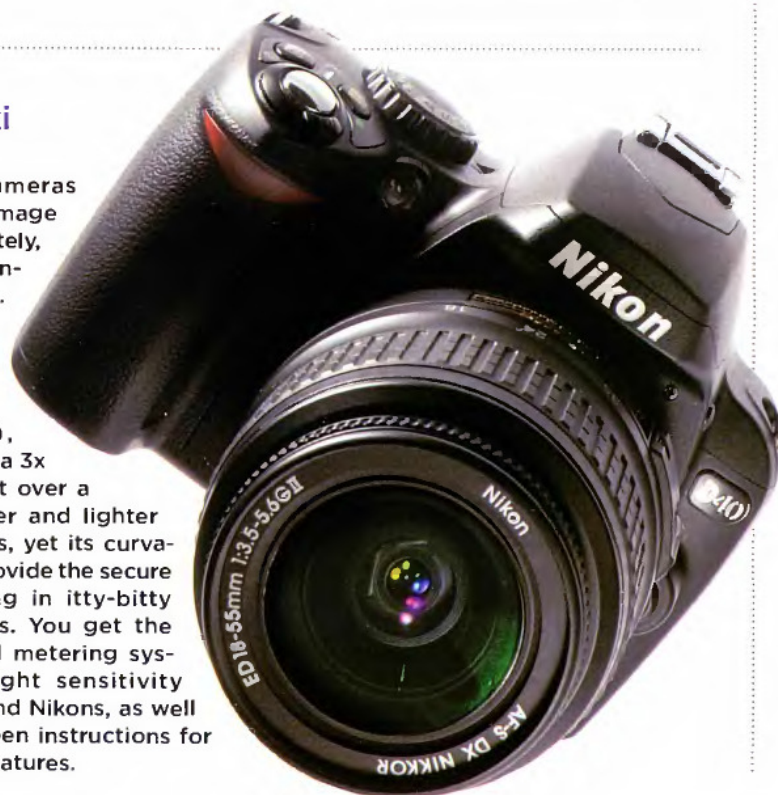


Electric Boogie

TIME WILL TELL if this vixen of a motorcar will shock the establishment or go the way of the Studebaker, but we like what we've seen so far. The 2008 Tesla Roadster is a zero-emission electric supercar with a body that reminds us of an updated Ferrari Dino 246. Its 6,831 tiny lithium-ion batteries zap power to an electric motor that spins at a Formula One-like 13,500 rpm and develops about 250 bhp and 205 foot-pounds of torque. That's sufficient to hurl this tiny terror to 60 miles an hour in four seconds, with a top speed of more than 130 mph in near silence. Based on a Lotus Elise chassis, the Tesla comes to life in the Lotus factory in Hethel, U.K. From a 3.5-hour battery charge, you'll reportedly get around 250 miles. Fully loaded, the Tesla will run you about \$100,000. Tweaks are still being made, but the company plans to fill orders next spring. More info at teslamotors.com.

Darling Nikki

DIGITAL SLR cameras give you superb image quality. Unfortunately, they're also expensive and bulky. Nikon tackles both problems with its 6.1-mega-pixel D40 (\$600, nikonusa.com), which comes with a 3x zoom lens. At just over a pound, it's smaller and lighter than other D-SLRs, yet its curvaceous contours provide the secure grip often lacking in itty-bitty compact shooters. You get the same exceptional metering system and high light sensitivity found in higher-end Nikons, as well as helpful on-screen instructions for using advanced features.



Something Fishy

AQUA BOMB *n*: An MK-84 bomb that has been emptied of its explosives and recast as a six-foot-eight-inch, 10-gallon fish tank. Crafted by MotoArt (\$3,950, motoart.com), this playful piece of home furnishing comes with a built-in pump filter for the fishies, lighting to illuminate the tank and a storage compartment for your fish food and whatnot. It's the perfect home for your piranha. Seven powder-coated colors are available, so matching the drapes will not be a problem. If this doesn't work as a conversation starter, you're dating the wrong women.

Ever see a grown man cry?



Be There, Be Square

NOPE, YOU'RE NOT seeing things: Nike's new Sumo² driver (\$480, nikegolf.com) has a square head. It's the Dolph Lundgren of golf clubs. (Work with us here.) Without our getting into Physics 101, the oddly shaped head offers added stability and doesn't twist as much as other drivers when you swing, so even shots from the heel or toe fly straight and far. The design adheres to USGA size limits, making it legal in tournament play.



Check, Please

CHESS AS WE know it developed in Europe in the 15th century, evolving from Asian origins. Back then, royalty played with pieces carved by artisans. Celebrate the tradition with the Chess Scalloped set (\$2,285, zontikgames.com). With an inlaid-leather playing surface and a leather-bound plinth, it's an instant classic. The pieces are fashioned in the timeless Staunton pattern, the same one used in the landmark world-championship match between Boris Spassky and Bobby Fischer in 1972. When not in use, the pieces rest comfortably in the plinth's suede-lined interior.

License to Grill

THERE ARE TWO kinds of grillers: gas guy and charcoal guy. Each is certain the other is an idiot. Here's a grill that can make both of them happy. The Fuego 01 (from \$3,500, fuegoliving.com) has the sharp looks of a high-end indoor range but is made for the great outdoors, with a retractable lid and weatherproof knobs. Ample prep areas help keep things civilized, and a thermostat on the grilling surface tells you when to throw your meat onto the fire. Most important, though, Fuego allows you to switch from gas to charcoal grilling on the fly, proving the only real idiots are absolutists.



WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 131.



After driving 24 hours straight,

A CHECKERED FLAG LOOKS A LOT LIKE AN ANGEL.

If you missed the Grand-Am Rolex 24 At Daytona, you missed one of the most exciting races in history. The grueling wheel-to-wheel 24 hour endurance event saw road racing superstars Scott Pruett and Juan Pablo Montoya and breakout rookie Salvador Duran triumph in a nose-to-tail nail biter that was up for grabs until the final lap. Don't miss another history making race! www.grand-am.com

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March 24	Homestead-Miami Speedway	3pm et.	July 13	Iowa Speedway	10pm et.
April 29	Virginia International Raceway	1pm et.	July 22	Barber Motorsports Park	3pm et.
May 20	Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca	2pm et.	August 3	Montreal	8pm et.
May 28	Lime Rock Park	3pm et.	August 10	Watkins Glen	8pm et.
June 9	Watkins Glen International	11am/2:30pm et.	August 25	Infinity Raceway	7pm et.
June 23	Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course	8pm et.	September 15	Miller Motorsports Park	1pm/5:30pm et.

Schedule subject to change.

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The Playboy Advisor

I am a guy who has a female friend with whom I feel very comfortable. She is engaged, but I find her attractive and often masturbate while thinking about her. I'd like to tell her what I do, though I'm not sure why, because no good can come of it. I think about this a lot. Should I tell her?—W.R., Los Angeles, California

You want to tell her because you hope she'll respond in a positive way, but "You saved me \$5.95 last night" has never worked as a pickup line. And have you noticed that sweet-heart cards never include platitudes about rubbing one out? That's because women have no interest in the fact that you whack off unless they are involved with you (and seldom even then). We're not supposed to talk about this publicly, but any woman a man meets and finds remotely attractive is eventually going to help bring him to orgasm. Women must suspect this deviancy in their male friends and acquaintances but choose to remain in denial—or at least not ponder it too deeply. Or maybe they're doing the same thing. We haven't had the guts to ask.

What do you think of the trend toward tighter and shorter jackets and pants so short you can see sock?—R.L., Boston, Massachusetts

We're way behind this trend and hope we never catch up. Its most recent champion is designer Thom Browne, who markets jackets that appear to be too tight and pants that are several inches too short. People sneer, but now the look is being copied, and Brooks Brothers has hired Browne to help revive its line. The editor of Details has been quoted as saying that while he "didn't fully understand" the trend at first, Browne should be commended for taking a routine activity such as putting on a suit and "making it different." Huh? You would certainly stand out if you cut off your coat sleeves or put denim patches on your knees, but that doesn't mean you'd look good.

I have a deep obsession with spike-heel boots, which my wife is aware of. Some nights at home she dresses up, but she won't wear the boots in public. She says she doesn't want people staring, but it's not as if I'm asking her to dress like a hooker. I tell her she should be confident knowing her husband likes it. She's partial to one pair I gave her, but she wears flared jeans that cover all but the toe. She has a closetful of boots I never get to see. I know she gets tired of my comments, so why doesn't she wear the fucking boots already? Throw a dog a bone! What's your take?—S.D., Roselle Park, New Jersey

Down, boy. Given the letters we've received from other married men with singular obsessions, you're doing well if your wife indulges you so readily in the bedroom. Taking it to the streets is another matter. Besides, what's in it



for her? An exciting sex life? It's more likely she'll get only more boots and more demands. The problem is the dog is always hungry, and he gnaws the same bone for every meal. Rather than nag her, which won't get you anywhere, praise her for her generosity so far and work on expanding your appetites.

In December a reader wrote about how his wife of 18 months told him she loves him but isn't "in love" with him. Your response made me question the value of all the advice you have given in the past about relationships. In my 27 years of marriage, I've found that both partners are in a state of constant change. Your moods, health, happiness, romantic involvement with each other and so many other things go up and down. To say as you did that this marriage has no future, when all that may be happening is a temporary romantic swing, is misguided. My wife and I have been through this cycle several times but have always ended up still in love. Sometimes you're on the wave, sometimes you're in front of it, and sometimes you wipe out, but you always end up back on another as long as you keep swimming together.—M.L., Phoenix, Arizona

That's all well and good, but if your partner starts questioning the nature of her love for you after the first 18 months, there may be no waves involved except the one about to knock you on your ass. Whenever people say they are no longer "in love" with their partner but still love him or her, we think they have seen or read too many romances. The intense, euphoric, obsessive-compulsive feelings you have when you're first together, designed to get you to reproduce without thinking too deeply about the consequences,

always wear off. Your brain can't maintain the rush. That's when people realize the work involved in continuing the partnership. The sure sign you are in a mature relationship is that you have occasional moments when you hate your partner's guts but don't bail because you know you aren't going to find better—only different. The strongest marriages acknowledge these moments of disdain and, as you say, ride the wave.

A reader asked in December about mixers for the bottle of firewater (aguardiente) he had purchased in Honduras. The equivalent in Brazil is *cachaça*, although I can't imagine mixing it with Sprite, as you said many Hondurans do. Instead it's used to make the national drink, the *caipirinha*. You'll need a lime, two ounces of *cachaça*, sugar and ice cubes. Roll the lime to loosen the juices, then cut it into eight wedges and place them in a glass. Add sugar to taste and crush the pieces with a pestle, pulp side up. Add the *cachaça* and stir. Add ice, stir again and serve.—T.S., San Francisco, California

Have you tried caipirinhas made with half a tangerine? Delicious. Although it's created with sugarcane, cachaça is often marketed here as Brazilian rum. Importers are trying to introduce more of the good stuff, hoping it will become as popular in the States as tequila. The best cachaças are sipped straight and the harsher varieties saved for caipirinhas. Premium brands available in the U.S. include Leblon, Beleza Pura, Água Luca and Cabana; on the less expensive end is Pitú.

I am a 29-year-old black man. When white women get me into bed, the first thing they go for is my cock. They are eager to validate the stereotype that black men are well hung. But my penis is only two inches when soft and five inches erect. Do I need to see a doctor? This is ruining my love life. I wonder if other black men have this problem.—J.S., Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Every black man who has slept with a white woman has been sized up this way. Scott Poulson-Bryant, author of Hung: A Meditation on the Measure of Black Men in America, recalls an incident in college when he hooked up with a white girl at a party. "She pursued me," he says. "Afterward she said, 'I thought your dick would be bigger.' I asked her why, and she said, 'Because you're black.' Then I said, 'I thought it would be bigger too.' That isn't to say I have a tiny penis, but as a black man I always thought I should have a certain measure." Black women generally don't have these expectations, Poulson-Bryant says, because they see more black dicks. The stereotype dates to at least the 15th century, when white explorers measured a few well-endowed African tribesmen and made a sweeping conclusion that later fit well with racist

propaganda that African American men are sexual savages. In truth, the few studies that have looked at penis size haven't found black erections to be any larger than average, which is five to six inches. You can't do anything to change expectations about your size, but you can be comfortable with what you have to offer. The best way to put this stereotype to rest is to have more interracial fucking.

My wife and I love sliced mushrooms with steak. I usually sauté them with butter. Sometimes I add herbs and spices or make gravy. I have even added green onions, garlic and asparagus, but I'm running out of ideas. Do you have any suggestions?—J.G., Cleveland, Texas

You're on the right track but just need a guide. Ours is Amy Farges, co-owner of the New York City mushroom shop Marché aux Delices (auxdelices.com). "I usually sauté mushrooms with sea salt and pepper, then add shallots, although anything from the onion family enhances the flavor," says Farges, author of The Mushroom Lover's Mushroom Cookbook and Primer. "Cook until the shallots are slightly brown, then add demi-glace, reduce until syrupy and add white or black truffle butter. Vary the herbs you put in based on the meat you're serving. For instance, tarragon works well with fish or chicken, or try a combination of oregano, thyme and rosemary with game. Chives and chervil are always wonderful with mushrooms. If you're cooking only white buttons, you are missing out. You can find shiitake, cremini, oyster and portobello just about anywhere, as well as dried mushrooms such as morel, porcini and black trumpets. If you use dried mushrooms, reconstitute them by soaking in broth or wine, whichever you prefer. Strain out any sand and chop them fine. They'll still be chewy, so add them to some button mushrooms that you've sautéed to create liquid. The dried mushrooms provide flavor, and the buttons give you texture; together it's a nice balance."

My girlfriend has developed a fascination with strap-ons. She's enjoying her power trip, and we're both having fun with it. However, she's noticed that when she uses any of her dildos that are eight inches or longer on me, I get soft. She thinks this is psychological, since she inserts only six inches of the foot-long one. But that also happens to be the thickest one she owns. Am I being psyched out, or is this a physical reaction?—L.M., Annapolis, Maryland

It's a physical reaction. "In my experience it happens about 50 percent of the time when a guy is being penetrated," says Tristan Taormino, author of The Ultimate Guide to Anal Sex for Women and a gonzo porn director who has seen her fair share of males being taken from behind by women. "Although men have a hard time believing they can be turned on if they don't have an erection, you have to relax all the muscles in your pelvic area for anal sex to be comfortable. Plus, some guys have told me that when they're having their prostate stimulated, they focus all their energy on that, so their penis isn't part of the equa-

tion." A man doesn't need an erection to reach orgasm. When it happens during strap-on sex, he may ejaculate prostatic fluid, the part of semen produced by the prostate gland.

After reading the text of the *Women of MySpace* pictorial you published last summer, my 40-year-old boyfriend (I'm 26) suddenly thinks I am "whoring around" because I have a page on the site. Can you please clarify that having friends on MySpace doesn't mean anything? I thought we had a solid relationship, but if he believes what he reads in *PLAYBOY* instead of me, I'm not so sure.—N.H., Key West, Florida

Complaining about your MySpace page is just a convenient way for your boyfriend to say he doesn't trust you. If he insists you shut-ter the page, what will he do next to isolate you from a world filled with other men? Your cell phone is dangerous too.

I thought *PLAYBOY* was for men, not pussies! Your contention in December that there is no good way to do push-ups is bunk. Not only are push-ups effective at toning the chest, triceps and shoulders, they strengthen muscles in ways your body can actually use. A push-up is also a lot like sex: If you do it wrong, you'll get hurt, so don't compromise form. The dozens of Playmates, including me, who have been on the *Playboy X-Treme Team* have worked up a sweat many times from push-ups, and our rotator cuffs feel fine. Our coach, Lieutenant Colonel Blain Reeves, a former Army ranger instructor, notes that proper form by military standards is to put your hands flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart. Your legs should be straight and your feet no more than a foot apart. Your back needs to be straight and your stomach tucked. Lower yourself slowly, concentrating on maintaining your form, until your chest touches the floor. If this is too difficult, you can do a modified push-up with your knees touching the floor.—Danelle Folta, Los Angeles, California

Great. Not only have we irritated one of our favorite Playmates, she happens to be able to kick our ass. Yet even in the face of that personal risk (or reward), we will stick with the advice Phil Wharton gave us. He's been a fitness guru for 18 years, trained and rehabbed some of the world's top athletes and never led us astray in the gym. "You can do a good push-up," he concedes, "but most people don't have coaches, spotters or mirrors to make sure they don't put undue stress on their body. They likely sit at work all day, too, so their backs are already in spasm, which increases the potential damage. If you are intent on including push-ups in your routine, you should first do other exercises to prepare the muscles around your joints."

Last August a reader asked why he gets turned on by his girlfriend's moans during sex yet she doesn't seem to react the same way to his. You discussed the idea

that this helps the female control the male's arousal. There's another reason I thought you'd find interesting: Biologically, the chance of "successful" sex (i.e., pregnancy) is higher if both partners reach orgasm at the same time. By controlling the man's arousal until she is ready to climax, a woman can make this more likely.—B.S., Staunton, Virginia

That's assuming a woman's orgasm has anything to do with fertilization. A few studies have suggested the contractions of orgasm may help sperm along. Other research has hinted that a woman climaxes more readily when she is fertile. There's also evidence that genetics determines how easily a female can come. But all this is far from conclusive. It's just as likely that a woman's orgasm has no influence on anything besides her mental health. In The Case of the Female Orgasm, biologist Elisabeth Lloyd dissects a number of hypotheses about why women reach climax and endorses one proposed in 1979 by anthropologist Donald Symons. Since the genitals of both genders are constructed from the same type of tissue, why shouldn't orgasm produce the same response in both males and females? Symons argues that the female orgasm did not evolve to fulfill any purpose. It is simply a potential.

A woman I used to see for booty calls before she returned to her boyfriend stopped by to see me and said she wanted to scroll through the digital photos we had taken during sex. So I popped the CD into my computer. Suddenly she tapped the eject button on the drive, grabbed the disk and snapped it in half. I have a few of the images on another computer, but can anyone besides Homeland Security retrieve the rest? The pictures are all X-rated, so that needs to be taken into account.—P.B., Baltimore, Maryland

Your ex sounds like a woman we'd like to meet—no regrets but no evidence, either. Her mistake was to believe digital isn't forever, but her salvation is the fact that you didn't make extensive backups. We asked around and couldn't find any geeks who offered hope of recovery. You could tape the CD together, but it is unlikely a drive will be able to read it, and you may end up destroying the equipment if the disk breaks apart as it spins at high speeds. Your energy may be better spent filling a CD—and a copy—with new photos.

*All reasonable questions—from fashion, food and drink, stereos and sports cars to dating dilemmas, taste and etiquette—will be personally answered if the writer includes a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The most interesting, pertinent questions will be presented in these pages each month. Write the *Playboy Advisor*, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, or send e-mail by visiting our website at playboyadvisor.com. The *Advisor's* latest book, *Dear Playboy Advisor*, is available at bookstores, by phoning 800-423-9494 or online at playboystore.com.*



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THE PLAYBOY FORUM

BREAKING THE LAW

OUR RIDICULOUS PATENT LAWS HAVE LEFT US WITH A SYSTEM OF LEGALIZED EXTORTION

BY LORI ANDREWS

You wake up with an idea for a tax shelter for a client. You get out of bed, have a cup of java and pack a peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich for work. As you shave you decide your hair is scruffy, so you cut your bangs. Then you head to the kitchen and pour milk over your combination of Special K and Lucky Charms. You're out the door, feeling on top of the world. Except you've violated at least four patents before breakfast.

The queen in *Through the Looking Glass* explains that she "believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast," but this time it's the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office that has fallen through the rabbit hole. Fifty patents have already been granted for tax-reduction strategies. Smucker's used its patent on the crustless peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich to threaten legal action against Albie Foods for infringement. A barber patented the two-handed process for cutting hair (comb in one hand and scissors in the other). And the company Cereality has filed patent-application number 20050160005 to cover "displaying and mixing competitively branded food products" and adding "a third portion of liquid."

Patents used to be granted for concrete inventions, such as a particular type of mousetrap. But now patents are doled out for broad concepts, which is like patenting the idea of trapping mice and charging a royalty anytime someone catches a rodent.

Patents are supposed to be reserved for inventions that are novel, nonobvious and useful. A patent allows its holder to prohibit anyone else from making, using or selling the invention. For 20 years patent holders can charge whatever royalty they want to those who use their inventions—or even prohibit someone from using them. That made sense when patents covered nuts-and-bolts inventions. But allowing patent holders to charge for ideas and even censor them entirely violates the First Amendment protection of speech and thought. Already, the work of researchers, doctors and tax advisors has been hampered by unwarranted patents. And the cost of goods and services has risen as inappropriate royalty fees are passed on to consumers.

For the past 150 years the U.S. Supreme Court has maintained that patents should be granted for inventions, not ideas or natural facts. In 1980 the Court reiterated

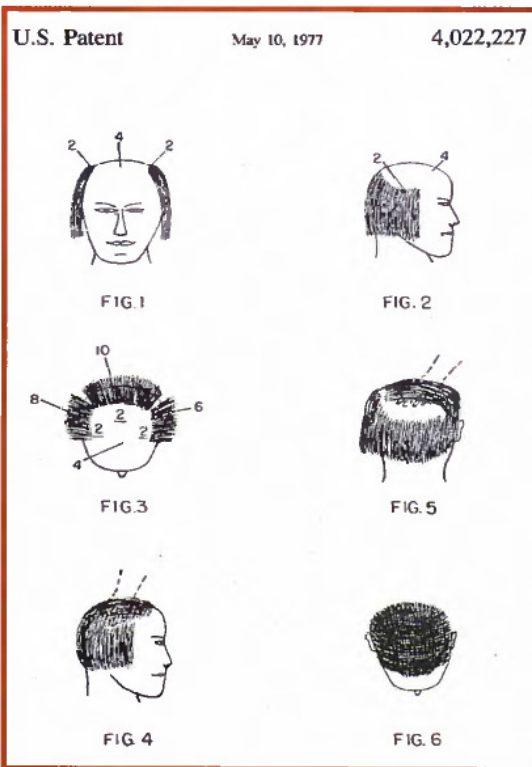
that the "laws of nature, physical phenomena and abstract ideas have been held not patentable. Einstein could not patent his celebrated law that $E=mc^2$, nor could Newton have patented the law of gravity. Such discoveries are 'free to all men and reserved exclusively to none.'" Another Supreme Court case stated that "Congress may not authorize the issuance of patents whose effects are to remove existent knowledge from the public domain or to restrict free access to materials already available."

But in 1998 the Federal Circuit—the pro-patent court, created during the Reagan administration, that hears all patent appeals—ignored that precedent and granted a patent for a method of doing business. That led to an increasing number of patents on correlations, applications of the law and even mixing cereals.

Rather than being a means to spur innovation, patents have become a method of legalized extortion by which a royalty is extracted for activities people are already engaged in. About half the 4 million American women who give birth each year undergo blood tests for a hormone called human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG). A low level of the hormone indicates that the fetus may have implanted somewhere other than the uterus. The test was never patented and has been widely used since the 1960s. Dr. Mark Bogart noticed women with a high level of the hormone were more likely to have a fetus with Down syndrome. He filed a patent not for a new test or treatment but for the medical fact that high hCG correlates with Down syndrome. Then he began suing labs that used the test. An Arizona clinic agreed to pay him \$90,000 for previous tests and a royalty for each future test. A national laboratory chain agreed to pay \$1 million annually. This year a court will hear his patent-

infringement lawsuit against the state of California, where more than half a million women give birth each year.

In a similar case, tests for homocysteine in the body were used for years to predict certain cardiac problems. But researchers from Columbia University and the University of Colorado began to notice that a high level of homocysteine could predict a vitamin B deficiency. They patented that medical fact, along with a real invention—a particular test for homocysteine levels. Someone else invented a better test, but



IRAQI SUCCESS STORY

A POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST THAT THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION WANTS NO PART OF

using it violates the patent. Why? Because when a doctor gets the results of the test, he will think about the patented medical fact. Once an idea is out there, you can't unthink it. Even doctors who use the test to assess cardiac risks owe a royalty since they know a high level of homocysteine is related to vitamin deficiency.

The Federal Circuit ruled that a laboratory infringed on that patent (and thus was liable for more than \$2 million in damages) because it published an article relaying the medical fact. Astonishingly, the appellate court held that physicians who order the test infringe the patent merely by thinking about the relationship between homocysteine and vitamin deficiency.

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's own procedures encourage improper patents. The office pays patent examiners for each file they investigate. The easiest way to get paid is to grant the patent. If the examiner denies the patent, the applicant will appeal and it will take longer to close the file; the examiner will make less money because he or she will have to work on the appeal rather than collect a paycheck for granting new patents.

In theory the courts can throw out faulty patents, but generally under U.S. law only someone who infringes a patent can challenge it. Plus, the average patent lawsuit costs more than \$4 million. So rather than try to knock out invalid patents, many companies pay the royalties and pass the costs on to consumers. Research in Motion, the maker of the BlackBerry, would probably have prevailed in a lawsuit against NTP, which claimed a patent on the concept of sending e-mails from computers to wireless devices. But Research in Motion did not want to risk a blackout of its product, so it paid \$612.5 million to settle.

We can fix the problem by giving members of the public a voice in the patent-application process and the right to challenge existing patents. In Europe, where such a procedure exists, a third of challenged patents are revoked. The patent office and the Federal Circuit should follow the Supreme Court precedents against patenting abstract ideas, natural phenomena and products of nature. And a special group of patent examiners should be given the task of protecting the public interest. This country was founded on principles of free speech and thought. Under copyright law, no one can own an idea. But now patents interfere with our free exchange of ideas.

*Lori Andrews, professor of law at Chicago-Kent College of Law, is author of the genetics thrillers *Sequence* and *The Silent Assassin*.*



By Joseph Braude

They could have been a major asset to American foreign policy, but instead they're merely the best-kept secret in the Middle East: Across the Arab world, from North Africa to the Gulf states and including Iraq, workers have been organizing into pro-Western, pro-American labor unions. They have even been asking the world's superpower for help. They're fighting for basic human rights, a civil society and collective bargaining power in a region where the labor force has been historically ill-treated. They're progressive, feminist and antifundamentalist and want to be engines of civil society and nation building. Yet even as the situation in Iraq continues to deteriorate, labor unions have not been well received in the Bush administration. For the new Democratic-controlled Congress, however, unionism could offer a way forward in Iraq, and supporting it could bolster the standing of the United States throughout the region.

Think back to the world's great political transformations of the past

60 years and you'll find organized workers playing a constructive role. General Douglas MacArthur made "encouragement of the unionization of labor" a central plan in his strategy for post-World War II Japan. The unions that grew out of MacArthur's commitment served to stabilize Japanese democracy for decades. The post-war German Trade Union Federation similarly helped shape post-Nazi politics and, 40 years later, reintegrate the divided country's east and west. Communism fell in Poland due in part to Lech Walesa's dissident Solidarity movement, a federation of shipyard workers that went on to champion free elections after the dictatorship collapsed. And the Congress of South African Trade Unions helped keep that country together after apartheid, thanks to ideals of equity and social justice that transcended South Africa's fractious tribes.

All these movements benefited from significant outside support—from Democrat Harry Truman, whose administration championed

German and Japanese reconstruction, to Republican Ronald Reagan, who recognized Solidarity's Walesa for the national hero and valuable American ally he was.

Of course, American support of foreign labor movements hasn't always been on the side of the angels. Back in the days of George Meany, the AFL-CIO created the American Institute for Free Labor Development, which was reportedly involved in all sorts of CIA shenanigans in El Salvador and Brazil.

Nevertheless, it's obvious the Middle East needs heroes too, as surely as the United States needs Arab allies, and labor's champions from Baghdad to the Bay of Tangier can provide many examples of both. Take the Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions, which had been agitating for Saddam Hussein's ouster since before George W. Bush took over the Texas Rangers. While Islamist insurgents plotted to blow up ballot boxes two years ago, union chiefs in Iraq fought to get out the vote. Or consider the nascent trade federations in mercantile, oil-rich Gulf states like Kuwait, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. These patriarchal sheikdoms are notoriously unfeminist and anti-Israel. Yet among Bahrain's 46 trade federations, for example, four have elected female chiefs and all 46 have endorsed a two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. That's not bad for a segment of the Arab world in which Al Qaeda has become a familiar threat.

These hopeful ventures are indigenous grassroots efforts that grew out of today's appalling labor conditions throughout the Middle East. According to a report by the International Labour Organization, working conditions in several Arab states approach the bottom of international standards. There are reports of people working 24 hours at a stretch, employee beatings and more—especially for migrant workers. Some of the worst abuses, moreover, have happened in facilities that serve American companies. So grassroots labor movements might not expect robust support from an antilabor administration.

Despite the efforts of Arab labor activists, who have sought American assistance in

their struggle against these abuses, the reactionary Bush administration has repeatedly snubbed them. In 2003 U.S.-appointed Iraq proconsul L. Paul Bremer preserved Saddam-era laws that prohibited collective bargaining, even as he supplanted much of the ex-dictator's legal system with his own executive orders. Bremer declined to unfreeze union assets that the IFTU claimed rightfully belonged to it, thus stunting the federation's ability to act while

the American administration pushed through aggressive privatization measures. The financially strapped organization's chief, Hadi Saleh, was inadequately guarded in 2005 when five Iraqi insurgents came to his home and strangled him. Beyond Iraq,

the White House's ambitious policy in the Middle East envisions a NAFTA-like free-trade zone across the region. According to the AFL-CIO Solidarity Center's Heba Shazli, an Egyptian native who trains Arab labor activists, the neoconservative rush to sign free-trade agreements with Arab states has too often come at the expense of critical dialogue on labor abuse. "There is no address in the U.S. government for us to go to to appeal for funds for this very

fundamental principle of democracy and governance," says Shazli. "It is absolutely amazing and shameful."

None of this should come as a surprise to anyone who comprehends the extremism of the Bush administration. But such a policy doesn't necessarily serve American interests.

Who better than Democrats, with their formidable labor constituency, to support the brave Iraqi man I met at the AFL-CIO's modest office in downtown Amman, who works long hours teaching Iraqis, Jordanians and

Palestinians about their rights of collective bargaining and human dignity? What could be more necessary, in a region rife with sectarianism and extremist ideologies, than to support a secular movement that upholds egalitarian ideals and strives for reasonable goals?

Supporting Arab labor could be the Democrats' "big idea" to help win hearts and minds in the Middle East. And it could strengthen civil society and improve social equity at the same time.

Who better
than Democrats
to support
Arab labor?



Iraqi refinery worker: American ally?

MARGINALIA

FROM BABY-LON'S ARK,

published in March by Thomas Dunne Books and written by Lawrence Anthony, a South African conservationist who helped save the Baghdad zoo after the U.S. invasion: "At the height of the anarchy I asked several American officers and soldiers for a gun, arguing that we were the only people on duty in the theater (as they called Baghdad) without a weapon. The request was always refused. They said they couldn't go around giving weapons to civilians. But without a gun we would be forever victims, completely unable to defend ourselves or protect the animals. I kept pestering anyone I could to get me one. Eventually a captain, who shall remain nameless, disgusted by what he saw happening and our being powerless to stop it, slipped me a nine-millimeter pistol that had formerly belonged to an Iraqi officer killed in battle. The captain did it with no fuss and asked for no thanks, but we knew he was putting his career on the line for the survival of the zoo. The difference was immediate. I would stride up to manageable groups of looters, point the pistol and gesture angrily at them to move on, and quickly. They always did."



FROM A PRESS release issued by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility in December 2006:

"Grand Canyon National Park is not permitted to give an official estimate of the geologic age of its principal feature, due to pressure from Bush administration appointees. Despite promising a prompt review of its approval for a book claiming the Grand Canyon was created by Noah's flood rather than by geologic forces, more than three years later no review has ever been done and the book remains on sale at the park, according to documents released today. 'In order to avoid offending religious fundamentalists, our National Park Service is under orders to suspend its belief in geology,' stated PEER executive director Jeff Ruch. 'It is disconcerting that the official position of a national park as to the geologic age of the Grand Canyon is no comment.'"



FROM AN ARTICLE in Sri Lanka's *Sunday Observer* about bartering for sex in Iran: "In a smart boutique displaying an array of miniskirts and skimpy tops, the shopkeeper was too busy attending to his female customers to listen to a sermon on HIV/AIDS."

(continued on page 53)

READER RESPONSE

THE EYES HAVE IT

Jonathan Raban's article "We're Watching You" (January) brings to light some of the core issues we as a country will have to deal with in the new century. To avert a terrorist threat, most of us would gladly allow some diminishment of our personal privacy. The promise of safety is difficult to ignore. But locked in a new kind of war whose rules remain vague, our government is making decisions that set us on a slippery slope. Systems like Echelon have been indispensable to our national security, but when the eyes of such systems are turned on American households, we as citizens are right to take notice. That gaze most certainly keeps us safer, but at what cost? Who will watch the watcher? We stand at a fulcrum between security and freedom. Weighting freedom too heavily puts us in physical jeopardy; overweighting safety may nullify the very freedom we hold dear. Finding bal-



Not all reality television is innocuous.

ance between these two pressures will be pivotal to our future as a nation.

Josh Conviser
Montecito, California

Conviser is author of the book Echelon, published by Random House.

FIGHTING WORDS

The analogy Stephen Van Eck draws between conservatism and radical Islam in January's "Reader Response" is logically flawed at best. Let's agree that conservatives are at the forefront of the battle with radical Islam and that liberals, in large part, want nothing to do with this fight. Now let's project a victory for Muhammad's warriors and assume conservatives are either wiped out or rendered powerless. Islam is not just a religion. It makes no pretense of separating church and state. Since in strict Muslim societies PLAYBOY is banned, how long do you suppose

any liberal lifestyle would be tolerated if one day the rule of sharia became the law of the land?

Mike Kuzara
Wyarno, Wyoming



Mixing church and state never works.

Talk about flawed logic. In the false dichotomy you create, your argument may seem winning. But it doesn't hold up to scrutiny: To suggest American liberals want nothing to do with the fight to defend the nation's treasured liberties is absurd. At issue is not whether to fight, but how. So let's agree on this instead: Certainly liberals are not alone in taking issue with the notion that the best way to combat theocratic authoritarianism is to adopt it at home.

BLACK AND WHITE AND GRAY ALL OVER

Concerning the letters in December's "Reader Response": Yes, God loves everyone. That does not mean, however, he approves of everyone's sins. I am a fundamentalist and a Republican, and I feel that advocating the killing of gays and abortion doctors should be punished to the full extent of the law. But let me also point out that laws protecting your readers' right to trash religious fundamentalists are the same laws that protect hatemongers.

David McRae
Denver, Colorado

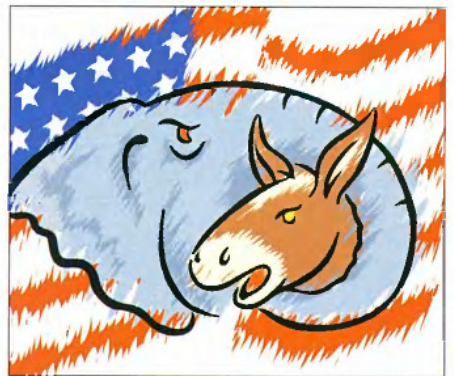
Everyone seems to be writing in these days with one side's viewpoint. Republican, Democrat—how many of us are actually one or the other? I agree and disagree with both sides. I am pro-life, which automatically kicks me to the right. On the other hand I am in favor of gay marriage, which kicks me back over to the left. People on the right refer to the Bible and say homosexuality is a sin, but by that standard so is eating shellfish—and I don't see anyone trying to outlaw Red Lobster. Also, I am not for

organized religion in schools. Children raised in non-Christian or agnostic homes should not be made to feel like outcasts. Our country is ethnically and religiously diverse. That's what makes it so great. Why would we try to impress conformity on a society that prides itself on nonconformity? This country shouldn't be split in half on everything. I am 25, and many of my peers feel the same way. We need new representatives able to speak for us and the new world we live in. We need a new political party, with new faces, new platforms and certainly new ideas.

Debra Logan
Biloxi, Mississippi

We hear you. You can perhaps take solace in the fact that you are in similarly independent-minded company among fellow readers. The Playboy Voter poll (October and November 2006) showed that our readers reject the prescribed right-left breakdown of most issues and seek a commonsense middle ground.

As for David McRae, he appears to come dangerously close to equating criticism on the one side with violence on the other. We can't remember any recent instance of a religion-bashing gay-marriage supporter beating up a couple in the midst of a covenant wedding, but alas, stories of antiabortion and antigay advocates resorting to violence to advance their causes are all too common. The crime against society is not the hating, which we are



Which side do you disagree with less?

all free to do; it is the punching, stabbing or bombing. Another distinction should be made as well: Those critical of religion in public life try to secure a philosophical area free from what they see as constricting systems of thought. But advocates on the other side try to shackle nonbelievers to a restrictive moral philosophy they do not share. In a free society, which is the more palatable goal?

E-mail via the web at letters.playboy.com. Or write: 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10019.

NEWSFRONT


Weather: Increasing clouds 59-43 SPORTS + FINAL Thursday, January 4, 2007

DAILY NEWS
NEW YORK'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER mydailynews.com

EXCLUSIVE

PREZ GOES POSTAL

Outrage as Bush claims new powers to open YOUR mail



SEE PAGE 5

Letter Bomb

WASHINGTON, D.C.—President Bush added a signing statement to the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, asserting the right to bypass federal law protecting the privacy of Americans' mail. Several laws, including the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978, make it a crime to open mail without judicial approval (though exceptions for suspected bombs already exist). Many observers believe Bush's signing statement means he has already begun or intends to begin warrantless mail snooping. Even Republicans—including Senator Susan Collins, who sponsored the original bill—have called on Bush to clarify his intent. As ACLU lawyer Ann Beeson puts it, "The question is, What does the signing statement mean? Why has he suddenly put this in writing if this isn't a change in policy?"

Flour Child

PHILADELPHIA—A woman jailed for three weeks on drug charges while a freshman at Bryn Mawr College settled a lawsuit against the city for \$180,000. The problem with the charges? The woman, Janet Lee, was arrested for carrying ordinary flour, albeit in condoms. At Bryn Mawr, an all-female school, flour-filled condoms are popular as a funny twist on stress-relieving Koosh balls, and Lee, apparently unaware that drug mules sometimes use condoms to transport contraband, attempted to board a flight home with a few of them. A baggage screener saw the condoms in Lee's carry-on luggage and called in city police. Officers claimed their field test showed the flour to be a mix of opium and cocaine. "Under the circumstances, something went terribly wrong," says Lee's lawyer, Jeffrey Ibrahim, who can't understand how the tests could have been so flawed and why it took so long for the mistake to be corrected. In settling the case, the city admitted no wrongdoing.

Beaver Research

CORVALLIS, OREGON—Scientists at Oregon State University are attempting to flip off biological switches that cause homosexuality in sheep. The project, initiated by the federal Sheep Experiment Station in Idaho and funded by the National Institutes of Health, aims to help sheep farmers for whom the eight percent of rams who mount other rams represent a serious economic blow. After determining that "male-oriented rams aren't

completely masculinized during the sexual differentiation process" of fetal development, researchers have developed hormone treatments that have led homosexual rams to mount ewes. Gay activists have been quick to decry the research, worrying that such treatments will eventually be modified for use on humans, technologically enabling parents to essentially breed out homosexuality. Lead researcher Charles Roselli, of Oregon Health and Science University, defends the work: "In general, sexuality has been understudied because of political concerns. People don't want science looking into what determines sexuality. It's a touchy issue. In fact, several studies have shown that people who believe homosexuality is biologically based are less homophobic than those who think this orientation is acquired."

Bottoms Up

PORTLAND, MAINE—Anticipating a legal challenge, the Maine Bureau of Liquor Enforcement dropped a ban on several beer labels, including the one for Santa's Butt Winter Porter and two that depict naked women. On the Winter Porter label, Santa is sitting on a butt—an archaic word for the barrels in which beer was once aged and transported. One of the other two labels—both of which are based on paintings—is a reproduction of Eugène Delacroix's *Liberty Leading the People*, which hangs in the Louvre in Paris.



MARGINALIA

(continued from page 51)

'I don't know anything about it at all. Come back after I've finished with my customers,' he told the volunteer health-education worker. The volunteer, Amir Fattahi, was unsurprised. Observation and experience told him he had interrupted no ordinary business transaction. The four young women, he surmised, were prostitutes striking a deal with the shopkeeper, offering sex in exchange for free or cheap clothes, an increasingly common arrangement in Tehran's fashion shops."

FROM THE BOOK *A Game As Old As Empire*, published in March by BK Currents: "Those who serve the interests of global empire play many different roles. A London bank sets up an offshore subsidiary staffed by men and women with respectable university degrees dressed in the same designer outfits you would expect to see in the City or on Wall Street. Yet their work each day consists of hiding embezzled funds, laundering the profits from drug sales and helping multinational corporations evade taxes. They are economic hit men. An IMF team arrives in an African capital armed with the power to extend vitally needed loans—at the price of slashing its education budget and opening its economy to a flood of goods dumped by North American and European exporters. They are economic hit men. A consultant sets up shop in Baghdad's Green Zone, where, protected by the U.S. Army, he writes new laws governing exploitation of Iraq's oil reserves. He is an economic hit man."



FROM COMMENTS BY Tim Everist, co-founder of Australian fashion label Schwiipe, about the supposed rebelliousness of the company, which prints slogans such as "Think before you breed" and "Ketamine is a drug for horses" on clothes and marketing materials: "To make your own brand is a way of not using what's on offer, but it's a pretty weak form of rebellion. If you're gonna rebel, don't go to school, don't wear clothes, shit like that."

FROM A DISSENT

written by Judge Diana Gribbon Motz in a North Carolina case in which the majority opinion upheld a ban on erotic simulation in strip clubs: "No one would mistake a dancer gyrating her hips for someone having intercourse, nor believe that a Carolina Panthers cheerleader patting her buttocks as part of a dance routine was masturbating."



THE GREAT TAX SWINDLE

MILLIONS OF AMERICANS WILL DUTIFULLY PAY TAXES THIS MONTH.
THOUSANDS OF OTHERS WON'T. HERE'S WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY

There's no doubt about it: Taxes suck. Everyone fudges a little, but some people go to extremes, searching the fine print for loopholes that ultimately exist only in their imagination. This past December Wesley Snipes surrendered to police in Orlando after the IRS accused the actor of claiming nearly \$12 million in fraudulent refunds between 1999 and 2004. Snipes relied on an interpretation of the regulations that created Section 861 of the federal tax code to argue that any citizen who works for a U.S. company is exempt from income tax. You hadn't heard? So many scofflaws have cited repeatedly discredited legal arguments such as this that judges have taken to fining their lawyers. Here are a few others.

Taxes are voluntary. The IRS says so in its own publications. The word *voluntary* refers to the fact that individuals can prepare their own returns and determine how much they owe rather than have the IRS do it. Paying taxes is involuntary.

You don't have to pay taxes on wages because they are a zero-sum exchange of labor for money. The intent of the 16th Amendment ("Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived") has so far been clear to every judge asked to interpret it.

U.S. currency can't be taxed, because the government doesn't own enough gold to allow every bill to be exchanged. Therefore, paper money is merely a debt owed to you by the Treasury. Stop the presses—the

U.S. is no longer on the gold standard. Ironically, tax cheats do not make this argument when deducting expenses they paid with paper money.

Federal income taxes violate the Fifth Amendment, which prohibits the government from taking property without due process of law. The Supreme Court ruled in 1916 that the Constitution can't be read to both grant Congress the power to tax and also take it away. Besides, the IRS says it provides due process: You can pay your tax and sue for a refund or refuse to pay a disputed tax until a court hears your appeal.

If you revoke or refuse your citizenship, you don't have to pay taxes. Although it's possible to rescind your citizenship, you can't just click your heels three times. In a typical case, in 1991 the court rejected a tax evader's argument that he was a "freeborn, natural individual, a citizen of the State of Indiana and a master, not servant, of his government." Before they were shut down, a Colorado couple sold a \$1,600 tax package that

claimed you could become exempt by sending a form letter to the IRS to change your status from U.S. citizen to American citizen.

Only residents of federal areas— Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam and other territories, Indian reservations and military bases—must pay taxes. This notion arises from a deliberate misreading of the word *includes*, used in the definition of who must pay income taxes, as meaning "only" instead of "in addition."

The 16th Amendment, which allows Congress to collect taxes, wasn't properly ratified in 1913. In *The Law That Never Was*, Bill Benson says he visited 48 state capitals and discovered that 33 legislatures had ratified versions with typos, making the amendment null and void. A court ruled in 1989 that Benson's argument has no merit.

Citizens aren't required to file Form 1040 because its instructions don't have an OMB control number as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act. The form has the number, and it covers the instructions.

The 16th Amendment is intended to tax only corporate profits. Besides, Congress revoked the income tax in 1954. In 2003 a judge indulged Irwin Schiff, author of *The Federal Mafia: How It Illegally Imposes and Unlawfully Collects Income Taxes*, for an hour as he explained these notions, which she (like many other jurists before her) dismissed as nonsense. Schiff is currently serving a 13-year sentence for tax evasion.

Wesley Snipes, second from left, arrives in Orlando this past December, accompanied by his legal team. Snipes claimed nearly \$12 million in questionable refunds.



PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: BILL MAHER

A candid conversation with the godfather of political humor about the war, the president, sex crimes, religion and all sorts of political incorrectness

In an age when millions of Americans turn to late-night TV and YouTube videos for satiric commentary on the day's news, Bill Maher is, as he has put it himself, the godfather of political humor.

An "acid-tongued comedian" and "one of the establishment's most entertaining critics," according to *The New York Times*, Maher sends up the nation's movers and shakers on his HBO hit, *Real Time With Bill Maher*, a free-wheeling and funny roundtable discussion of national and global issues. His guests have included George Clooney, Howard Dean, Michael Moore, Robin Williams, Drew Barrymore, the Reverend Jesse Jackson, General Wesley Clark, Gary Hart, Pat Buchanan, Ben Affleck, John Edwards and George Carlin.

On the show, which has received multiple Emmy nominations, Maher has continually attacked George W. Bush—calling the president "a catastrophe that walks like a man" and the "retarded child emperor"—and criticized the war in Iraq. But Maher is no knee-jerk liberal. He is pro-death penalty and pro-Israel, supports a powerful military and has strongly libertarian views on sex and drugs. For Maher there are no sacred cows. This past Halloween he angered the entire continent of Australia by dressing up as TV's Steve Irwin just weeks after a stingray fatally speared the Crocodile Hunter. More recently Maher was embroiled

in controversy when he outed Ken Mehlman, chairman of the Republican National Committee at the time, as a homosexual; Mehlman later quit his job. Christian groups also frequently assail Maher for his cracks about religion, which he calls stupid and dangerous.

None of these storms compare to the hurricane generated by one of his comments following the 9/11 attacks. The president had called the terrorists cowards, prompting Maher to respond on his late-night ABC talk show, *Politically Incorrect*, "Lobbing cruise missiles from 2,000 miles away—that's cowardly. Staying in the airplane when it hits the building—say what you want about it, it's not cowardly."

Maher was denounced by the White House and vilified by the media. Advertisers such as Sears and FedEx pulled their ads from the show, and it was soon canceled. Many people assumed it marked the end of Maher's career, but they were wrong. Six days after the cancellation, he received an award from the Los Angeles Press Club for championing free speech, followed by a Hugh M. Hefner First Amendment Award. In 2003 he returned to television with his smarter, funnier, hipper and, thanks to HBO, uncensored new show.

Besides working in television, Maher, 51, has written a number of books, including *When You Ride Alone You Ride With Bin Laden*, *New Rules* and *Does Anybody*

Have a Problem With That? He was also one of the first TV stars to have a regular Internet show, on Amazon.com, and his blog appears on *The Huffington Post*. He is currently producing and directing a documentary about religion.

After the 2006 election, as Republicans lost control of the House and Senate, we decided to track Maher down for his second *Playboy* Interview. Contributing Editor David Sheff, who interviewed the comedian a decade ago, traveled to Los Angeles for the follow-up. Sheff reports, "Maher hasn't mellowed. On the contrary, he is more emphatic and confident—and funnier. The sessions, which took place at an L.A. hotel (Sylvester Stallone was hanging around) and at Maher's Beverly Hills home (yes, there is a stripper's pole in the club room), began at two P.M., which is early morning for him. He started off sleepily but quickly warmed to the subjects at hand, including the war in Iraq, past and upcoming elections, and the Hollywood trend of starlets eschewing underwear."

PLAYBOY: After the Democratic upset in the midterm election and with a year and a half left for the Bush administration, are you feeling more optimistic about the country's direction?

MAHER: Are you kidding? It's a disaster.



"I don't believe life is necessarily precious, I don't believe everything happens for a reason, and I don't think people necessarily have goodness in them. Life is precious? It can be. It can also be a waste of protoplasm."



"I can probably come across as bullying—especially since it's my show and I have home-court advantage. I should watch that. The real bullies are O'Reilly and Hannity, though. They never let you finish a sentence."



PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIZUNO

"Barack Obama is exciting. Everyone says he's a rock star, which is one of the most overused phrases these days; everybody's a rock star. You know what? If you're not getting blown after the event, you're not a rock star."

Unmitigated. Every day we're killing more American soldiers for an immoral and unwinnable war based on lies. We're killing innocent Iraqis. The environment is disintegrating. It's one debacle after the next. Much of the rest of the world loathes us. We're infinitely less safe than we were before 9/11. Other than that, everything's great.

PLAYBOY: President Bush may disagree. He maintains the world is safer now.

MAHER: The world is not safer. We took Saddam Hussein out, but the idea that he was in league with Osama bin Laden was a direct lie, a bigger lie than the weapons of mass destruction. Being a power-hungry dictator, Hussein would never have given somebody a nuclear weapon, especially someone like Bin Laden, who hated him because he was a secularist. Even three years ago the world wasn't safer because we'd gone into Iraq. Now even Iraq isn't safer. We want to keep Muslim extremists who hate Americans from coming here and hurting us, so what do we do? We go into the heart of the Muslim world and start this cockfight. Muslims around the world do not look at our invasion of Iraq as an attempt to install democracy and freedom. They're far more cynical, and they have reason to be. America has meddled in foreign affairs many times, usually for its own self-interest. We meddled in Iraq in 1963 under Kennedy and put a young assassin named Saddam Hussein on the case of killing its leader. We abandoned the Kurds in 1991. When Bush's father encouraged the Shiites to rise against Hussein, we pulled a Bay of Pigs and didn't show up; they were massacred. In their view we went in for oil and perhaps just to fuck with Muslims. There will be angry Muslims for generations. To those on the right who say Muslims hated us anyway, yes, a certain number of them did. But I don't see how taking that hate and raising it from a simmer to a boil has helped matters.

We were having a picnic and a couple of hornets were stinging us, so we went over and hit the nest with a stick. Exactly how is the world safer?

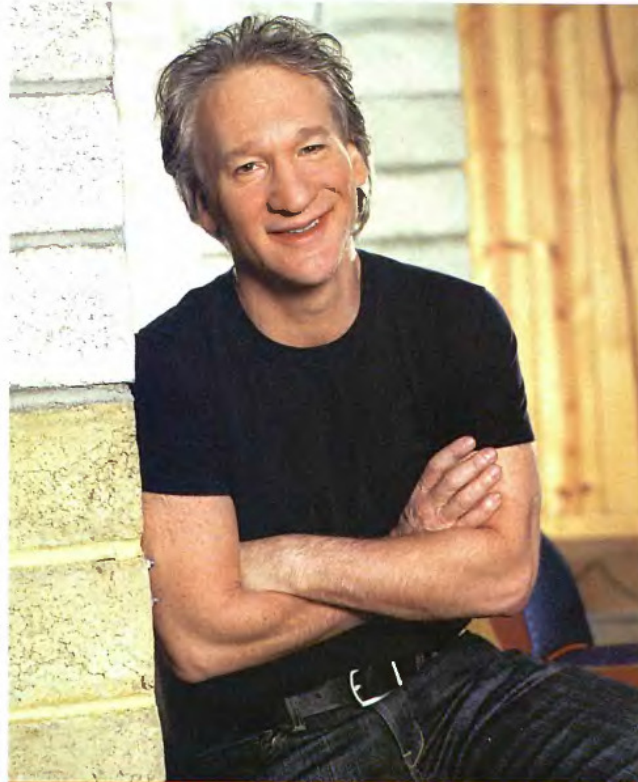
PLAYBOY: What would you have the U.S. do at this point?

MAHER: Get out of Iraq. Having troops and bases in the heart of the Muslim world is a thorn in the side of the people who live there. Throughout the region, we are building giant bases with Pizza Huts and car dealerships, stuff that goes over really well in that part of the world. Next there will be a Spearmint Rhino gentlemen's club.

PLAYBOY: If we pull out, there will likely be increased chaos and slaughter.

MAHER: The sooner we get out, the sooner

it will end. Turkey will come in? Iran will come in? Maybe, maybe not. It's Allah's will. Who knows? Maybe it will shake out in a not so horrible way. The country of Iraq has existed only since 1932. It's seven years younger than Paul Newman. So what if it breaks apart into three countries? It's not worth one more dead American to uphold a line on a map that Winston Churchill drew, probably when he was drunk. We disbanded the Iraqi army, which was not a great idea because now there's a group of Sunnis who know how to use weapons, have no future and have reason to hate us because we put the Shiites in power. We created a massive insurgent guerrilla army. We painted ourselves into a corner, and Bush still



Paris Hilton is the head bitch in the high school of America.

doesn't get it. The Iraq that was is gone and will never rise again. It has already partitioned itself into three countries: Kurdistan is completely autonomous in the north, the Shiite southern part is a theocracy mostly allied with Iran, and the middle is a mess. The Sunnis are still trying to hold on. They're never going to put it back together again. When we went in, we were told Iraqis would throw flowers at us. Anyone who was of a mind to throw flowers is either dead or gone. Moderate Iraq doesn't exist anymore.

PLAYBOY: Did the 2006 election vindicate your views on Iraq?

MAHER: It was a breath of fresh air. Democrats may differ from Republicans only in that they are bought off

by a slightly less scary group of special interests, but at this point a slightly less scary group looks pretty good.

PLAYBOY: What will a Democratic Congress do better?

MAHER: Put pressure on the administration to end the war. Barbara Boxer said she's going to hold hearings on global warming. With scientists! In America! Wow. Bush's theory is we should teach intelligent design along with creationism—treat stupidity as if it's a competing school of thought. In addition, in medical school, along with what ob-gyns normally learn, we're going to teach that storks bring babies.

PLAYBOY: You once said that if we get any stupider about science, soon we won't even be able to make our own crystal meth.

MAHER: Look at our leader. He doesn't believe in evolution. I'm embarrassed by the cretins who have taken over. Luckily they're on the way out. In the next election, even if the Republicans win the presidency, at least it won't be Bush.

PLAYBOY: What Democratic candidate would you support?

MAHER: Barack Obama is exciting. Everyone says he's a rock star, which is one of the most overused phrases these days; everybody's a rock star. You know what? If you're not getting blown after the event, you're not a rock star. But okay, Obama is a rock star. Fine, if that's what it takes. He seems articulate and serious and thoughtful and electable.

PLAYBOY: Some people say he's inexperienced and unprepared to be president.

MAHER: Bush was woefully unprepared. It obviously doesn't prevent Americans from voting for you. If Obama wants it, he's one of the Democrats' most viable candidates. John Edwards too. In America you can't get elected president unless you can pronounce all four *e*'s in the word *shit*. Clinton, Carter

and Bush could. Edwards can.

PLAYBOY: Can you?

MAHER: She-e-e-e-it.

PLAYBOY: You'd be a great candidate.

MAHER: Yeah, right. I think religion is bad and drugs are good. You want to be my campaign manager?

PLAYBOY: Sure. We like a challenge, especially when dealing with your checkered past.

MAHER: Who has more of a checkered past than Bush? He was a drunk until he was 40. He wouldn't answer the cocaine question, which was a way of saying, "Yeah, I did it, and go fuck yourself." That's one of the few things I admire him for. He basically said, "I was a sinner, and now I'm not." Americans love that.



What's in your martini?



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What they don't like is when you get blown in office.

PLAYBOY: Speaking of Bill Clinton, you have said he should be allowed to run again.

MAHER: In a democracy, the people should be able to elect whomever they want. It's not a very clever tribe of Indians that prevents its greatest warriors from taking the field of battle.

PLAYBOY: The Constitution would have to be changed for him to do so.

MAHER: We'll change it so both he and Arnold Schwarzenegger can run. Can you imagine the interest if Clinton ran against Schwarzenegger? The debate could be on pay-per-view.

PLAYBOY: Would you support Clinton?

MAHER: Sure. He has a reputation as a party animal because of the Monica Lewinsky situation, but basically he's a wonk. He can do Monica *and* run the country. He's a multitasker. If he had been president when Katrina hit, he would have been in New Orleans three days before the storm. He wouldn't have slept. Yes, he would have been getting blown—come on, Slick Willie in the Big Easy? He would have had some excellent *étouffée*. But he would have been working the whole time. I think the country has learned a lesson: If he can do the job, let the guy be who he is. People don't care about sex.

PLAYBOY: They cared about Mark Foley.

MAHER: Monica Lewinsky was an adult. Foley went after boys. Actually, I wasn't terribly taken aback by Foley. He was like a college professor, in a job where every year there's a new wave of fresh meat. He would look over the field and decide. He probably had pretty good radar to know which kids were amenable. From the evidence we have, he tried to do something only after they were out of the page program. If a 19-year-old gay kid wants to go out with an older guy, why not? The guys his own age are probably dumb doofuses.

PLAYBOY: But even after leaving their jobs as pages, they were far younger than Foley.

MAHER: Look, I'm a 51-year-old man, and I go out with girls in their early 20s. I'd be hypocritical if I said it's ridiculous for a gay man to do that. I'm very libertarian about love. I'm the only guy I've ever heard who defends Mary Kay Letourneau.

PLAYBOY: Are you saying teachers should be allowed to have sex with their 13-year-old students, as she did, and not go to jail?

MAHER: I think it's a little offbeat, but you know, I believe in the double standard. If a 28-year-old male teacher is screwing a 13-year-old girl, that's a crime. But with Debra Lafave [another teacher who had sex with a student] screwing her 14-year-old boy student, the crime is that we didn't get it on videotape. Was he being taken advantage of? I wish I had been taken advantage of like that. What a memory she gave him! I would think he's a champion among his friends. Are you

kidding? Even with Michael Jackson—**PLAYBOY:** Are you defending him, too?

MAHER: I'm not defending him, but I do believe his case has a nuance that makes it different from other child molestation cases—not that I'm saying he necessarily did it, but come on. Jackson's worst accusers never said he did anything brutal, like bend them over a table and ram them—you know, like a priest. The worst they said he did was a little grabby-grabby under the covers. Don't get me wrong. It's a crime. You shouldn't be able to grab a kid that age, but when I heard about it, all I could think of was my being brutally beaten up on the playground when I was 12—a kid punching me in the face while another held me down. If I could go back and trade that experience for being gently masturbated by a pop star, I would do it in a New York second. Frankie Valli could jerk me off. Bobby Sherman could. Marvin Gaye could.

PLAYBOY: You're being remarkably open-minded.

MAHER: Woody Allen is the one we might have been wrong about. I was pretty hard on him on my show, but how many

When you say things when you're drunk, it's not the liquor talking. The liquor makes you more honest. Mel Gibson is a bright, talented guy and a despicable anti-Semite.

years has his relationship continued? Maybe that, like Letourneau's, was true love. If you look at him or Letourneau, who is still with the guy after her time in jail—they have two kids—the lesson is love will take the form it's going to take. Sometimes it's at great variance with the mainstream. I don't think teachers should be allowed to do that. I think they should be fired. But to send that woman to jail and separate them all those years?

PLAYBOY: You may think Clinton's or even Foley's personal life is irrelevant, but you apparently draw the line in some cases, such as when you outed Ken Mehlman, who was chairman of the Republican National Committee.

MAHER: I didn't know I was outing him. My bad.

PLAYBOY: How could you not have known?

MAHER: I guess I'm in a bit of a news-junkie bubble. For years everyone talked about him as if it was known he was gay. The truth is I don't know. I never dated the guy.

PLAYBOY: Are you apologizing?

MAHER: If I disrupted anybody's life, I'm sorry. I probably shouldn't have said it. I'm

not an outer. I don't believe in outing. I mentioned Mehlman because I had a joke about him. I didn't mean to out him.

PLAYBOY: Were you surprised when CNN cut your comments about Mehlman and had YouTube remove the clip from its website? Also, *The New York Times* wrote about the incident but didn't print Mehlman's name.

MAHER: I was surprised because I didn't think I was doing anything out of school.

PLAYBOY: Do you make an exception to your feelings about outing if the doseted gay man espouses traditional family values, demonizes gays and pushes antigay legislation?

MAHER: I don't. For years it was an inside joke about Mehlman, but do I really know? Everybody talks about everybody. Rosie O'Donnell said Oprah is "a little bit gay." I'd never heard that before. Everybody makes Tom Cruise gay jokes now. I don't know if that's true, either.

PLAYBOY: You called Katie Holmes Tom Cruise's beard.

MAHER: Yeah. There are something like 25 celebrity fragrances now, so on the show we made up fragrances by other celebrities. Tom Cruise's was called Bat Shit—the fragrance to use on your beard.

PLAYBOY: As a comedian, do you rub your hands together when you wake up to news about the misadventures of celebrities like Cruise and Mel Gibson?

MAHER: It's gold.

PLAYBOY: What was your opinion of Gibson's arrest and outburst?

MAHER: When you say things when you're drunk, it's not the liquor talking. The liquor makes you more honest. He's a bright, talented guy and a despicable anti-Semite. All those people live by the press, then they're surprised when they die by the press. At least Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie are clever enough to take a page out of the old John and Yoko book and say, "If you're going to photograph everything we do, we're going to use that for good. You'll have to photograph starving children and AIDS in Africa." I admire them for doing that.

PLAYBOY: Who are your favorite celebrities to make fun of?

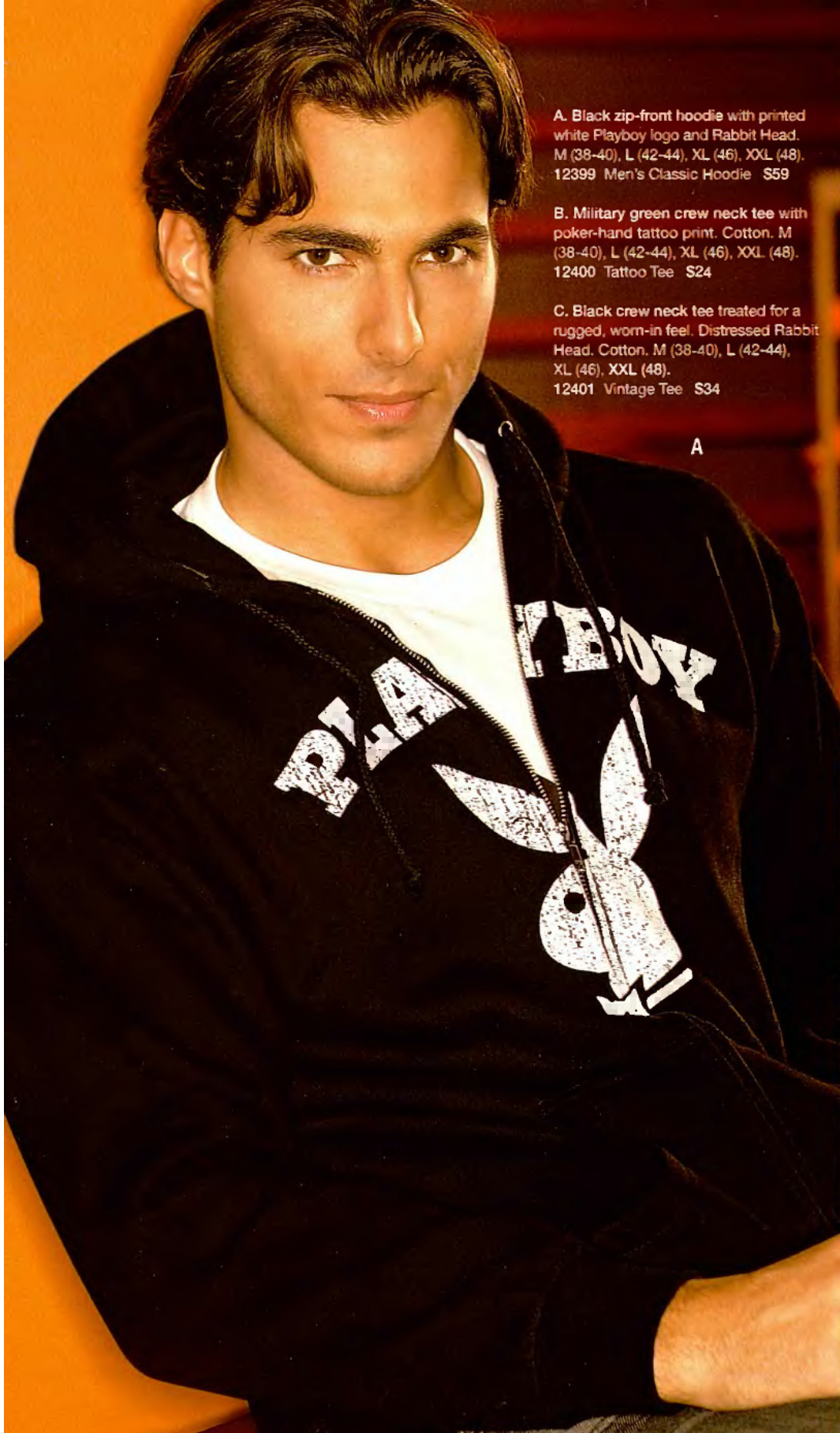
MAHER: We don't usually talk about celebrities much, but occasionally in the monologue we mention the brat patrol—the Paris Hilton, Britney Spears, Lindsay Lohan contingent. I feel no guilt about whatever joke we do, because these people exist only to be made fun of. They don't otherwise contribute. I guess Lindsay Lohan is an actress, but Britney Spears doesn't seem to have a career anymore except as tabloid fodder.

PLAYBOY: That group is continually photographed without underwear. What do you make of the trend?

MAHER: I would never discourage it. Girls not wearing underwear is a wonderful thing.

PLAYBOY: Have any of those girls been on your show?

(continued on page 130)



A. Black zip-front hoodie with printed white Playboy logo and Rabbit Head. M (38-40), L (42-44), XL (46), XXL (48). 12399 Men's Classic Hoodie \$59

B. Military green crew neck tee with poker-hand tattoo print. Cotton. M (38-40), L (42-44), XL (46), XXL (48). 12400 Tattoo Tee \$24

C. Black crew neck tee treated for a rugged, worn-in feel. Distressed Rabbit Head. Cotton. M (38-40), L (42-44), XL (46), XXL (48). 12401 Vintage Tee \$34

A



B







C

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BOOSTING THE

BIG



TUNA



WHEN JOHN MENDELL FIGURED THE DAYS OF THE CHICAGO OUTFIT WERE OVER, HE MADE A FATAL MISCALCULATION

Nothing was as it appeared at 1407 Ashland Avenue in River Forest, an affluent suburb west of Chicago. From the street, the ranch-style home—clad in buff-colored fieldstone—looked smaller and more subdued than the houses around it. By the first week of the new year the elderly owners were already ensconced in their warm-weather second residence and had a caretaker periodically drop by to make sure the furnace still worked and no pipes had burst. On the morning of January 7, 1978 the caretaker pulled into the semicircular driveway just as he had the day before. Michael Volpe was 75, white-haired and slight in stature but still spry. After opening the sculpted double doors, he was prepared to work the buttons just inside to disarm the elaborate security system. But instead he stood transfixed in

the mirrored foyer. Something was wrong. Although there was no sign that the burglar alarm had been tripped, the house was in disarray. As he would later testify, he saw his boss's pants turned inside out and strewn about the hallway, a violation that seemed to disturb him even more than the opened drawers and overturned furniture.

Almost every burglary is shocking, especially for the person who discovers it. But this was not your typical suburban break-in nor was the owner your typical victim. Volpe didn't pick up the phone to dial the police. In fact, he never reported the crime. The home's owner and Volpe's longtime employer,

BY HILLEL LEVIN



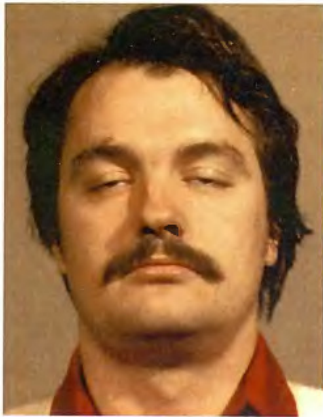
Anthony Accardo, wasn't one to leave his troubles to the local authorities. For decades Tony "Big Tuna" Accardo had been leader of the Outfit, Chicago's Mafia, and some considered him to be the most powerful man in the history of organized crime. His long reign was due in good part to his willingness—even eagerness—to delegate authority to a coterie of able underbosses. But that day, at the age of 71, he hopped onto the next plane out of Palm Springs, prepared to take matters into his own hands.

Meanwhile, in the working-class suburb of Lincolnwood on the North Side of Chicago, there was another home in which nothing was as it appeared. This house, a sturdy two-story brick Georgian, was much bigger than the modest wood-frames on the rest of the block. As far as the neighbors were concerned, the homeowner, 31-year-old John Mendell, was a hardworking young man who ran the machine shop his father-in-law had established a few blocks away. He was

agents their best shot yet at busting Accardo, who despite his long criminal career had never spent a night in prison.

But no charges would ever come from the intensive investigations that followed the burglar killings, and over the years the Accardo boost became another much-debated yarn in Outfit lore. When FBI agent turned crime writer Bill Roemer used the tale to open his book *Accardo: The Genuine Godfather*, some journalists and police investigators scoffed. They argued the cascade of hits was just a heavy-handed Outfit campaign to collect street taxes from independent burglars and had little or nothing to do with the break-in.

This year, nearly three decades later, some of the mystery surrounding Mendell's death will lift, as a major racketeering trial gets under way in Chicago. The case, dubbed Operation Family Secrets, pits U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald (of Valerie Plame fame) against some of the remaining leaders and enforcers of the Outfit, now but a shadow of its former



John Mendell (above left) was a great wire man, but when he made his big heist through a window at Levinson's pawnshop (above), he initiated a chain of events that left him dead in the trunk of an Oldsmobile. Mendell allegedly broke into Anthony Accardo's suburban Chicago house (above right) with ex-cop Vincent Moretti (middle right), looking for jewels. Underboss Joey Aiuppa (near right) was the old-timer who engineered the vicious retribution. Ron Jarrett (left) and Little Tony Borsellino (far right) helped kill Mendell.



tall with shaggy dark hair and a full mustache, but such was the fashion of the day. No one questioned the source of the furs and jewels his older, redheaded wife wore. Nor did anyone appear to notice the late hours he kept—until he went missing and was found dead, on February 20, 1978, trussed and slashed in the trunk of his car. In newspaper accounts of the murder, he was described not as the enterprising small-business man his neighbors knew but as a burglar, one of Chicago's top wire men, capable of defeating the most sophisticated alarm systems. In an equally bizarre turn, the media linked him to both the Accardo break-in, which took place 10 days before his disappearance, and a million-dollar jewel heist of the previous month.

Mendell was not the only one swept into the vortex of Accardo's fury. In just two weeks, four of Mendell's fellow boosters had been found dead in cars parked around Chicago. To cover the tracks of their killers, as many as four others would die in the coming months. Even caretaker Volpe would disappear. All in all it was a murderous spree unparalleled in the Outfit's modern era, and it gave FBI

self in the heyday under Accardo. The government charges that the Mob furthered its criminal enterprise by using an elite team of hit men to commit 18 murders. One of the killers, Nicholas Calabrese, will be a key witness. The most notable victim on the indictment's list is Tony Spilotro, the Outfit's incendiary Vegas enforcer and the basis for Joe Pesci's character in Martin Scorsese's *Casino*. According to prosecutors, Spilotro was killed in a Bensenville, Illinois basement and not in the Indiana cornfield where he was buried, as vividly depicted in the film.

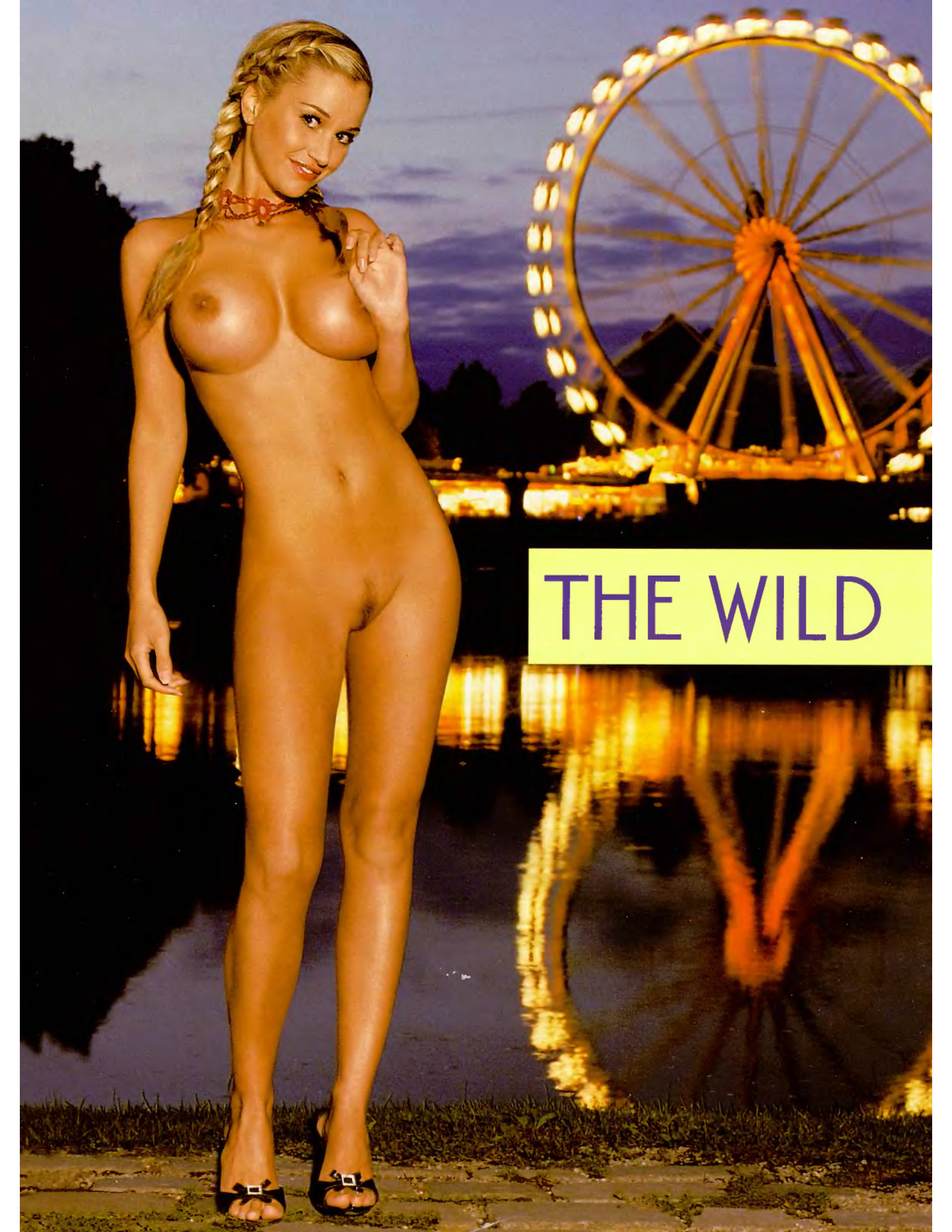
Mendell is also on that murder list, along with two of his associates. According to the indictment, Nicholas Calabrese's older brother, Frank—the Outfit's most reliably vicious hit man—was among those dispatched to kill the burglars. Although the killings have received hardly any attention from the Chicago press, they remain the most fascinating of family secrets for Mob aficionados.

Questions will always remain about the break-in, but recent interviews with investigators and others involved with the crimes and the criminals offer new *(continued on page 80)*

ABLISS



"We came out to smoke but stayed to diddle."



THE WILD



Regina
Deutinger

GERMANY

Regina, 24, hails from Munich and knows her way around a Ferris wheel. She's got a heart as gold as her locks. Turn-ons: fast cars, jewelry, sunny beaches and the ocean. Her measurements: 97-60-92. See? She can even make learning the metric system worthwhile.



WORLD OF PLAYBOY

A TASTING MENU FROM OUR FOREIGN EDITIONS

Congratulations! You've just won an all-expenses-paid trip around the globe, and you don't even have to move. You'll meet some of the world's most exotic women, all of whom have mysteriously misplaced their clothes. Ophélie Marie of France would like to play the piano for you. Edyta Kochanowska of Poland wishes to sit with you by a fire. There's no telling what Estela Pereira of Brazil has in mind. Life is good, isn't it? You won't get this treatment anywhere else.

Estela
Pereira

BRAZIL

Estela is not your average day at the beach. Brazilian PLAYBOY's official World Cup girl 2006, she makes even the most heralded Latin soccer stars fall over themselves trying to score. The 21-year-old Rio de Janeiro native's shockingly sexy pictorial in the issue below (May 2006) runs no fewer than 26 pages. Tidbit for foot fetishists: She wears size six and a half.





Ophélie
Marie
FRANCE

This tasty little brioche from Avignon says her role model is Pam Anderson. Ophélie has studied all of Pam's postures in her movies and PLAYBOY pictorials, and she can reproduce them on demand. Very impressive. Still, Ophélie possesses a certain je ne sais quoi, a style and sexiness uniquely her own. And frankly, the naked-in-heels look will never go out of fashion as far as we're concerned. In her spare time, the 23-year-old likes skydiving, skiing, snowboarding and a night out with a man in uniform.



Beautiful Roxana—Romanian PLAYBOY's 2006 Playmate of the Year—has dreams she would like to fulfill while she's here on earth: a pictorial in American PLAYBOY and sex on an airplane, for starters. She describes herself as "optimistic, volcanic and ambitious." She likes massages and extreme sports, and she says she prefers men who have a sense of humor and no inhibitions. That's definitely our kind of girl.

Roxana
Ungureanu
ROMANIA







Sanja
Grohar

SLOVENIA

Of all the beauties in this dizzying pictorial, Sanja has generated the most enthusiasm among the younger members of our staff. The succulent 23-year-old from the city of Kranj possesses both a confidence and an innocence that make her photographs—well, see for yourself. No wonder Sanja was named Miss Slovenia in 2005. We're guessing you'll be seeing more of her.



Dasha
Astafyeva

UKRAINE

Dashing Dasha hails from a town called Ordzhonikidze, which is perched on the Black Sea. The mysterious 21-year-old plans to study English, and we hope she follows through. She likes kids, the movie *Amélie* and the music of Goran Bregovic (the genius behind the song "100 Lat Modej Parze"). When asked about the best date she has ever been on, Dasha says, "I hope it will be soon!"





Olga
Kurbatova

RUSSIA

Russian PLAYBOY's Playmate of the Year. Those six words alone would make any man curious. Well, here she is: Olga Kurbatova, who last appeared in our Russian edition's July 2006 issue with her PMOY pictorial. Born in Moscow, the 27-year-old is a big tennis fan (naturally, with a name ending in -ova). We don't know about her skills, but we can vouch for her form.



Edyta
Kochanowska

POLAND

She likes dancing, sports, Italian food and cinema. She dreams of someday living in a beautiful home on a glistening lake. She hails from Olsztyn and will soon turn 24. Her name is Edyta, and she is a Polish vixen. There is something about the curve in her lower back that makes us think of skiing down the greatest slope of fresh powder in the world.





HOW RENEGADE BLOGGERS AND FEARLESS PAPARAZZI HAVE
REINVENTED THE WORLD OF HOLLYWOOD GOSSIP

LA Confidential 2007

On a Friday night last November Michael Richards was performing stand-up at the Laugh Factory in Los Angeles. A group of young black men in the cheap seats started heckling the comedian, who looked very much like Kramer, the character he played in *Seinfeld*. But then, suddenly, the kooky guy from across the hall lost it.

"Fifty years ago we'd have you upside down with a fucking fork up your ass," Richards screamed at the hecklers. One of the young men had already started filming the tirade. Richards continued, "You can talk, you can talk, you can talk. You're brave now, motherfucker. Throw his ass out. He's a nigger! He's a nigger! He's a nigger! A nigger; look, there's a nigger!"

The guy with the camera happened to have a friend at TMZ.com, an entertainment-news website named for

the "30-mile zone" around Hollywood, a show-business moniker for the concept that anything important to the industry occurs there. The footage was live on the site by 8:30 A.M. the following Monday. The next day the story was all over the newspapers, even commanding the tabloid covers. But by then anyone with an insatiable appetite for celebrity gossip had already gotten the goods.

The Richards rant was the top video of 2006 for TMZ, a year-old site owned partially by America Online—clocking in at a staggering 4 million streams. "Seeing is absolutely believing," says Harvey Levin, TMZ's fast-talking, perm-tanned managing editor, who oversees a staff of 25 in Glendale, California. "Now we do it only if what we know we're getting is true, and that has changed the game."

Thanks to TMZ and a growing handful of other sites



No one's secrets are off-limits. The exploits of (from left) Nicole Richie, Britney Spears and Lindsay Lohan are documented with photos and videos and posted immediately on numerous gossip sites.

devoted to posting footage of celebrities misbehaving in the YouTube era, the gossip game has dramatically changed. Gone are the days of name-brand gossip columnists hobnobbing with socialites and celebrities for scoops in gilded dining rooms and at red-carpet premieres. Gone is the gravitas of columns conjecturing about which boldfaced name may be getting drunk, divorced or dissed. What use is conjecture when you can watch hard-partying oil heir Brandon Davis talk trash about Lindsay Lohan's "firecrotch" or read the police report of Mel Gibson getting arrested for drunk driving while spewing anti-Semitic slurs—practically in real time?

"I think it's the Wild West out there," says venerable publicist Ken Sunshine, who represents tabloid mascots Justin Timberlake and Leonardo DiCaprio. "It has certainly dramatically changed the nature of the way celebrities get covered, and I don't know if that's for better or worse."

Now it's a game of getting the gossip online quickly and with empirical evidence on sites like TMZ and The Smoking Gun and having those reports instantly dissected on gossip sites, including Gawker, Defamer, Fleshbot, Jossip, Hollywood Tuna, Pink Is the New Blog, Perez Hilton and dozens of others. The new need for speed means that when Paris Hilton backs into a car or Britney Spears flashes her perfectly waxed crotch, you are there. The image spreads across the world in mere seconds and forces mainstream media to cover scandals that would once have been deemed too poten-

tially libelous for publication. "Traditional media are embracing these stories more than ever before because people like reading them and they know they're legit," says Levin, also a lawyer, a former TV newsman and the onetime executive producer of the syndicated entertainment show *Celebrity Justice*. Sunshine, along with most other celebrity publicists, thinks this is perhaps the worst thing about the new-media gossip era: "Legitimate news outlets that cover celebrities will now just pick up what's posted on these sites and think they're covered legally."

Even if mainstream media won't cover a celebrity scandal that breaks online, the scandal lives forever in a hyperlinked international network of blogs. Just over a week after the Richards rant, Britney flashed her vagina to the paparazzi while exiting a car. Fleshbot ran the picture and expressed disappointment that the shot wasn't more revealing: "You can't see a goddamn thing; there's not even the barest hint of a peach cleft or landing strip to indicate that you are, in fact, looking at actual female pudenda and not the glossy, rounded surface of a life-size Barbie-doll crotch." A day later Britney flashed the photographers a much more satisfying X-rated shot while exiting Paris's car. It was almost as if Britney had hiked up her short dress (sans underwear) for the cameras. You could see everything—even the C-section scar—on Fleshbot and the numerous sites that subsequently linked to it.

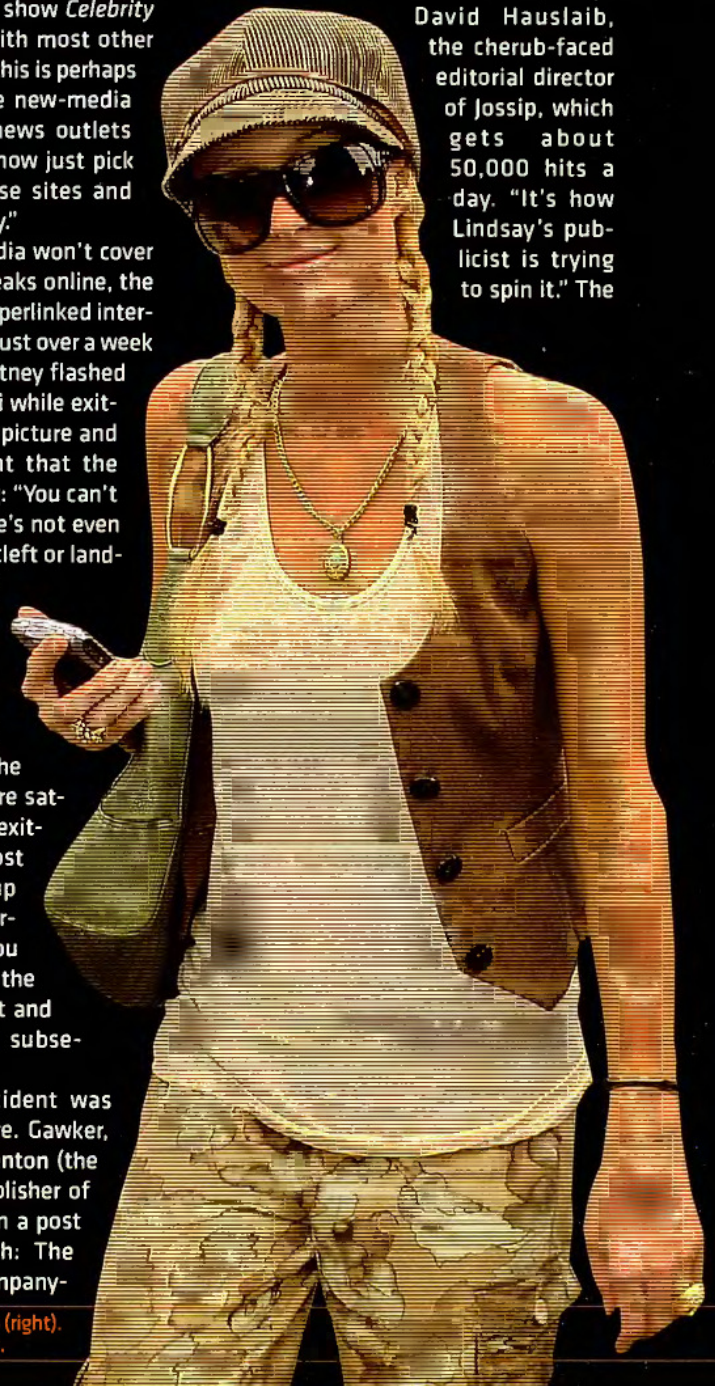
A month later the incident was still hot in the blogosphere. Gawker, which is owned by Nick Denton (the same New York-based publisher of Defamer and Fleshbot), ran a post titled "Britney's Vagflash: The Breakdown" with an accompany-

ing pie chart. Pre-"vagflash," 59 percent of Britney's press reports mentioned her divorce. After the flash, 44 percent of her press reports mentioned the vag, usually in the headline or first paragraph.

Gawker associate editor Doree Shafrir, a 29-year-old Columbia Journalism School graduate, says she was inundated with responses to her posts about the vagflash. In a meta-moment Shafrir also posted an interview with Levin of TMZ and an unnamed photographer about the provenance of this crotch shot. "The role of a gossip blogger is to offer fresh insight and perspective," says Shafrir. "No one cares if you're first anymore."

Instead of being first, blogs now try to get hits for fresh commentary and have that commentary linked on other blogs to drive traffic and increase ad revenue. "It's not that Lindsay Lohan fell down and broke her wrist," says

David Hauslaib, the cherub-faced editorial director of Jossip, which gets about 50,000 hits a day. "It's how Lindsay's publicist is trying to spin it." The



TMZ.com's managing editor, Harvey Levin (above left), and favorite target, Paris Hilton (right). "Seeing is absolutely believing," says Levin. He's about to start a TMZ TV show for Fox.



Britney Spears went commando, and the gossip blogs went crazy. Eventually mainstream media—even network TV—followed their lead.

commentary doesn't even have to be particularly juicy. Levin says a seven-second video posted on TMZ of Britney walking down a hotel lobby corridor commands an insane number of hits. "People want to know if she's gained weight or if she looks happy. Has she changed her hair?" Many paparazzi videos featured on sites like TMZ and X17online.com are equally boring—endless shots of celebrities in bad lighting, waiting outside a club for the valet to bring their car. But for many readers it's almost like being there. Even network TV is impressed: Fox is creating a TMZ-based TV show for the fall.

Shafir works part-time at the Gawker headquarters in SoHo, in a street-level loft where about 25 people under the age of 35 sit in front of Mac laptops and Dell desktops all day, surfing the Net. On a recent Thursday afternoon the bloggers are silently working while Bob Dylan plays from someone's computer. There is intermittent giggling as they stumble upon something funny in the blogosphere and presumably link to it. Book galleys, magazines and newspapers cover most of the shiny black desk surfaces. By five P.M. they are clearing out after a long day. Shafir and her cohort, Emily Gould, head to the unofficial Silicon Alley canteen, Balthazar, for a drink. Neither has plans to hit any industry events to network and forage for gossip that night—highly unusual for two new hires under 30 in a high-profile media job.

I should know. Back when I was the gossip columnist for *New York* magazine, I would usually hit at least two events a night, and it almost always paid off with sources, quotes and items. It was a mandatory part of the job—cabs could be expensed. It was fine to show up at

the office around noon the next day if I had gotten good gossip the night before. Gould, however, starts her day at the office before eight A.M.

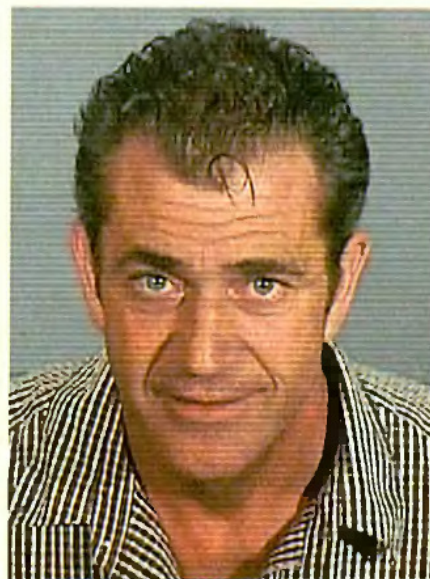
"We're certainly not on Nadine Johnson's list," says Shafir. She is referring to the invite roster of a powerful New York publicist who represents the nightclub Bungalow 8 and hotelier André Balazs, among other chic clients who host hot-ticket events. Johnson was once married to longtime *New York Post* Page Six gossip editor Richard Johnson, and it's hardly a coincidence that her clients are often mentioned favorably in his column. (The couple has kids together.) "Some people see us as the enemy," adds Gould, a dewy 25-year-old wearing a white sweater, tall white leather boots and jeans, "and some people see us as a frenemy—because we are."

Unlike the old guard of gossip columnists (see Liz Smith and Cindy Adams), the new Gawker gals are not interested in making friends with the rich and famous. They could care less about lunching at a media hangout like Michael's or dining at a glitterati clubhouse like the Waverly Inn. Not only do they shun the spotlight, they feel uncomfortable if it's pointed in their direction. Gould's personal blog was recently hacked into, an experience she found extremely unsettling. It's hard to imagine she could muster the courage to try to interview a notoriously press-averse celebrity like Robert De Niro.

"We aren't starstruck like Perez Hilton," says Shafir, referring to blogger Mario Lavandeira, who two years ago started a site named for his favorite celebuteante. He's known for editorializing on paparazzi shots and recently wrote (in what looks like Wite-Out) the words *tragic*, *mess* and *trash*

across pictures of a bloated-looking Britney heading to a nightclub days before Page Six reported she was going to a "spa" to recover from a spate of intense partying. He also draws what he calls coke boogers coming out of celebrity nostrils and semen coming out of their mouths. He has dismissed some famous actresses as sluts and obsessively speculates on which celebrities may be gay; he has been at least partly responsible for Lance Bass and Neil Patrick Harris publicly announcing their homosexuality. Despite all this, Perez Hilton gets major advertising from NBC, VH1 and the ABC Family channel—mainstream media outlets eager to reach his 4 million daily hits. "If ABC Family is down with Perez Hilton," Lavandeira says, "my ad sales people are doing something right."

A larger-than-life character with black-framed glasses and hair color that changes weekly, (continued on page 136)





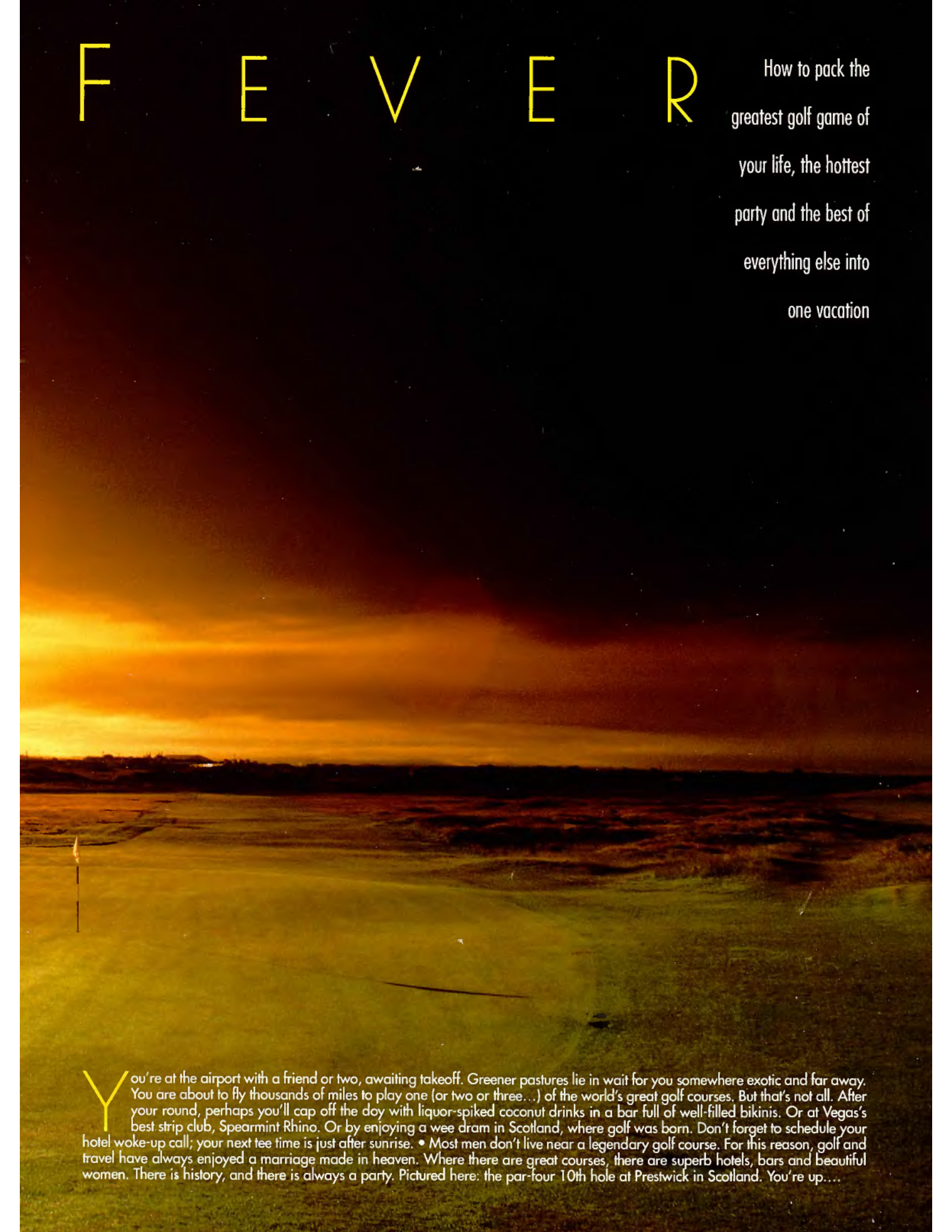
"Excuse me, doctor, but aren't you going a long way around to find out what's wrong with my head?"

S W I N G



F E V E R

How to pack the
greatest golf game of
your life, the hottest
party and the best of
everything else into
one vacation



You're at the airport with a friend or two, awaiting takeoff. Greener pastures lie in wait for you somewhere exotic and far away. You are about to fly thousands of miles to play one (or two or three...) of the world's great golf courses. But that's not all. After your round, perhaps you'll cap off the day with liquor-spiked coconut drinks in a bar full of well-filled bikinis. Or at Vegas's best strip club, Spearmint Rhino. Or by enjoying a wee dram in Scotland, where golf was born. Don't forget to schedule your hotel wake-up call; your next tee time is just after sunrise. • Most men don't live near a legendary golf course. For this reason, golf and travel have always enjoyed a marriage made in heaven. Where there are great courses, there are superb hotels, bars and beautiful women. There is history, and there is always a party. Pictured here: the par-four 10th hole at Prestwick in Scotland. You're up....

Golf in Oz: Australia

They call it Oz because it's a magical faraway land and because Aussie sounds like Ozzie, especially when you've been drinking. On the Sandbelt around Melbourne you'll discover stellar courses as well as some of down under's best beaches, bars and beauties.

PLAYING: Eighty years ago Dr. Alister MacKenzie left the United Kingdom for America, where he and Bobby Jones designed Augusta National, arguably the greatest golf course in the world. But MacKenzie also had a hand in three world-class courses in Oz. Best among them is Royal Melbourne (royalmelbourne.com.au), which on most lists ranks in the world's top five. You need a letter of introduction from a U.S. club to tread Royal Mel's glass-slick greens, but Aussies are a friendly lot; ask around, mention how far you've come and you might get on. Victoria Golf Club (victoriagolf.com.au) features MacKenzie's famed Sandbelt bunkers. Golf fans will remember the time in a 1964 tournament when Arnold Palmer climbed 15 feet up a tree on the ninth hole to hit a "tree iron." Par that hole and your buddies will have to buy you an Arnold

Palmer cocktail—lemonade and iced tea (with your choice of spike). Finally, Kingston Heath (kingstonheath.com.au) has hungry rough that makes it one of Australia's finest tests. Other noted courses in the area include Metropolitan (metropolitangolf.com.au) and Commonwealth (www.commonwealthgolf.com.au). While you're out there, play a game of "bottle, bottle, bottle," a local favorite in which players bet a good bottle of Aussie red wine on the front nine, back nine and total score.

STAYING: The Park Hyatt Melbourne in town (from \$350 a night, melbourne.park.hyatt.com) features the Raddi restaurant—try the ivory-chocolate mousse—and Cuba, a cigar lounge where the \$65 Cuban Cohiba Robusto is king of the humid. You're half an hour from the courses but smack in the middle of the city.

PARTYING: Downtime down under starts at St. Kilda Beach, where gentle bay waves move past swimmers to lap at the feet of Aussie sunbathers. After dark you could start at the Ding Dong Lounge on Market Lane (dingdonglounge.com.au), where live rock shakes the rafters well into the night. For a quieter evening, the Melbourne Supper Club (melbournepubs.com) is open until six A.M. on week-ends. Think weathered couches, cigar smoke and jazz. For a real delight, however, hit Tony Starr's Kitten Club (kittenclub.com.au) on Little Collins Street, where the style is 1960s cool and you might find a souvenir to take home with you. —Steve Ager

Green Monkey: Barbados

A mere three-and-a-half-hour flight from Miami, Barbados is a golfer's paradise. It's no coincidence that many pros (Ian Woosnam, Ernie Els) have homes on this quaint little island.

PLAYING: You'll want to play three courses; all are in St. James, just north of Bridgetown, the capital. Royal Westmoreland (royal-westmoreland.com), a Robert Trent Jones Jr. course, is private but offers tee times to visitors daily between 10:20 and 11 A.M. You can also get a pass if you're staying on site in one of the houses or villas. The 171-yard third is modeled on the Redan hole at North Berwick in Scotland. But brilliant as it is, Royal W takes a back-

seat to two Tom Fazio courses at the Sandy Lane resort (sandy lane.com). The Country Club Course, home of last year's World Golf Championships World Cup, is a purist's delight. Its lush greens, five lakes and smashing views of the Caribbean let you know you're playing a special game even if your score sucks. The second is the brand-new Green Monkey, named for the island's species of *Chlorocebus*, vervet monkeys you will likely see wandering the course. (If you find one carrying a golf club, run.) Green Monkey has coral cliffs—it is carved out of an old quarry—and a monkey-shaped grass island in a bunker on the 16th hole (see photo below). Land on that monkey and you can shave two shots off your score.

STAYING: You may as well go for broke and stay at Sandy Lane (from \$900 a night, sandy lane.com). This is all-out living, where the service is so high-end, visiting royalty feel as if they haven't left home. Tiger Woods was married here, in 2004, and rented all 112 rooms. For an alternative, a romantic room at Cobblers Cove (from \$315, cobblers cove.com) will tickle your fancy, and the hotel can arrange a tee time at Royal Westmoreland or Sandy Lane. If you prefer a louder type of stay, get some pals to chip in and rent your own villa by the sea through barbadosvillavacations.com.

PARTYING: For the perfect 19th hole, head to the Whistling Frog at the south-coast party hotel Time Out at the Gap (gemsbarbados.com). Order the pan-fried flying fish, a local delicacy. Beach time is a must. The island sand ranges from pearly white to hot pink. For dinner, the Crane Resort (thecrane.com)—home of world-class Caribbean flavors and dazzling views of Crane Beach—is a must. When you're ready for whatever comes next, opt for Club Xtreme (clubxtreme.net), a 10,000-square-foot bacchanal in which the DJ stays up late and laser lights will burn your eyes, if the barely dressed women haven't already. —Kevin Cook

Maui Wowee: Hawaii

The Hawaiian Islands boast no shortage of killer golf resorts worth the long trip—Princeville on Kauai, Manele Bay on Lanai, Mauna Kea on the Big Island. But for an all-around good time, Wailea, on the island of Maui, delivers the right mix of play on and off the course. Here's the lei of the land...

PLAYING: Wailea is a community full of resorts outside Kihei, on the island's southern coast. You'll want to play three courses: Wailea's Gold, Emerald and Old Blue (waileagolf.com), each a visual treat with tropical vegetation and sea vistas, all in the shadow of Maui's famous volcano, Haleakala. The Gold course is the standard: 7,078 yards, home to the annual Champions Tour Skins Game. Rugged and undulating, it is the toughest Wailea course—a true test of skill and intellect. Robert Trent Jones Jr. designed both this course and the Emerald, a scenic track that borders the Gold and is marked by wider, easier-to-hit fairways. The Blue, Arthur Jack Snyder's baby at the foot of

Haleakala, is the most forgiving of the three, best left for the morning after a late night. Bonus: In winter you can whale-watch while waiting for your turn to putt.

STAYING: All the Wailea resorts are plush, notably the Four Seasons (from \$440, fourseasons.com/maui); its pools, fountains and groomed exotic gardens are so elegant, you feel as if you're walking around the top of a wedding cake. Grand Wailea (from \$625, grandwailea.com) is like Eden with lots of



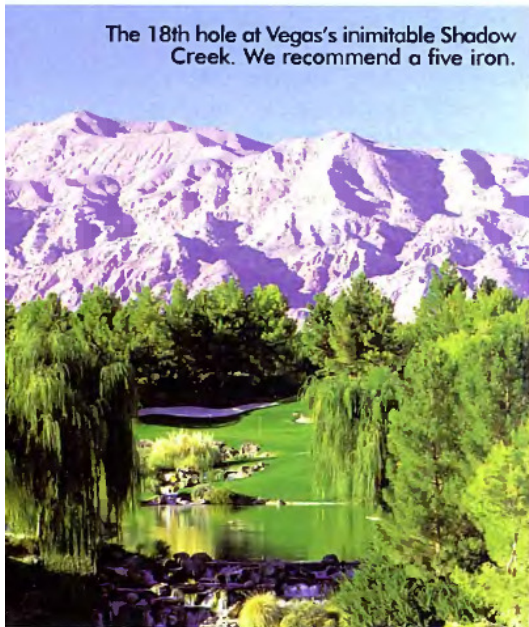
After a round at Australia's Royal Melbourne, ride some waves at Bells Beach.

The par-three 16th hole at Green Monkey in Barbados.



bartenders. Still, we recommend a condo rental through Destination Resorts Hawaii (drhmaui.com). Get your own spot with bedrooms featuring private lanais with epic views just steps from the ocean. Then host your own revelry.

PARTYING: Mulligan's, Wailea's authentic Irish pub (mulligansontheblue.com), is just steps from the Blue course—Guinness, Bass and Harp on tap, plenty of Jameson and fresh-from-the-sea fish and chips. For dinner, Ferraro's at Wailea's Four Seasons serves melt-in-your-mouth fresh Hawaiian seafood with an Italian spin, on outdoor tables skirting the sea. As for nightlife, the Hawaiian vibe is more mai tai on the lanai with a slack-key-guitar soundtrack than thumping "What did you say?" cacophony. Drive 30 minutes up the road to Lahaina, and you're in the thick of an old whaling town turned bar-happy hot spot. Take your pick of the litter. Before you head back to the mainland, stop by the Spa Grande at the Grand Wailea and have



The 18th hole at Vegas's inimitable Shadow Creek. We recommend a five iron.

a small woman do a classic shiatsu back-walk massage with her feet (\$225 to \$275). It's the only way you should ever let a woman walk all over you.

—Scott Gummer

Skin City: Las Vegas

Nights in Vegas are for risking your wad at the tables, ogling flat screens in the sports book and seeing what sort of woman lands in your lap. But keep in mind that the days start early. The quality

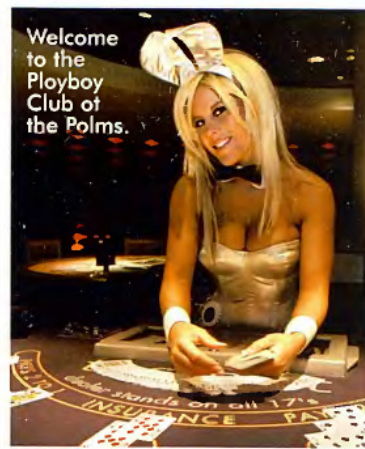
of golf in Vegas rivals the beauty of the women and the cut of the aged beef. You want to be on the tee before the sun heats up and the pinkie-ring crowd clogs the course.

PLAYING: As Sin City strippers will tell you, fake ain't always bad. Vegas sports an amazing pair of replica golf courses: the Royal Links (www.royallinksgolfclub.com), with facsimiles of famous British Open holes, and Bear's Best (bearsbest.com), which features spot-on reproductions of Jack Nicklaus's best-designed holes. The ne plus ultra in Vegas, however, is still Shadow Creek (shadowcreek.com), a course so visually stunning, it merits the \$500 greens fee. "It's the golf course on the moon," designer Tom Fazio has said of his gem in the Nevada desert. Rugged mountains rise on the horizon, and the course is as manicured as Victoria Beckham's claws. The 17th hole is a postcard par three over a crystalline lake to a flag backed by mountains and a waterfall. You'll love it even if it devours a few of your Titleists. And the 18th is even more stunning (see photo above). Keep in mind that skins is a Vegas institution. Each hole has a money value; the winner of that hole wins the skin. If there's a tie, the pot carries over to the next hole.

STAYING: The hottest hotel in Vegas may be the Palms (from \$89, palms.com), where upstairs you will find the new Playboy Club. With tables to throw some cards around and some of the shapeliest waitresses and dealers in town (meet Lindsey, pictured top right), there's no question you're in the right spot.

PARTYING: A guy could write a doctoral thesis on how to party in Vegas. For now let's keep it simple. Dinner: the New York strip at Craftsteak at the MGM (mgmgrand.com). Strip club: Spearmint Rhino (spearmintrhino.com); a slim \$400 gets you a VIP champagne dance—a private hour with a topless beauty, on top

of which you can order a bottle of champagne, with fresh strawberries and cream. Alternative strip club: the Palomino Club, Vegas's only fully nude club that serves alcohol. After hours: Once you've made the rounds at the Playboy Club, head upstairs to the Palms' indoor-outdoor Ghostbar, off the 55th floor. Good luck finding a better view of the Vegas skyline. Just don't look down. —K.C.



Hallowed Turf: Scotland

A visit to golf's cradle is a necessary pilgrimage. The sport was born in the Kingdom of Fife, and you can still play on the very turf where it all began centuries ago.

PLAYING: The Old Course in St. Andrews (www.standrews.org.uk) is the most important course on earth. Reserve tee times online (reservations@standrews.org.uk) or through the Old Course Hotel, but keep in mind the course is booked months in advance. The daily ballot, a tee-time lottery, is a better bet. Phone 01334-466666 the day before you want to play and cross your fingers. Golf travel firms can arrange tee times but may double the £125 greens fee (about \$250). Your best chance to walk the hallowed turf? Arrive at sunup and be willing to split your foursome—the starter can often get singles and twosomes out early. When you do get on, be prepared for the 17th hole, the best tee shot in golf: the feared Road Hole. This is no place to wuss out. Smack your drive over the corner of the Old Course Hotel. And if you make bogey, remember what Ben Crenshaw said: "The reason the Road Hole is the greatest par four in the world is because it's a par five." Lest you prove you're a dumb Yank who thinks there's only one course in Scotland, you also need to play the adjacent New Course, opened in 1895, which is slightly easier to get onto. Seven miles away is Kingsbarns (kingsbarns.com), a Kyle Phillips design that may be the best Scottish course of the 21st century, and just across the Firth of Tay lies historic Carnoustie (carnoustiegolflinks.co.uk), site of this year's British Open.

STAYING: The Old Course Hotel looms at the corner of the Road Hole (with shatterproof windows on that side), yet it's a bit of an eyesore. Save your pounds for homier Macdonald Rusacks (from \$300, macdonald-hotels.co.uk), a Victorian throwback overlooking the 18th hole, or the delightfully tacky golf-mad Dunvegan on North Street (from \$100, dunvegan-hotel.com).

PARTYING: One of the greatest things about Scotland is its pubs. Spot one that looks good, walk through the door and pull up a bar stool. You'll find a nice mix of men and women, old and young, whiskey and beer. Some tips to help you get around: Don't offend a Scottish bartender by tip-

ping him; his tip is included in the price of your drink. If a guy in a kilt starts singing karaoke, sing along. The Barber's Pole on South Street offers a free whiskey with every haircut. The food at the Seafood Restaurant overlooking St. Andrews Bay is top-rank. Haggis (sheep's stomach stuffed with everything but the kitchen sink) isn't nearly as bad as it sounds. Try it. Hell, it was good enough for Old Tom. —K.C.



The Old Course in St. Andrews, Scotland.

BIG TUNA (continued from page 62)

A parking ticket indicated the car had sat, with Mendell in it, for more than a month in the cold.

perspectives on why Mendell's crew would attempt the risky caper and why Accardo responded so ferociously. They also indicate how close the G came to putting Big Tuna in the can.

Gangster murders were nothing new to Chicago, but there was something out of the ordinary about the five bodies that turned up beginning in the early weeks of 1978: They were all left in cars in suburban parking lots on the edge of Chicago; the victims were all known burglars, some already targets of the FBI's Top Thief program, which put particular burglars under surveillance. But these bodies were also meant to be found, and the men were killed in ways that sent a message to other criminals.

First discovered was Bernard Ryan, 34, who was slumped behind the wheel of his brother's snow-encrusted Lincoln Continental with a trusty police scanner at his side. A renowned jewel thief and three-time convicted burglar, Ryan looked ready to go out on another job—until he was dispatched with a few bullets to the back of his head.

The next body to turn up belonged to one of Ryan's frequent boost partners, 29-year-old Steven Garcia. He didn't go so gently. His chest had been punctured five times with an ice pick, one of the Outfit's preferred means of torture, and his throat cut from ear to ear—Mob code for betrayal. When Garcia's killers shoved his body into the trunk of a rented car, they left a gold chain around his neck so there would be no mistaking that he hadn't died in a robbery.

A few days later small-time crook Vincent Moretti, 51, and burglar Donald Renno, 31, were found in the backseat of Renno's Cadillac, parked behind a neighborhood bar. Both had been stabbed in the neck and head, but Renno may just have picked the wrong day to take his friend to breakfast. Moretti, a barrel-chested ex-cop, had been shown special attention before he died. He was stomped—the ultimate Outfit sign of contempt—until his ribs broke and his kidneys ruptured.

Once it was clear the killings were linked, FBI agents were assigned to each victim to assist local homicide departments with the investigation. Bob Pecoraro had just been transferred to Chicago from New York City, where he had worked on some of the same tough guys portrayed in Nicholas Pileggi's book *Wiseguy* and its movie version, *GoodFellas*,

but he was still unprepared for Second City-style violence. "When I hear people start to glamorize these Mob types in movies and things," he says, "I just want to show them the body of Vincent Moretti so they can see how vicious and merciless these people can be."

But even Moretti did not prepare Pecoraro for the corpse of Mendell, who had been the first to disappear and the last to be found, in the trunk of a used Oldsmobile. The car was parked by a meter in a rundown South Side neighborhood. A parking ticket, plastered among others on the windshield, indicated the car had sat, with Mendell in it, for more than a month in the Windy City cold. Pecoraro was there when they pulled Mendell out, his body folded and frozen like an iceman's in a glacier. "I had never seen anything like it," he says. "He had icicles in his eyes." Mendell's throat had been cut and his chest punctured like Garcia's, but a noose had been wrapped around his neck and then threaded behind him to bind his hands and ankles. The medical examiner told Pecoraro that Mendell must have died an agonizing death. "As he was writhing in pain," he said, "he was tightening the noose, but it made him bleed that much more slowly."

Pecoraro found something else about the corpse especially curious. It was clad in only a brown velour sweater, a gold chain necklace and underwear. The homicide detective explained the killers had probably taken Mendell's pants so he wouldn't run away. "If I had known they were going to kill me," Pecoraro says, "I would have gotten out of there with or without my pants."

The torture visited on Mendell made him the focus of the investigation into the burglars' deaths. The *Chicago Tribune* initially described him as "an ex-convict who had served federal and state prison terms for theft, sale and possession of narcotics." But that record is hard to verify, along with much else about his background.

Some police first reported his name as Mandell, the sort of spelling they saw in Lincolnwood, a suburb with a large Jewish population. But according to Social Security records, Mendell hailed from South Dakota, where his name can be traced back to farm families who fled Ukraine to homestead on the Great Plains. His first known Chicago address, in a blue-collar South Side neighborhood, was recorded when he was arrested, at the age of 20, for

killing a narcotics snitch. His alleged partner in the crime was a cocktail waitress seven years his elder, whom the newspaper described as a pretty, dark-eyed redhead. Prosecutors dropped the charges when their key witness's credibility was called into question.

In his few remaining years, Mendell somehow made the transition from low-level drug dealing to high-end burglary. He was next in the news at the age of 23 when he was arrested outside a Goldblatt Bros. department store, pretending to be a repairman called to fix the burglar alarm. By then his home address was on the North Side, in one of the ritziest high-rises on the city's lakefront.

John Volland, a retired lieutenant with the Chicago Police Department's Criminal Investigation Unit, would not have been surprised if Mendell had actually worked for an alarm company. "I often wondered who trained him," he says. "Other people had his capacity to get through burglar systems, but he was unique in knowing what he could get away with."

For a while it looked as if he could also get away with living a double life. Just two years after the Goldblatt arrest he was married and living in his nice Lincolnwood home. According to public documents, his wife, Victoria, was 12 years his senior, but Mendell looked older than his age, so perhaps they were a good match. According to Volland, they both appeared to be engaged in her father's tool-and-die business.

But during this time, Mendell also kept up with his booster buddies and still frustrated police attempts to nail him. "The trouble with good thieves is they don't leave much behind," says Jack O'Rourke, an FBI agent who has spent his career pursuing them. Mendell carried police scanners, like other professionals, but he also had a sixth sense about surveillance, pulling to the side of the freeway whenever he thought he was being tailed.

In 1971 Mendell was arrested again with some ominous associates, all homeboys from the South Side. The charge was stealing \$250,000 worth of Bayer aspirin from a trucking depot. An FBI stakeout caught the boosters at a highway rest stop just as they were ready to cross state lines. Along with Mendell were three mad members of the Outfit, including Sam Bills (the only one to serve time for the theft) and Ronald Jarrett, who would be arrested more than 50 times for charges ranging from assault and burglary to rape. Although Jarrett was never charged with murder, he was known inside the Outfit as a stone-cold killer. He was both neighbor and friend to Frank Calabrese and was ultimately gunned down in 2000 by a rival drug dealer.

For the FBI's Pecoraro, free-agent criminals like Mendell were different
(continued on page 140)



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DAVID
L. RAY

"Actually, I have nothing on for tonight...!"

THE THIRD SENSE

FICTION
BY

THE SCENT OF A WOMAN LINGERS IN THE MIND LONG AFTER IT FADES

NADINE GORDIMER

The senses, “usually reckoned as five—sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch.”
—*The Oxford English Dictionary*

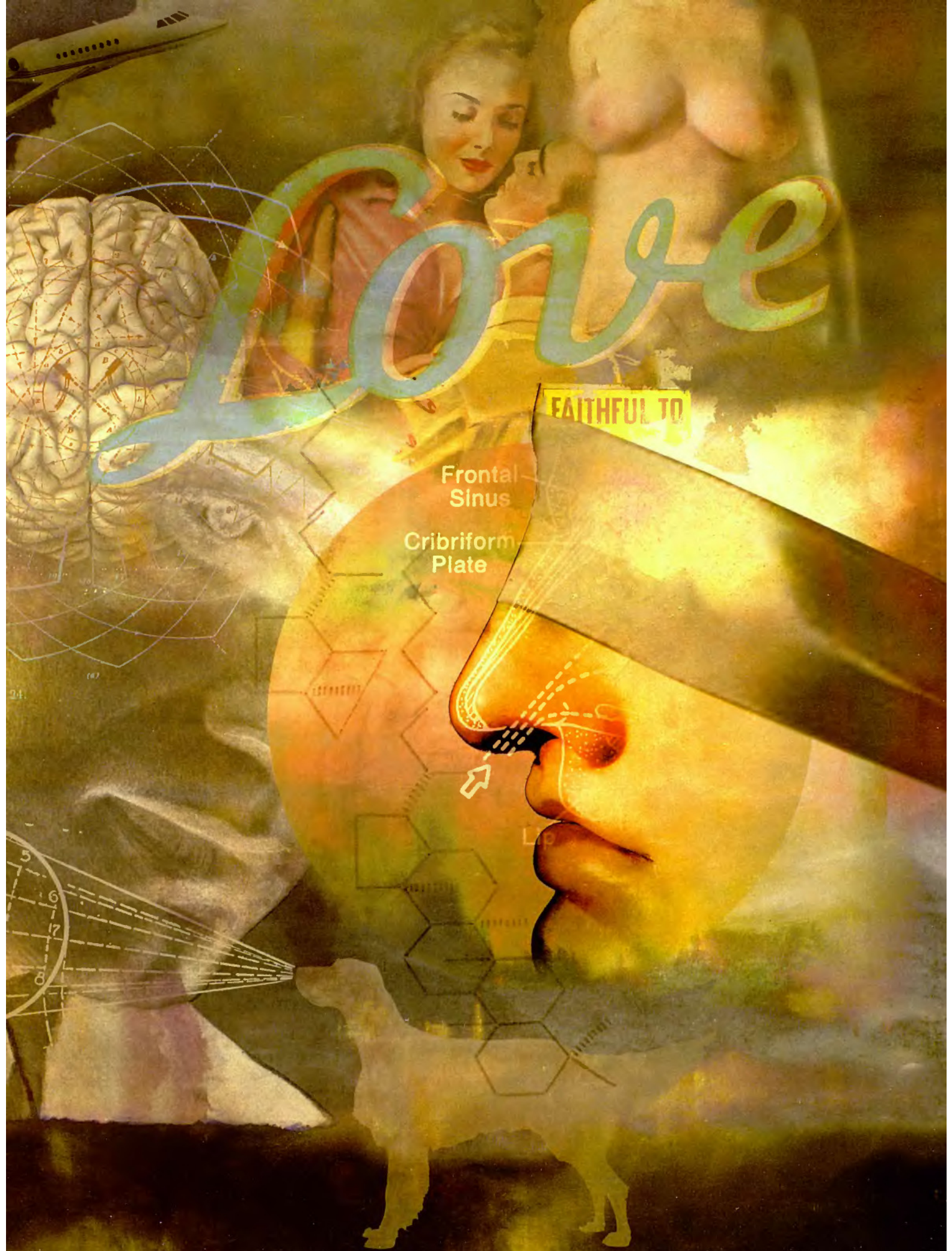
He’s the owner of one of the private airlines that have taken up the internal routes between small cities and local areas the national airline, flying at astronomical heights to five continents, hasn’t bothered with. Until lately, that is, when its aircraft with full-length sleeper beds and gourmet menus haven’t succeeded in cossetting it against falling profits. Now it wants to pick up cents on the local routes’ discount market, enter into competition with modest craft flitting to unimportant places on home ground.

But that wouldn’t have anything to do with this night.

Could have been some other night (Tuesdays he plays squash) if it didn’t happen to be when there was a meeting of private airline owners to discuss their protest against the national carrier’s intention as a violation of the law of unfair competition, since the great span of the national wings is subsidized by taxpayers’ money. She didn’t go along to listen in on the meeting because she was behind time with marking papers in media studies from her students in that university department. She was not alone at her desk, their dog lay under it at her feet, a fur-flounced English setter much loved by master and mistress, particularly since their son had gone off to boarding school. Dina the darling held the vacant place of only child. So intelligent, she even seemed to enjoy music; a *Pearl Fishers* CD was playing, and she wasn’t asleep. Well, one mustn’t become a dotty dog lover, Dina was probably waiting to catch his footfall at the front door.

It came when the last paper was marked and being shuffled together with the rest for tomorrow; she got up, stretching as she was instructed at aerobics class, and followed the dog’s scramble downstairs.

He was securing the door with its locks and looped chain, safety for their night, and they exchanged, How’d it go, any progress? Oh, round in circles again; that bloody lawyer didn’t show—but the master didn’t have to push down the dog’s usual bounding interference when the master came home from anywhere, anytime. *Hullo my girl*—his expected greeting ignored, no paws landing in response on his shoulders. While he was questioned about the evening and they considered coffee or a drink before bed, you choose, the dog was intently scenting round his shoes. He must have stepped in something. As they went upstairs together, he turning from above her to repeat exasperated remarks about why he was so late, how long the meeting had dragged on, the dog pushed past her to impede him, dilated nose rising against his pants legs. Dina, down! What d’you think you’re doing! He slapped the furry rump to make her mount ahead. She stood at the top of the stairs in the hunting dog’s point stance, faced at him. Dina’d never been in the field, her master



FAITHFUL TO

Frontal Sinus

Cribriform Plate

(67)

24.

5
6
7
8

was not a hunting man. Some displaced atavistic tic come up in an indulged house pet.

While they undressed they decided for coffee. Dina didn't jump on their bed in customary invitation for them to join her; she was giving concentrated attention to his discarded pants, shirt, shoes. Must be the shoes that perfumed his attraction. Doggy doo, Eva said. Wait a minute, don't put them on the rug. I'll run the tap over the soles. Wendell laughed at the crumple of distaste lifting from her nose, her concern for the kilim. In the bathroom instead she wet a streamer of the toilet roll, rubbed each sole and flushed the paper down the bowl: Although there was no mess clinging to the leather, a smell might remain. She propped his shoes to dry, uppers resting against the wall of the shower stall.

When she came back into the bedroom he'd dropped off, asleep, lying in his pajama pants, the newspaper untidy across his naked chest: opened his eyes with a start.

THE SOFTNESS OF BREASTS IN OPPOSITION TO THE MALE RIB CAGE AND SPINE IS ONE OF THE WORDLESS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN.

"Still want coffee?"

He yawned assent.

"Come, Dina. Bedtime."

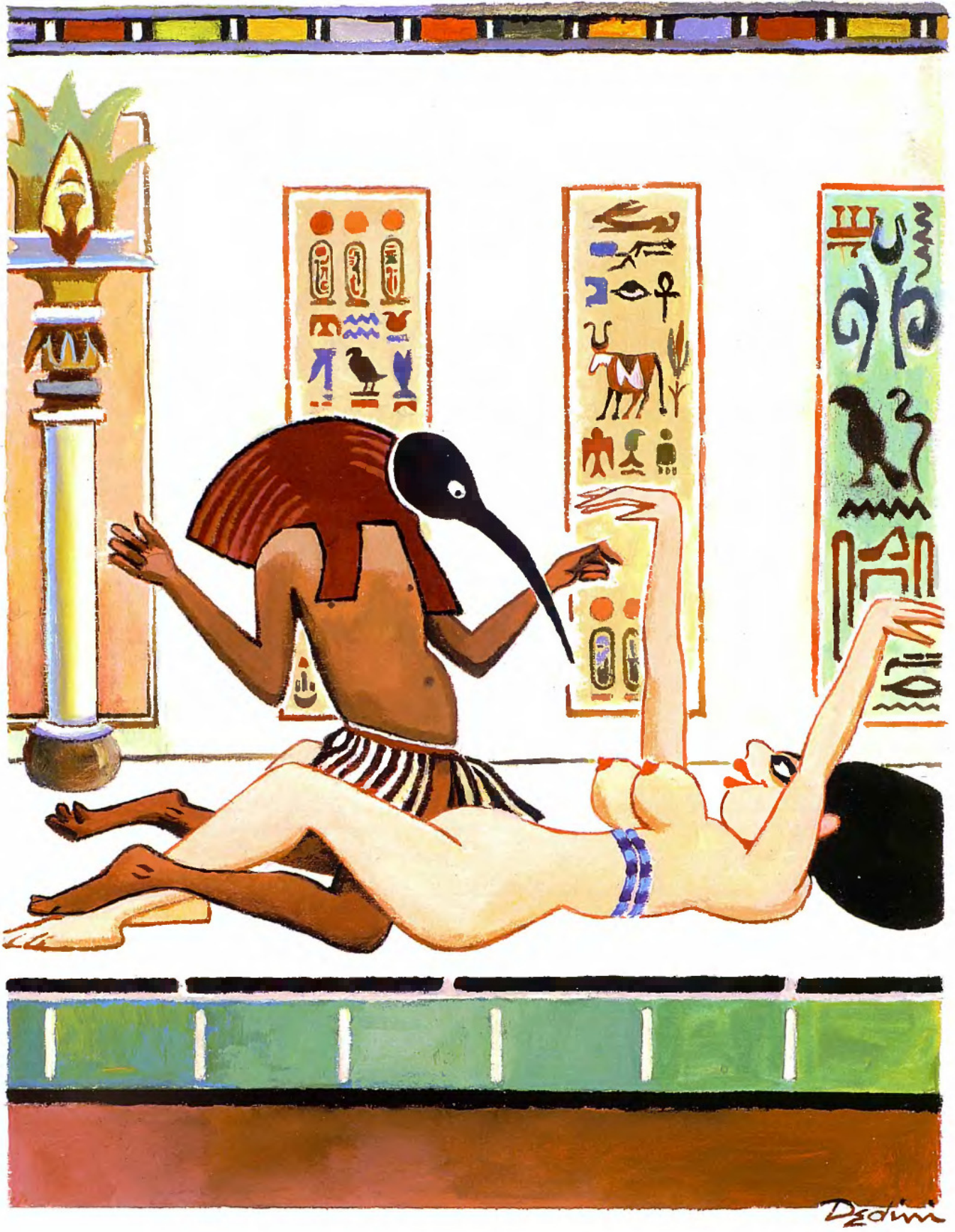
As a child enjoys a cuddle in the parents' bed before banishment to his own, it was the dog's routine acceptance that she would descend to her basket in the kitchen when the indulgence was declared over. Tonight she wasn't on the bed with master; she got up slowly from where she lay beside a chair, turned her head in some quick last summons to sniff at his clothes lying there and went down to her place while Eva brewed the coffee.

They drank it side by side in bed. "I didn't make it too strong? Looks as if nothing could keep you awake tonight anyway."

There were disturbed nights these days, when she would be awakened by the sleepless changed rhythm of the breathing beside her, the interrupted beat at the heart of intimacy shared by lovers over their 16 years. He had put all their funds into his airline. Flight Hadedá (her choice, the name of the ibis that flew over the house calling out commandingly). Profits of the real estate business he'd sold, her inheritance from her father's platinum mining interests. Those enterprises of old-regime white capitalism were not the way to safe success in a mixed economy—politically correct capitalism. Such enterprises were now anxiously negotiating round affirmative action requirements that this percentage or

that of holdings in their companies be reserved for black entrepreneurs, with workers becoming token shareholders in stock exchange profits. A small airline, dedicated to solving something of the transport problems of a vast developing country, had patriotic significance. If Wendell and his partner are white, the cabin attendants, one of the pilots and the engineer are black. Isn't it an honest, not exploitative, initiative on which they've risked everything? She knows what keeps him open-eyed, dead-still in the night: If the national airline takes up the homely routes, its resources will ground the Everything in loss. Once or twice she has broken the rigid silence intended to spare her; the threat is hers as well. There is no use to talk about it in the stare of night; she senses that he takes her voice's entry to his thoughts maybe as some sort of reproach: The airline is his venture, way out, in middle age.

The coffee cups are on the floor, either side of their bed. She turned on her elbow to kiss him good night but he lifted a hand and got up to put on the pajama jacket. She liked his bare chest near her, the muscles a little thicker—not fat—than they used to be; when you are very tired you feel chilly at night. Climbing back to bed, he stretched to turn off the light above. His sigh of weariness was almost a groan, let him sleep; she did not expect him to turn to her. Let the mutual heart beat quietly. Before moving away for private space they mostly fell asleep in what she called the spoon-and-fork way: she on her side and his body folded along her back, or he on his other side and she curved along his. Of course he was the spoon when enveloping her back in protection from shoulders to thighs; her body was the slighter line of the fork, its light bent tines touching the base of his nape, her breasts nestled under his dorsal muscles. This depended haphazardly on who turned this or that side first; tonight he rolled onto his right, approaching deep sleep giving him a push that way. The gentle impetus reached her to follow, round against him. The softness of breasts in opposition to the male rib cage and spine is one of the wordless questions and answers between men and women. In offended vanity that long survives, she never forgot that once, in early days, he'd remarked as an objective observation, she didn't have really good legs; her breasts were his admiring, lasting discovery. In bantering moods of passion she'd tell him he was a tit man, and he would counter with mock regret that he hadn't ever had a woman with those ample poster ones on display. In tonight's version of the spoon-and-fork embrace she always had her closed eyes touched against his hair and her nose and lips in the nape of his neck. She liked to breathe there, into him and breathe him in, taking possession he was not conscious of and was yet the essence of them both. These were not the sort of night moments you tell the other; anyway they half belong to the coming state of sleep, the heightened awareness of things that's called the unconscious. (continued on page 126)



Dzdim

"I've missed you during the migration season!"



GIULIANA *the* GREAT

European goddess Giuliana Marino conquers America



World travelers may recognize this fabulously beautiful woman. Her name is Giuliana Marino, and she is German *PLAYBOY*'s Playmate of the Year for 2006. Hef met her in Munich on a recent trip and found her charm irresistible. "He asked me if I wanted to come to America to be a Playmate," says the 20-year-old lovely. It was an offer she couldn't refuse, and now she is Miss April.

You may be thinking, If *Giuliana Marino* is a German name, I'm a Wiener schnitzel. Actually, this *bella donna* is a full-blooded Italian but was raised in Deutschland. "I feel a bit schizo," she says in charmingly accented English. "When I go

to Italy, I'm the German. And when I'm in Germany, I'm the Italian. Now when I'm in America, people don't know what to make of me!" Except a knockout, of course. Giuliana's ambition is to start a career in law enforcement and become a criminal profiler. "My uncle is a police officer in Rome in a special unit, and it sounds very exciting," she says. "I believe in justice. The police academy takes about two and a half years, and after that I want to be a young mom."

We can't imagine what Giuliana would look like in a tight-fitting police uniform, but suffice it to say there's not a man alive who could resist this arresting officer.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WAYDA











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

MISS APRIL
PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH





PLAYMATE DATA SHEET



NAME: Giuliana Marino

BUST: 33 WAIST: 25 HIPS: 35

HEIGHT: 5'6" WEIGHT: 114

BIRTH DATE: May 13, 1986 BIRTHPLACE: Nuremberg, Germany

AMBITIONS: My dream is to become a profiler after going to a police academy and studying criminology.

TURN-ONS: I love cleverness, real beauty, truth and when I see the love in his eyes.

TURNOFFS: I hate stupidity, jealousy and envy.

FAVORITE ANIMAL: I go crazy when I see a dog.

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CITY AND WHY: I'm completely in love with Rome because it is full of culture and there is always something to discover.

THINGS ITALIANS DO BETTER: Italians make the best cooks. The food in Italy is good and healthy.

FAVORITE COP SHOWS: Without a Trace, Cold Case, The X-Files, Law & Order: Criminal Intent.

IN THE MORNING: I'm always in a bad mood.



My second birthday tasted supersweet.



I'm seven or eight and dressed as a fairy for Carnevale.



Working as a model in a tricked-out Beetle at a car show.

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

What is the Congressional Record?
Four pages.

So let me get this straight," the prosecutor said to the defendant. "You came home from work early and found your wife in bed with a strange man. You then took out a pistol and shot your wife, killing her. So why did you shoot your wife and not her lover?"

The defendant replied, "It seemed easier than shooting a different man every day!"

Why won't cannibals eat divorced women?
They're always bitter.



A husband asked his wife to go to the hardware store and buy a door hinge for him. She went to the store, picked out the hinge and headed to the cashier. The clerk noticed she didn't have any fasteners for it. "Do you want a screw for that hinge?" he asked.

"No," she said, "but I'll blow you for that toaster in the window."

A young boy asked his mother, "Ma, is it true that people can be taken apart like machines?"

"Of course not," she answered. "Where did you hear such nonsense?"

"Well," he said, "the other day Daddy was talking to someone on the phone, and he said he screwed the ass off his secretary."

Fact: The donkey is the only known animal that can reproduce by ass fucking.

Two coeds went to the movies one night. In the middle of the feature, one girl leaned over to the other and whispered, "What should I do? The guy sitting next to me is masturbating."

"Don't do anything," her friend said. "Just ignore him."

"I can't," the first girl said. "He's using my hand."

What is the difference between George W. Bush and *E. coli*?

E. coli has an exit strategy.

A boxer was getting the tar beaten out of him by his opponent. As he was being counted down by the referee for the fourth time in the match, his manager said, "Stay down till eight."

"Okay," the dazed boxer said. "What time is it now?"

A teenage blonde who wanted to earn some money decided to hire herself out as a handyman and started canvassing the neighborhood. She went to the front door of the first house and asked the owner if he had any odd jobs for her to do. "Well, you can paint my porch," he said. "How much would you charge?"

"How about \$50?" she answered.

The man agreed and told her the paint she would need was in the garage. The man's wife overheard the conversation and said to her husband, "Does she realize the porch goes all the way around the house?"

"She should," the man replied. "She was standing on the porch when we talked."

A short time later the blonde came to the door to collect her money. "You're finished already?" he asked.

"Yes," the blonde answered, "and I had paint left over, so I gave it two coats." Impressed, the man reached into his pocket for \$50. "And by the way," the blonde added, "that's not a Porch, it's a Ferrari."



What's the worst thing you can say to a man who complains that his wife is frigid?

"No, she isn't!"

Two men were bragging about their families. "My grandfather correctly predicted the year he was going to die," one said to the other.

"Oh yeah?" the other said. "My grandpa knew the exact day of the year he was going to die."

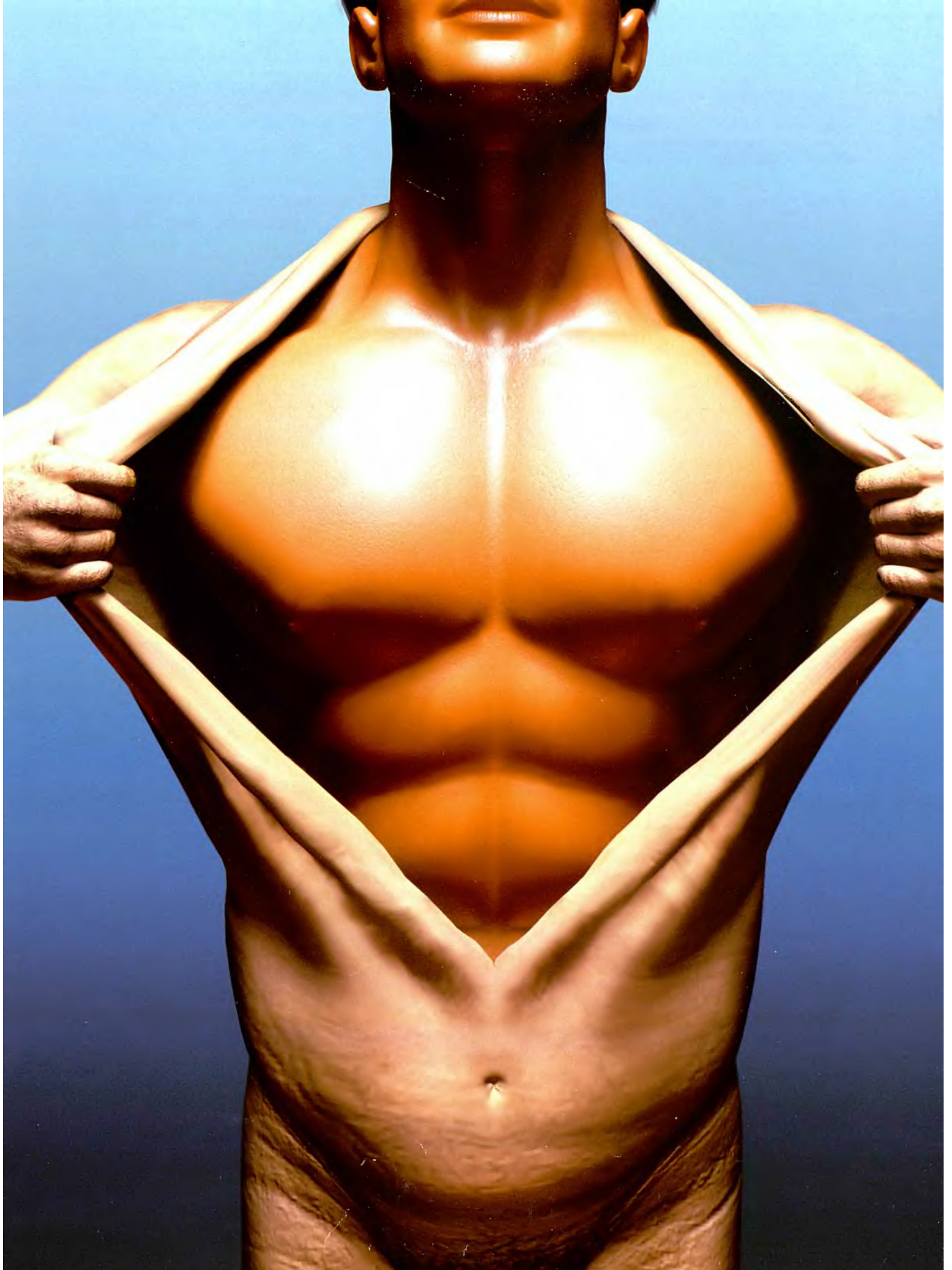
"Wow, that's incredible," the first said. "How did he know that?"

"A judge told him," the second replied.

Send your jokes to Party Jokes Editor, PLAYBOY, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, or by e-mail through our website at jokes.playboy.com. PLAYBOY will pay \$100 to the contributors whose submissions are selected.



"We're busy right now...can I put you on hold?"



IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO BE YOUNG—MANY MEN ARE TRYING TO STAY VIRILE AND BUFF FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. SOME MEDICAL DOCTORS, AND MORE THAN A FEW QUACKS, THINK **HUMAN GROWTH HORMONE** IS ONE OF THE ANSWERS

DR. T TO THE RESCUE



BY PAT JORDAN

The cocktail party was held in a suite of rooms on the third floor of the Venetian, a hotel on the Las Vegas Strip. It was crowded with attendees from the 14th annual International Congress on Anti-Aging Medicine and Regenerative Biomedical Technologies, hosted by A4M, the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine.

A gaunt man with a villain's mustache was giving a PowerPoint slide show of dead rats. The word *pomegranate* appeared on-screen. He said, "Our pomegranate capsules are our best product." A man sitting cross-legged on the floor nodded and scribbled on a pad while the man using PowerPoint exclaimed about pomegranate juice's efficacy in prolonging life. Everyone else was standing around the suite, talking.

A handsome young man wearing wire-rimmed glasses talked about the health benefits of coenzyme Q10. A tall massage therapist, whose motto is "Feel the heat," was talking loudly about her upcoming breast

reduction. The PowerPoint man glared at her and said, "If you'll just bear with me, I'll only be a minute." He went back to his rats and pomegranate juice.

A round little Chinese woman was grazing at the hors d'oeuvres table as if this were her last meal. A handsome silver-haired ex-porn star said something to her. She snapped, "Where from? From Boston. What you think?" An Irish A4M lawyer in a muscle T-shirt was telling a journalist in a Hawaiian shirt that he didn't trust journalists. The lawyer had patches of hair missing from his scalp, which looked like a threadbare quilt.

A woman in a black spangled dress with dyed black hair and a manic bird's black eyes talked about her sexology practice in an indecipherable foreign accent. The ex-porn star and a man with a white beard nodded. When she left, a man with a reddish walrus mustache came over to the two men. He said, "She's crazy. Stay away from her." He eyed the ex-porn star and said, "You look great. I could give you something that would

maintain that look into your 80s.” The man with the white beard said, “What about me?” The man with the reddish mustache laughed and said, “You’re circling the drain.” This mustached man is known as Dr. Testosterone. He has a clinic in a Victorian house in Michigan called the Man Cave, which is devoted “to all things male.”

A young, skinny blonde in a too-short dress that barely covered her ass presented herself to the ex-porn star, the man with the white beard and Dr. Testosterone. She said, “My bags were searched at the airport. They took out all my dildos.”

Dr. T smiled and said, “Of course.”

The girl said, “You missed the orgy last night. There were bodies strewn everywhere.” She smiled lasciviously at the ex-porn star and added, “You gonna stay for tonight’s orgy?”

When she left, Dr. T said, “You know, it is all about sex.”

Dr. Testosterone, whose real name is John Crisler, D.O., was referring not only to this A4M conference but to all the anti-aging organizations and institutes throughout the world in more than 80 countries: the Society for Free Radical Biology and Medicine, the European Academy for Quality of Life and Longevity Medicine, the International Hormone Society, Cenegenics Medical Institute, the Longevity Institute, the Palm Springs Life Extension Institute. The word *antiaging*, it seems, is an umbrella term that covers a host of New Age and medical therapies that critics claim are quackery and true believers think are the cutting edge of modern medicine for the 21st century. But all that talk about extended old age and the quality of life is merely window dressing that hides one of the antiaging movement’s dirty little secrets. Crisler said that when the antiaging movement first started to promote its benefits, it listed an increased libido first. But people were put off by such a blatant appeal to sex. “So we listed all the other benefits first and put libido last,” he said, “like it was an afterthought.” He grinned, then added, “But it is all about sex.”

The antiaging movement’s other dirty little secret: It’s not really about diet and exercise. It is about injecting human growth hormone and testosterone into patients or applying testosterone as a cream. The antiaging industry claims that as a body ages, it loses a good percentage of its HGH and testosterone, and the loss of these two vital hormones accelerates the aging process and leads to age-related diseases. Simply replenishing the body with HGH and testosterone, the antiaging movement claims, can not only stop the aging process, prevent diseases and improve appearance and the quality of life but also reverse the aging process entirely.

The term *antiaging* is a misnomer meant to foster the impression that the industry’s *raison d’être* is to medically treat the elderly in order to improve and extend their life. But most people do not use antiaging therapies to extend their life. They take HGH and testosterone to exchange fat for muscle, to grow hair and tighten skin. The antiaging industry is actually about cosmetics; it is the Botox of the 21st century. Its typical patient is a man in his late 30s or mid-40s who has always considered himself a player. He has already had a little Botox, a little work around the eyes, a little neck tightening, a little liposuction. Now he wants some muscles,

too, and thicker hair that doesn’t look like the spring grass of hair plugs, and maybe a jolt of energy, a spring in his step and, of course, increased libido. He wants to be that captain of industry he has worked so hard to become, but with it he wants all the advantages of youth. He wants it all. Botox and plastic surgery made him *look* younger. Human growth hormone and testosterone make him *be* younger.

It all began in the mid-1980s with Dr. Daniel Rudman, an endocrinologist at the Medical College of Wisconsin, who had spent a good part of his medical career developing HGH for short children. According to his wife and research partner, Inge Rudman, “When he felt he’d solved that problem, he noticed his parents were not aging well. They were in their 70s and weak, stooped, with shrunken muscles. Since he knew that children on HGH grew taller, increased their muscle size and were more outgoing, he thought HGH might help his parents.”

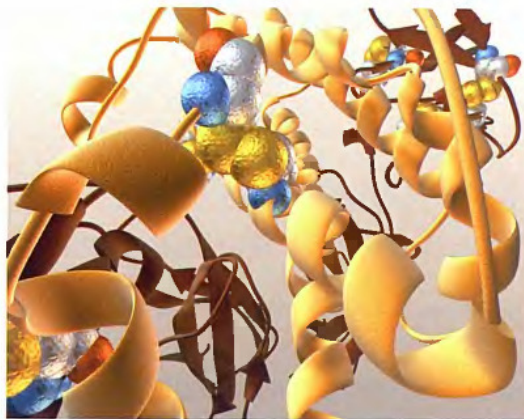
Rudman applied for National Institutes of Health funding for a study on HGH’s benefits in treating the frail elderly. He started his studies in 1983 and, according to

Inge, was the first to publish his findings on HGH in older patients. “The rest was history,” she adds. “Unfortunately, he never helped his parents, who died before his study was published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.”

In that *NEJM* article, “The Effects of Human Growth Hormone in Men Over 60 Years Old,” Rudman explains the groundwork for his study. He picked 21 healthy men between the ages of 61 and 83. Twelve received injections of biosynthetic HGH three times a week, and the other nine received nothing. After six months the HGH group had an 8.8 percent increase in muscle mass, a 14.4 percent decrease in fat, a 1.6 percent increase in bone density and a 7.1 percent increase in skin thickness. The non-HGH group experienced no changes. He writes in his conclusion that “diminished secretion of HGH is responsible in part for the decrease of lean body mass, [the increase in fat] and the thinning of the skin that occurs in old age.... These structural changes have been considered unavoidable results of aging [but this study shows] that age-related changes in body composition should be correctable in part by the administration of HGH.” He added later in a TV interview, “We reversed 10 to 20 years of the aging process.”

In his article Rudman also claims he expected “no adverse reactions to HGH,” since “similar or larger doses have caused no undesired reactions in children or young adults.” He did notice a slight spike in his HGH subjects’ glucose, which hinted at possible diabetes, but that spike vanished once the men stopped taking the hormone. He did not, however, totally preclude the possibility that HGH therapies could be dangerous. He wondered what adverse side effects might be discovered in HGH patients once more elderly patients were studied. As a scientist, he realized that his studies were preliminary and not conclusive. His study group was too small and his six-month study period too short a time span. Still, he believed he had substantial proof that the “potential benefits of growth hormone merit continuing attention and investigation.”

The antiaging industry didn’t *(continued on page 143)*



A scientist’s-eye view of HGH, which is produced by the pituitary gland and diminishes as humans age.



"I'll concede you've put it behind you, Turner. But it's still behind you."

SPRING + SUMMER

FASHION FORECAST



FASHION BY
**JOSEPH
DE ACETIS**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
**ANTOINE
VERGLAS**

PRODUCED BY
**JENNIFER
RYAN JONES**

Global warming is no joke: Meteorologists are predicting that 2007 will be the hottest year on this blue marble since the dinos. The summer is apt to be brutal, and unless you mix drinks at a tiki bar, you can't go to work in a Hawaiian shirt and Bermuda shorts. Not that you would anyway. You have style and class, which means while your colleagues are sweating through their stuffy "all-season" jackets, you stay cool in a summer suit. Men's designers are now pairing lightweight fabrics like cotton, silk and

tropical wool with sophisticated weaves, crafting suits that are hip and remain comfortable even as the mercury rises. Not only do these suits let your body breathe, their neutral color schemes reflect light from the sweltering summer sun. Shades of pale gray and khaki also give you a chance to bring a sense of yourself to your style by choosing accessories in any conceivable color. A quiet palette promotes versatility: You can wear a strong tie to the office and then switch to something fun when you whisk your girl off for a summer getaway.



THAT PAGE

HER DRESS (\$3,300) AND SHOES (\$575) ARE BY ALESSANDRO DELL'ACQUA. | HIS SUIT (\$1,995) IS BY VALENTINO. THE SHIRT (\$285) AND POCKET SQUARE (\$70) ARE BY ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA. HIS TIE (\$125) IS BY ROBERT TALBOTT, AND HIS BELT IS BY SALVATORE FERRAGAMO. THE SHOES (\$1,520) ARE BY JOHN LOBB.

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FROM LEFT: HIS JACKET (\$855), PANTS (\$332) AND TIE (\$138) ARE BY JASPER CONRAN. HIS SHIRT (\$275) IS BY LORENZINI. THE SHOES (\$720) ARE BY SALVATORE FERRAGAMO. | HIS JACKET WITH VEST (\$890), SHIRT (\$350) AND PANTS (\$275) ARE BY RICHMOND X UOMO. HIS TIE (\$130) AND POCKET SQUARE (\$75) ARE BY SALVATORE FERRAGAMO. THE BELT (\$70) IS BY JOHNSTON & MURPHY. THE SHOES (\$415) ARE BY ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA. | HIS SUIT (\$1,495) IS BY CALVIN KLEIN COLLECTION. HIS SHIRT (\$150 TO \$175) IS BY GRAN SASSO. HIS TIE (\$110) IS BY CANALI. THE POCKET SQUARE (\$65) IS BY MASSIMO BIZZOCCHI. THE BELT (\$70) IS BY JOHNSTON & MURPHY.





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HER BRA (\$175) AND SKIRT (\$325) ARE BY VPL BY VICTORIA BARTLETT. | HIS SUIT (\$3,800) IS BY LUIGI BORRELLI NAPOLI. THE SHIRT (\$295) IS BY LORENZINI. THE TIE (\$145) IS BY MASSIMO BIZZOCCHI. HIS POCKET SQUARE (\$65) IS BY ISAIA. HIS BELT (\$70) IS BY JOHNSTON & MURPHY. THE WATCH (\$695) IS BY LOCMAN.

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FROM LEFT: HIS SUIT (\$2,400) AND SHIRT (\$270) ARE BY SALVATORE FERRAGAMO. THE TIE (\$138) IS BY JASPER CONRAN. HIS POCKET SQUARE (\$70) IS BY ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA. THE BELT (\$70) IS BY JOHNSTON & MURPHY. THE SHOES (\$625) ARE BY ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA COUTURE. | HER DRESS (\$575) IS BY JOVOVICH-HAWK. THE SANDALS (\$539) ARE BY BARBARA BUI. | HIS SUIT (\$3,325) IS BY ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA COUTURE. THE SHIRT (\$235) AND POCKET SQUARE (\$70) ARE BY ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA. THE TIE (\$125) IS BY ROBERT TALBOTT.

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HIS JACKET (\$1,170), SHIRT (\$530), PANTS (\$400) AND SHOES (\$700) ARE BY Y'S. THE TIE (\$85) IS BY ROBERT TALBOTT. HIS WATCH (\$750) IS BY TISSOT.





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HER TUNIC (\$375) IS BY BOSS BLACK. THE SKIRT (\$200) IS BY BABY PHAT BY KIMORA LEE SIMMONS. | HIS SUIT (\$2,200) AND SHIRT (\$270) ARE BY LORIS DIRAN. THE TIE (\$110) IS BY CANALI. HIS POCKET SQUARE (\$70) IS BY ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA. HIS WATCH (\$12,595) IS BY CARL F. BUCHERER.

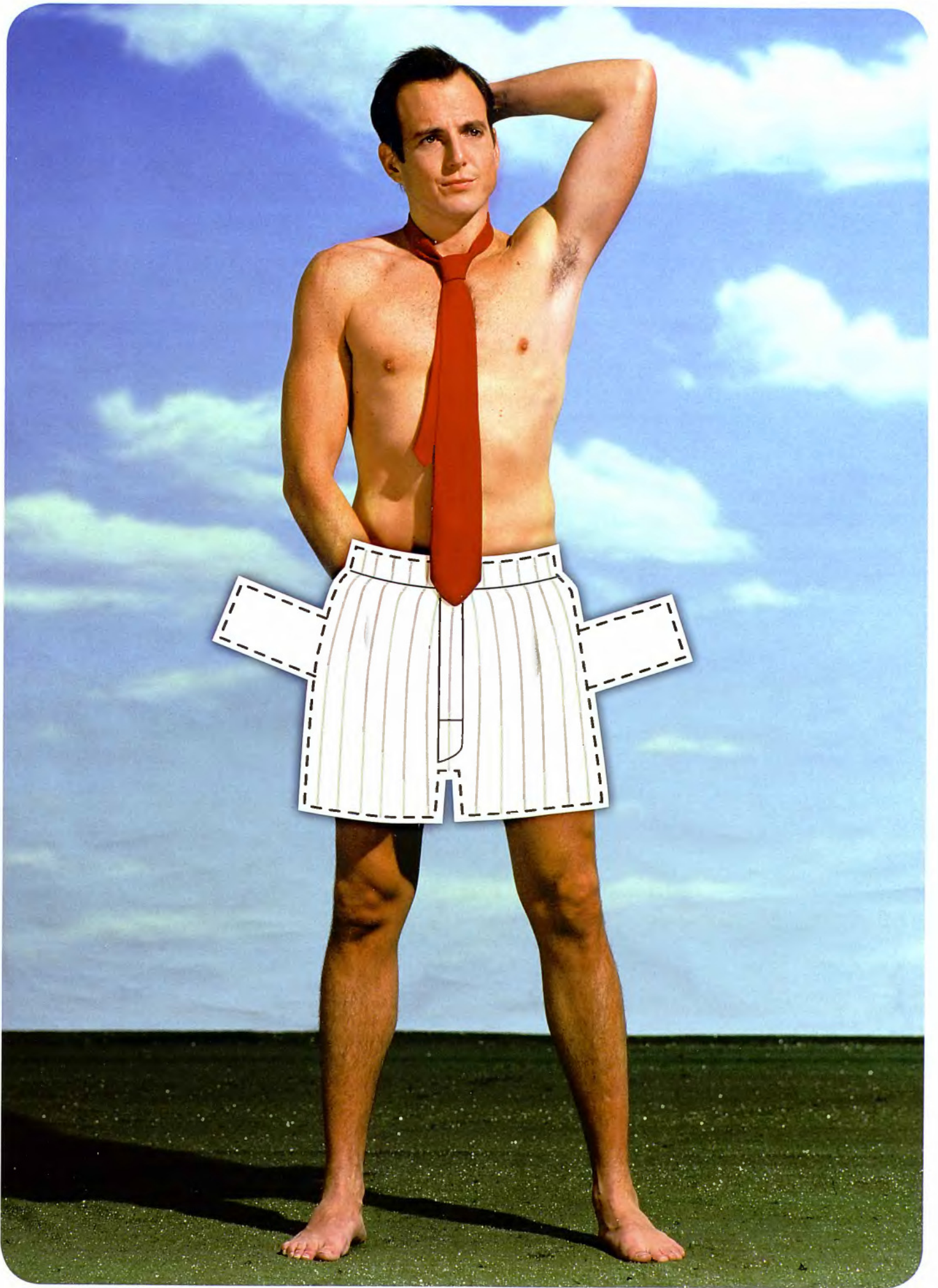
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HER DRESS IS BY CHAIKEN. THE SANDALS (\$539) ARE BY BARBARA BUI. | HIS JACKET (\$2,095), SHIRT (\$375) AND PANTS (\$365) ARE BY ISAIA. HIS TIE (\$110) IS BY CANALI. THE POCKET SQUARE (\$70) IS BY ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA. HIS BELT (\$130) IS BY SALVATORE FERRAGAMO.

FOR MORE ON SPRING SUITS WITH STRENGTH AND COLOR, GO TO PLAYBOY.COM/MAGAZINE.

WOMEN'S STYLING BY KATHY KALAFUT

WHERE + HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 131.





BY ERIC SPITZNAGEL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
NIGEL PARRY

WILL ARNETT

THE *ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT* ALUM BARES ALL ABOUT BEING MARRIED TO *SNL* ROYALTY, DEALING WITH SEMISTARDOM AND HOW HE'S GOING TO TAKE WILL FERRELL DOWN

Q1

PLAYBOY: In the new Will Ferrell comedy, *Blades of Glory*, you play Stranz, a four-time figure-skating champ. Were you cast for your comic timing or your ability to perform a flawless triple axel?
ARNETT: People say I move like a dancer. I get that all the time. There comes a point in your career when you have to give in to the chorus of fans saying, "We see the way you move. You're like a cat. Please, share your gifts with the world." Eventually you just give the people what they want. Actually I'm not much of a skater. The more difficult skating moves were obviously performed by trained professionals. I was able to do a few of the big jumps, but mostly I just did the smiling. When the skater finishes his routine and waves to the camera and smiles while he's waiting for his scores to come up, that was all me. I was so ready for that.

Q2

PLAYBOY: You were raised in Canada, where hockey is a national pastime. Aren't all Canadians born with the ability to skate?
ARNETT: I certainly had an advantage growing up in Canada. I knew how to skate. When I was a kid I played a lot of hockey. I haven't done it in a while, but I

still goof around whenever I can. I'll break one of my kneecaps or purposely injure myself, stuff like that. But now I'm pretty much relegated to obsessively watching hockey. I watch every single game the Toronto Maple Leafs play all season. That's how I spend my Saturdays.

Q3

PLAYBOY: But Saturday is the day your wife, Amy Poehler, appears on *Saturday Night Live*. You don't ignore her for hockey, do you?
ARNETT: Saturdays are a big night in our house. I watch the Leafs at seven p.m. and then go see Amy on *Saturday Night Live*. If I'm really happy, I can pretend it's because Amy was in an amazing sketch, but it's actually because Matt Stajan did a great poke check.

Q4

PLAYBOY: Your character in *Blades of Glory* is a treacherous bad guy who will stop at nothing to destroy his competition. It's hard to imagine a skating villain without thinking of Tonya Harding. Did you use her as inspiration?
ARNETT: I pictured Stranz as more of a Jeff Gillooly-type guy. Jeff was the unspoken hero in that whole Harding scandal. I

remember when it first broke, the *New York Post* published this hilarious story about it. Her bodyguard had just come out and admitted that Tonya was responsible for the Kerrigan attack, and the *Post* printed this headline: BODYGUARD FINGERS TONYA. I taped the article to the back of my closet and had it up there for a couple of years.

Q5

PLAYBOY: Why do men in competitive skating wear such frilly costumes with so many sequins and ruffles?
ARNETT: The cast watched a lot of Olympic skating as research for the movie, and we realized you can't go too far with the costumes. Some of the outfits are just insane. Your first thought is, Well, they're obviously gay. But that's not true. These guys are incredible athletes, and the costumes are just a part of skating tradition. But I'll tell you what: I kind of liked it. When I put on the tights and the dance belt, everything is a little tighter down below. And when you're showing that much, you're gonna get some big laughs. I got kind of addicted to it.

Q6

PLAYBOY: Some journalists believe you're poised to become the next Will Ferrell. Is there room (continued on page 150)



By Jason Harper

STAR STRUCK

WWE Diva Ashley Massaro
has us on the ropes



"I'm a really sweet girl!" Ashley Massaro says. "Really!" We believe her. Really. She is sitting in the WWE offices in midtown Manhattan, looking relaxed with her long blonde hair pulled back and wearing just a touch of natural-looking makeup. A thick turtleneck sweater does

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ARNY FREYTAG



Beautiful 27-year-old Ashley Massaro, New York native and WWE Diva, will work her signature move, Starstruck (notice the star tattoos on her elbows), in *WrestleMania's* April 1 pay-per-view extravaganza. That body, that face, that move—we're seeing stars, and we haven't even entered the ring. Here's a little taste of what to expect.

little to hide her figure—incredibly shapely and curvaceous but at the same time cut as sharp as a sushi knife. Her face is model beautiful, though few models have two ring piercings in their lower lip. We believe Ashley is a really sweet girl not merely because she says so and because she seems so, but because we have never stood in a wrestling ring in front of thousands of howling fans and felt her elbow land on our nose.

Ashley is excited. She is on the verge of her biggest moment so far: On April 1 the WWE Diva will fight in the extravaganza known as *WrestleMania*, which will be aired live on pay-per-view. Her career with WWE began just two years ago when she won the 2005 RAW Diva Search. Soon after, the searing 27-year-old New York native got her first taste of the ring when she faced off and held her own against Torrie Wilson and Candice Michelle, two other WWE Divas. "The only thing I knew at that point were street-fight moves," she says. To answer the next logical question: Yes, Ashley has been in street fights. "But only in self-defense."

Now, in 2007, *SmackDown!*'s latest, greatest find is poised to hit the big time, and she has all the tools to make her shot pay off. You may have noticed the star tattoos on her elbows. Her signature move is Starstruck, a brutal elbow drop off the ropes—a feat of visual flair and acrobatic acumen that whips fans into a frenzy. And if you think wrestling is not real enough, consider Ashley's injuries so far: a broken nose (which she never got fixed but looks perfect to us), a crushed knuckle and a broken ankle that was repaired with a five-inch metal plate that sets off radar detectors when she flies, which is often. "We travel more than rock bands," says Ashley, who has visited, among other places, Iraq, where she met some of the troops. So far her success has come naturally. "This is really me, not an act," Ashley says, "and I think the fans get that."

Speaking of real, those ringside rivalries between the WWE ladies—real? "Well," Ashley says, "I'm easygoing, with chicks especially. I just let things slide off my back. The girls are so cool. We get along." Despite, of course, the professional jealousy that comes with appearing in *PLAYBOY*. Ashley winces when we mention this. "Yesterday a girl in the ring was all over my face and tried to tear this out," she says, touching one of her lip rings. "She said she wanted to wreck my face and make me ugly before the magazine comes out." Ashley grins. Not likely.














WOMEN OF THE WWE

Celebrating a quintet of beautiful body slammers who have appeared in **PLAYBOY**

Wrestling was not part of the original **PLAYBOY** equation. Coltrane, Picasso, Sartre—cool. Gorgeous George and Wahoo McDaniel—not so much. But back then wrestlers were mostly men. The wrestling patriarchy has been shaken by an equal-rights revolution, and now pro wrestling features women. Glorious women! Fabulous women! With long, flowing hair and dazzling teeth and amazing physiques tightly wrapped in sparkly spandex! In the face of such allure, how could we withhold our appreciation? We have joined the ranks of World Wrestling Entertainment's biggest fans, delighted to encounter any of these ladies anywhere but on a canvas mat.

It was good girl Torrie (left) vs. the wicked Sable on the cover of our March 2004 issue, and here they are posed opposite one another again. Although the two beauties have drop-kicked each other from one coast to the next, they insist they are good friends.

PHOTOGRAPHY
BY ARNY FREYTAG





"Out of the ring, out of her clothes, outrageous" was how we heralded the lovely Candice Michelle (above) on our April 2006 cover. A year before that, RAW Diva Christy Hemme (below) got our engines running. The inimitable Chyna (opposite) twice ruled our cover, once as a goddess of wrestling in November 2000 and then as her mortal self, Joanie Laurer, in January 2002.





THIRD SENSE (continued from page 84)

The intensity of sweat, semen, cosmetics, saliva, salt tears; all become an odor distilled as theirs alone.

None of his business, secret even from herself, that she enters him there as, female, she can't the way he enters her. Or it's just something else, the way you would bury your face in that incredibly innocent sensuous touch and smell of an infant's hollow under the back of its skull. But that's not a memory that persists from the distant infancy of a 15-year-old whose voice has broken. She moves her face, herself, into the nape as she does, without at first meeting the skin, not to disturb, the touch of the lips to come after the gentlest touch of her breathing there—

She's sniffing. She's drawing back a little from the hollow, smooth and unlined as if it were that of a man of 20. Comes close again. Scenting. Her nose drawn tight, then nostrils flared to short intakes of whatever. Scenting. She knows their smell, the smell of his skin mingled with what she is, a blend of infusions from the mysterious chemistry of different activities in different parts of their bodies, giving off a flora of flesh juices, the intensity or delicacy of sweat, semen, cosmetics, saliva, salt tears; all become an odor distilled as theirs alone.

Scenting on him the smell of another woman.

She moved carefully out of bed. He was beyond stirring as her warmth left him. She went into the bathroom. Switched on the light above the mirror and forced herself to look at herself. To make sure. It was facing a kind of photography no one had invented. It wasn't the old confrontation with oneself. There was another woman who occupied the place of that image. Smell her.

She, herself, was halfway down the passage darkness to the bed in the room that served as guest room and storeroom when—despising that useless gesture—she went back. In their bed she lay spaced away from where she would allow herself to approach, scenting again what she already had. Rationality attacked: why didn't he shower instead of dozing bare-chested and then climbing into bed. Yes, he'd got up and put on the pajama jacket in place of the shower's precaution. He showered when he came home after squash games. Was it really from the squash courts he returned, always, Tuesday nights.

It wasn't that she didn't allow herself to think further; she could not think. A blank. So that it might not begin to fill, she left their bed again as carefully,

silently as the first time and in the bathroom found his bottle of sleeping pills (she never took soporifics, a university lectureship and the takeoff and landing of a risky airline enterprise did not share the same "stress"). She shook out what looked like a plastic globule of golden oil and swallowed it with gulps of tap water cupped in her hand. When she woke from its unfamiliar stun in the morning he was coming from the bathroom, shiningly freshly shaven, called, "Hullo darling" as he did "Hullo my girl" in affectionate homecoming to their dog.

Eva and Wendell Tate lived the pattern of the working week, seven days and the next seven days differentiated only by the disruptions of Wendell's alternations of tentative hopes and anxiety about negotiations with the national airline that might bring not a solution for Flight Hadedá's survival but a resolution as its bankruptcy. "That's no exaggeration." He rejected her suggestion that, as negotiations were lagging on, this was surely a good sign that the government was at last having doubts. After all its rapping the private sector over the knuckles for not taking enough responsibility in new ways to develop the infrastructure.... Beginning to listen to the private airlines. "Government could have just gone ahead and granted licenses to the national after that window-dressing democratic first meeting with all of you. Why didn't it? I think it's tiptoeing round a compromise."

He had pulled his upper and lower lips in over his teeth as if to stop what he didn't want to say.

There were also words she didn't want to say.

She did something out of her anger and disbelief that disgusted her. But she did it. She called the squash club on a Tuesday night and asked to speak to Wendell Tate. The receptionist told her to hold: for her, an admonition not to breathe. The voice came back, "Sorry, Mr. Tate is not here tonight." "Sorry," the regret a form of colloquial courtesy personnel are taught.

Eva read in bed, and the dog's indulgence, there with her, was extended. Music accompanied them and she did not look at her watch until the dog jumped off and made for the stairs. Wendell was back. And early. Down, Dina, down! They were in the bedroom doorway, the dog with paws leaped to his shoulders.

Dina's come to accept what she scents as part of the aura now of the couple and the house; she does not have to recall the atavism of hunting instincts.

Eva does not remark on the hour. And he doesn't remark that he finds her already gone to bed. Perhaps he isn't aware of her. She's never experienced coming home to one man from another, although she once had a woman friend who said she managed it with some sort of novel pleasure.

"Win or lose?" Eva asked. The old formula response would be in the same light exchange; a mock excuse if he'd been out of form, mock boast if he'd played well—they knew Tuesdays were for keeping fit rather than sport; avoiding the onset of that male pregnancy, a middle-age belly.

"I think I'm getting bored with the club. All my contemporaries working out. Most of us past it."

She tried to keep to the safe formula. "So you lost for once!"

He did not answer.

He'd gone to the bathroom; there was the rainfall susurrus—he was taking a shower this time. When he came back she saw him naked; yes, nothing unusual about that, the chest she liked, the stomach with the little fold—no, it's muscle, no, no, not fat—the penis in its sheath of foreskin. But she saw the naked body as she had seen herself in the bathroom mirror that first night when she and the dog scented him.

He spoke, turned from her, getting into pajamas. "It looks worse every day. There's a leak that's come to us. Adams knows one of their officials. They've had approved a schedule of the routes they intend to take up. Analyzing cost structures if bookings are to be taken only online, cut out the travel agents' levy on passengers."

"But you can do the same."

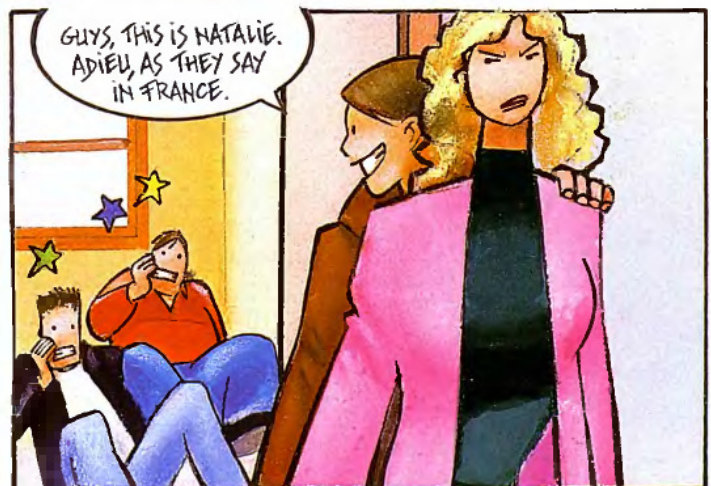
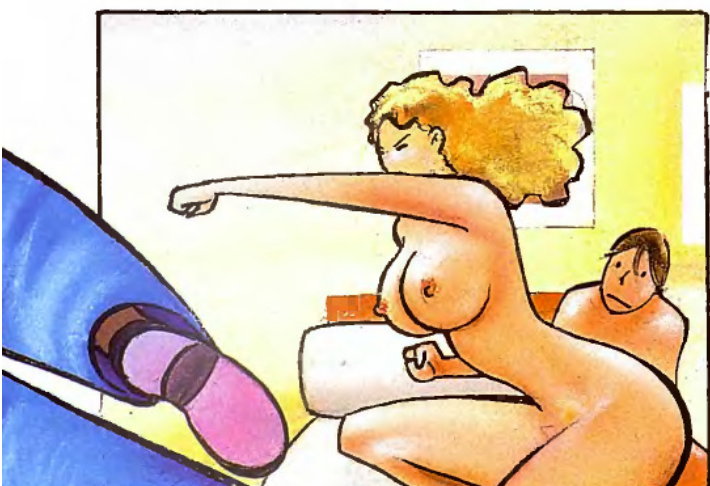
"We can? Travel agents feed us passengers as part of overseas visitors' round-trip tours. We can't afford to ditch them." He came to the bed.

"Aren't you taking Dina?"

Recalled to where he was from wherever he had been, he put his hand on the dog's head and the two went to the stairs. When he reappeared he got into bed and did not lean for the good-night kiss. The alternate to his reason for avoidance could be the despairing abstraction: distraught. As Wendell turned out their light he spoke aloud but not to her. "Hadedá's down. Scrap."

For the first time in 16 years there was no possibility of one comforting the other in embrace. She said in the dark, "You can't give up." She didn't know whether this was a statement about Flight Hadedá or a bitter conclusion about where he had been, this and other nights.

Adieu



They did continue what the new-millennium vocabulary terms "having sex," not making love, from time to time, less often than before. This would be when they had had a night out with friends, drinking a lot of wine, or had stood around at her duty academic celebrations when everyone drank successive vodkas, gins or whiskeys to disprove the decorum of academia.

So, it was possible for him to desire her then. Hard to understand. She's always refused to believe the meek sexist acceptance that man's desire is different from woman's. When they went through the repertoire of caresses real desire was not present in her body; for her, as it must be for him, desire must belong with another woman.

She was looking for the right moment to come out with it. How to say what there was to be said. The "Are you having an affair" of soap operas. "You are having an affair," restating the obvious. "You're making love to some woman; even the dog smells her on you." Away with euphemisms. When to speak? At night? Early in the morning, a breakfast subject? Before

Patrick came home for the holidays? What happens when such things are said. Would they both go to work after the breakfast, take their son to the movies, act as if the words hadn't been said, until he was out of the way, back at school.

The night before Easter she was taking from the freezer a lamb stew that was to be the last meal together before it was spoken. What she would find the right way to say. When he came home he closed the living room door behind him against the entry of the dog and strode over to turn mute the voice of the newscaster on the television.

"I'm shutting up shop. Just a matter of selling the two jets; no one's going to be stupid enough to buy the license. Fat hope of that. Adams and I have gone through the figures for the past 18 months and even if the national thing weren't about to wipe us off, it's there—we're flying steadily into loss."

The brightly miming faces were exchanged on the screen while he said what he had to say.

"But we knew you'd have to rely on our capital for at least two years before

you'd get into profit; it's not the same issue as the national one."

"The competition will make the other irrelevant, that's all. Why wait for that. Sell the planes. Won't make up the loss. The overdraft."

"It'll be something."

There were images dwelling on the dead lying somewhere—Afghanistan, Darfur, Iraq.

"For what. To do what."

He's been a man of ideas in maturity, with connections, friends in enterprises.

"You'll look around." That's what he did before, set out to change his life from earth-bound real estate to freedom of the sky.

He lifted his spread hands, palm up, and let them drop as if they would fall from his wrists, while the screen was filled by the giant grin-grimace of a triumphant footballer. "How are we going to live in the meantime."

"I don't bring in bread on the corporate scale, oh yes, but there's a good chance I'll be appointed head of the department with the beginning of the new academic year."

"It'll just about pay the fees at Patrick's millionaire school." That school also had been the father's ambitious mold-breaking choice for their son; if it was now a matter of reproach, the reproach was for himself, not a sharp reception of her provision of an interim rescue. Despair ravaged his face like the signs of a terminal illness.

She did not say what she had decided was the right time and the right words to say.

She saw he managed to eat a little of the lamb as some sort of acknowledgment of her offer.

●

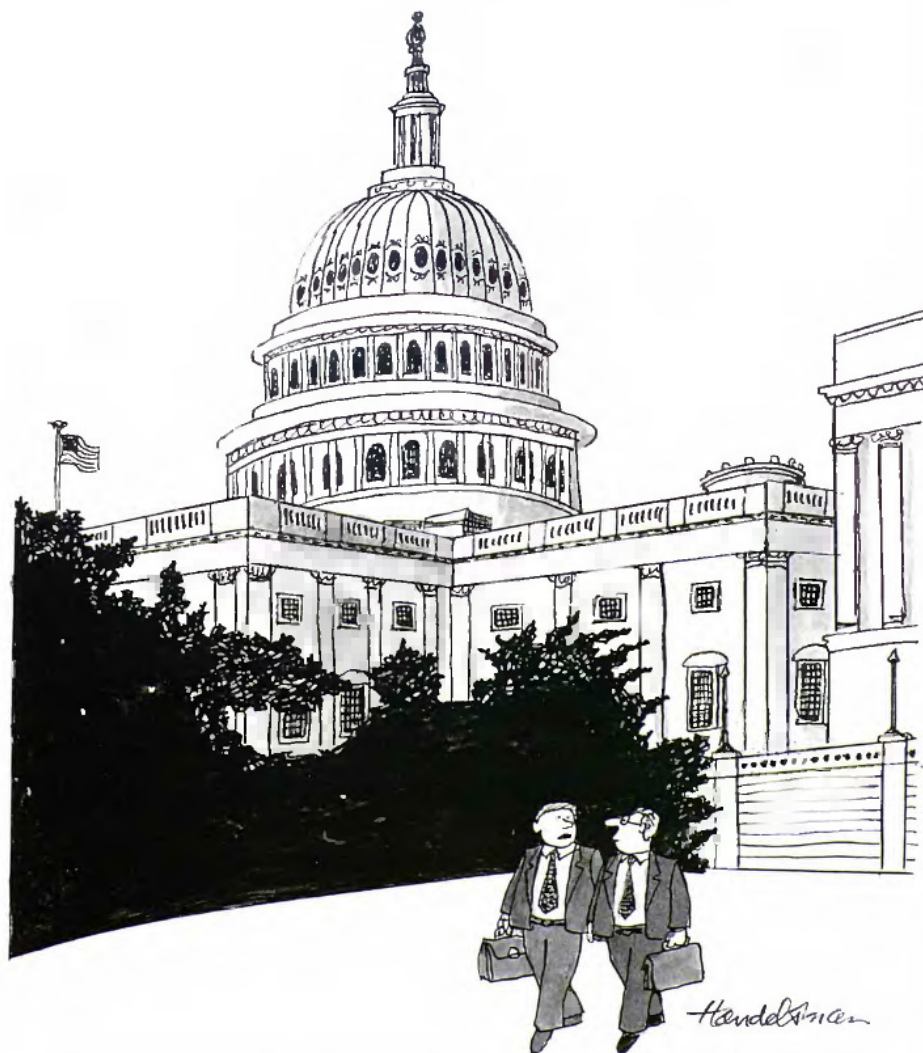
Eva recalled that time, the Tuesday when he came home from the woman and said about his fellows at the squash court where he hadn't played with them—"Sorry, Mr. Tate is not here tonight"—he was getting bored with the club, "All my contemporaries working out. Most of us past it."

Past it.

Too late. In middle age the schoolboy adventure of Flight Hadeda, even that night in unadmitted faltering and threatened by the national carrier he had no means to counter. Inside Eva, sometimes softening, the failure accepted; perhaps he had been too tired, *stressed's* the cover-all word, to make love.

What other way to reassure, restore himself. Not past it; proof of the engendered male power of life, arousal to potency: by another woman.

Eva never confronted Wendell with the smell of the woman scented on him. She did not know whether he saw the woman some other time, now that he had given up the Tuesday night squash club; when or whether he had given up the affair. She did not know nor return, by the means she and the dog possessed, for evidence.



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BILL MAHER *(continued from page 58)*

You can't just instill democracy. You can't just graft it onto a society that has no institutions of public law.

MAHER: Are you kidding? I don't know what we'd talk about. Paris Hilton is an amazing phenomenon, though. Did you notice that the second Britney Spears was free of her husband, she came under Paris's spell? Paris is the head-honcho cheerleader who decides who's cool and who's in her group. You can make fun of her, and I of course enjoy doing so quite often, but you have to give her her due. Somehow she is the head bitch in the high school of America.

PLAYBOY: What is it about her?

MAHER: I think it's confidence. She's a rich kid. I compare her to George W. Bush, a rich kid who really didn't accomplish anything but had the confidence rich kids often have—an attitude that the world should come to them because it always has. It's very attractive to a nation of followers. Britney Spears, who nominally should be the leader of the pack—she actually had a career, has sold millions of dollars' worth of records—and Lindsay Lohan, an actress who does movies, understand who the boss is: Paris Hilton. It's because she does what the Democrats don't do and the Republicans have consistently done. They let the country come to them. By standing their ground and standing by their principles, they have successfully moved the country way, way to the right. When Barry Goldwater ran in 1964, he lost by a landslide, but they didn't care. Ronald Reagan was a laugh-out-loud joke when he first ran for president, in 1968. But he stood by what he thought was right and true, and the country came to him.

PLAYBOY: Why do Americans find that appealing?

MAHER: Most people in this country want to follow. They want to be told what to think. It's an attribute that has served Bush well, too. He seems resolute. He seems as if he knows what he thinks. People like it when he says, "I don't follow the polls." To them it says leadership. Of course they forgot that his ideas are stupid and he's a moron. Finally they woke up to that in 2006. Resolute became stubborn. But by standing their ground, Republicans brought the country way to the right. It's why you had John Kerry closing out the election in a goose-hunting outfit and why Hillary Clinton talks about a flag-burning amendment. Hillary Clinton, valetorian at Wellesley, doesn't think we should be able to burn the flag? That's hard for me to believe. But they have put the idea into the Democrats' heads that to win you better move closer to where they are. As a result, nobody in Washington is sug-

gesting programs and policies I would consider left-wing. Nancy Pelosi is not going to say we should legalize drugs. She's not for socialized medicine. She's not for a gasoline tax. Part of the genius of Karl Rove and the far right is they have convinced the rest of America that the center is way over to the right. It's one reason so many people don't vote. In the 2004 election 78 million people who could have voted did not. My guess is most of those 78 million would have voted liberal. Meanwhile conservatives vote. They're organized. They're squares. They get up in the morning.

PLAYBOY: As opposed to...?

MAHER: Us. We're sleeping it off from last night's clubs. If there were a draft and the Supreme Court outlawed abortion, you might see liberals set the alarm clock that Tuesday.

PLAYBOY: Did the most recent election indicate that the religious right has been discredited?

MAHER: No. From what I read they came out in about the same numbers as previous elections. This time, however, independents who were energized by Republican ineptitude outvoted them. The religious right is still there. The election just taught us that there is a counterweight to it.

PLAYBOY: Do you agree that the election was a referendum on the war?

MAHER: Mostly on the war but also on corruption. Also it was about Bush giving most of the treasury to his rich friends. People finally realized our money could be going to better things than Paris Hilton so she can gargle with diamonds after she blows a guy. The Democrats won this time only because people were fed up. The challenge now is for Democrats to see if they can win an election when the other party has not completely disgraced itself in every conceivable manner.

PLAYBOY: People have said the results might have been different had Donald Rumsfeld been fired before the election rather than after. Do you agree?

MAHER: People were looking for the president to make a change, to show he could be flexible. Rumsfeld was the face of a failed program. Bush had done nothing but stand by him. In fact, the week before the election he said Rumsfeld was going to be there until the end of his term. I think people just rolled their eyes at that. It was a political blunder.

PLAYBOY: Have we heard the last from Karl Rove?

MAHER: I don't know if people in the party blame him for that election. I think they blame Bush. Rove has proved he could win with a weak hand, but this

was pretty much the weakest hand anyone had ever been asked to play in modern politics. Add up the war, Hurricane Katrina, Mark Foley, the debt—there was very little he could run on. Mostly, Bush lost the war. Mr. Kick Ass and Take Names lost. I'm sure Bush prayed a lot about Iraq, but he never learned about Iraq. Everybody in this country thinks praying is great, which to me is childish. But even if it isn't, it doesn't replace knowledge. *[impersonating Bush]* "Saddam bad. Freedom good." Well, the Iraqis saw something else. Sunnis out, Shiites in. In most of the Muslim world, Shiites are close to apostates. In the minds of most Muslims, it was impossible to imagine Shiites in power. That's what threatens them now. They see America enabling this impossible event. We went into their country without knowing anything about them. Half the people they originally got to go over there thought, We've sprinkled the freedom dust on them, and now everything's going to be cool. We don't need troops; we don't need a plan. Another problem is something we seem never to learn: You can't just instill democracy. You can't just graft it onto a society that has no institutions of public law. As I said, Saddam was a secularist. Now we have these crazy fundamentalists warring—a model democracy.

PLAYBOY: How many of the problems in the Middle East are due to religious fundamentalism?

MAHER: Religious fundamentalism is the root of problems everywhere. I could just as easily go on about the crazy Christian God-hates-fags types who have killed abortion doctors. I don't know if any religion has the monopoly on crazy factions. I've been brushing up on my Eastern religions, and they're crazy too. Their big superiority is supposed to be that they're peaceful, but Japan was Buddhist before World War II, and that didn't stop it from raping Nanking and bombing Pearl Harbor. People use religion to justify what they want to do. Some Mormons use biblical passages to justify the genocide of the Indians, as well as their longtime prejudice against blacks.

PLAYBOY: Your views about religion have gotten you into trouble.

MAHER: Like the old saying goes, the two things you shouldn't talk about in a polite dinner conversation are politics and religion—the two things I love to talk about. *[laughs]* At my dinner parties we talk about them.

PLAYBOY: Have you been affected by religious organizations' angry reactions to you?

MAHER: When ABC canned me for my 9/11 comments, a lot of it was because of what I had said about religion.

PLAYBOY: But your show was canceled not because of anything you had said about religion but your comment that the U.S., not the terrorists, was cowardly.

MAHER: A Houston disc jockey started all the mob action against me, but he had

been trying to get me fired for 10 years because of my position on religion.

PLAYBOY: Do you regret your remarks?

MAHER: I was sorry it upset people at a time when they were traumatized anyway, but what I said wasn't wrong. Listen, after 9/11 Bush said the terrorists win unless we continue to do exactly what we've been doing. So go shop. Go back to work. Well, I went back to work. I was host of a show called *Politically Incorrect*, which prided itself on pulling no punches and saying the truth. The terrorists did not win with me.

PLAYBOY: Did the reaction surprise you?

MAHER: Oh my God. I don't think most people, even people in show business, will ever know what it feels like when that super-white-hot light gets turned right onto you in a negative way. I thought I was headed to Abu Ghraib. I was afraid to go out. I thought people were going to punch me or something. It was as though all of America was enraged about what had happened to us, but because the enemy was amorphous, people had nothing to turn their rage on until I stepped up. I provided a service for America. I gave people a target for their rage for a while. You're welcome, America.

PLAYBOY: Were the sponsors who pulled out offended or just succumbing to your critics' reaction?

MAHER: They reacted to money. They got letters saying, "We will boycott your product if you advertise on this show."

PLAYBOY: Did you worry that the damage was irreparable?

MAHER: At first, yes, absolutely.

PLAYBOY: You have been at the heart of many controversies. Have any of the others compared?

MAHER: No. None. And nothing ever will, which is kind of good. It's as if I've been inoculated. I know what it feels like to have people try to make me disappear.

PLAYBOY: After that experience, were you bothered by the flak about your Halloween costume of Steve Irwin pierced by a stingray?

MAHER: I didn't even flinch. I defend that, by the way. If you get killed by an animal, it means you were doing something to an animal that you shouldn't have been doing. Steve Irwin loved animals the way child molesters love children. They really do love them, but they also go too far.

PLAYBOY: Who will you dress up as next Halloween?

MAHER: I'll have to see what tragedy has struck the heart of most Americans. That's what Halloween is for. I don't understand why people don't get that.

PLAYBOY: Clearly your political incorrectness still pushes many people's buttons.

MAHER: Yes, America is still a place that wants to make people disappear if they make someone the least bit uncomfortable. What 9/11 should have done was toughen America up, but it didn't. We just absorbed it into our vast web of narcissism and general softness. I see things

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 34, 39-42, 104-111 and 158-159, check the listings below to find the stores nearest you.



GAMES

Page 34: *Bullet Witch*, atari.com. *Def Jam: Icon*, ea.com. *God of War II*, playstation.com. *MotorStorm*, playstation.com. *Virtua Fighter 5*, sega.com.

MANTRACK

Pages 39-42: *Aspen Mountain Powder Tours*, aspensnowmass.com. *Belly Up Aspen*, bellyupaspen.com. *Chess set*, zontikgames.com. *Elevation*, elevation.aspen.com. *Eric's Bar*, 970-920-6707. *Fuego*, fuegoliving.com. *Hickory House Ribs*, hickoryhouseribs.com. *Merkur*, nashvilleknife.com. *MotoArt*, motoart.com. *Mountain Valley Retreat*, mc-cartneyprop.com. *Nike*, nikegolf.com. *Nikon*, nikonusa.com. *Nobu Matsuhisa*, nobumatsuhisa.com. *Sky Hotel*, theskyhotel.com. *Summit Creek*, summitcreeklamb.com. *Tesla*, teslamotors.com. *Tommy's Honor*, available at bookstores nationwide.

SPRING AND SUMMER FASHION FORECAST

Pages 104-111: *Alessandro Dell'Acqua*, 212-253-6861. *Android*, android-usa.com. *Baby Phat* by Kimora Lee Simmons, available by special order at 212-391-9443. *Barbara Bui*, 212-625-1938. *BOSS Black*, 800-HUGO-BOSS. *Calvin Klein Collection*, 877-256-7373. *Canali*,

www.canali.it. *Carl F. Bucherer*, carl-f-bucherer.com. *Chaiken*, 888-339-3301. *Ermenegildo Zegna*, available at Ermenegildo Zegna boutiques and Barneys New York. *Gran Sasso*, www.gransasso.it. *Isaia*, available at Neiman Marcus. *Jasper Conran*, jasperconran.com. *John Lobb*, johnlobb.com. *Johnston & Murphy*, johnstonandmurphy.com. *Jovovich-Hawk*, available at select

Nordstrom locations. *Locman*, available at Bloomingdale's. *Lorenzini*, available at Wilkes Bashford in San Francisco and Stanley Korshak in Dallas. *Loris Diran*, 212-675-4055. *Luigi Borrelli Napoli*, available at Luigi Borrelli boutiques and Bergdorf Goodman. *Mark Nason*, marknason.com. *Massimo Bizzocchi*, available at Saks Fifth Avenue. *Richmond X Uomo*, 212-505-9725. *Robert Talbot*, 800-747-8778. *Salvatore Ferragamo*, ferragamo.com. *TAG Heuer*, tagheuer.com. *Tissot*, tissot.ch. *Valentino*, available at Valentino boutiques. *Versace*, available at Versace boutiques nationwide. *VPL by Victoria Bartlett*, vplnyc.com. *Y's*, yohjiyamamoto.co.jp.

POTPOURRI

Pages 158-159: *CarMD*, carmd.com. *Elemis*, timetospa.com. *ExceptionLab, Inc.*, wearehappytoserveyou.com. *Hanky Panky*, available at Saks Fifth Avenue. *Peerflix*, peerflix.com. *Photo by Sammy Davis, Jr.*, reganbooks.com. *Self Shelf*, firebox.com. *Skystream*, skystreamenergy.com. *Tanqueray*, available at liquor stores nationwide.

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all the time that offend me or that I don't like. I turn the page or change the channel. I don't need to hear an apology. I'm like, "What an asshole. Fuck you. Next." But instead, I dress up like the Crocodile Hunter and people want me to apologize. At least I piss off Democrats as well as Republicans. I'm bipartisan.

PLAYBOY: Are you a registered Democrat?

MAHER: I'm an independent.

PLAYBOY: In 2000 you supported Nader. Many people blame his supporters for getting Bush elected.

MAHER: In 2000 a lot of us supported Nader. He represented more of what we were thinking. He still does, but in 2004 we felt it would be better to go the practical route, and this Kerry fellow was a decent man who had a chance of winning. We got fucked both ways.

PLAYBOY: Will an independent candidate ever have a chance of winning?

MAHER: No. It's ironic. This is a country that insists on 28 flavors of ice cream. You go down the aisle in the supermarket: Do you want Pellegrino or still water? Lemon? I'm just trying to get some fucking water, and there's a questionnaire I have to fill out. Christ, I don't care. I'll die of thirst before I get it. But somehow in politics it's always the same two choices.

PLAYBOY: One issue on which you and the left disagree is the death penalty. You support it. Why?

MAHER: I don't believe life is necessarily precious, I don't believe everything happens for a reason, and I don't think people necessarily have goodness in them. Most people in this country believe those three things. Life is precious? It can be. It can also be a waste of protoplasm. I certainly don't think everything happens for a reason.

PLAYBOY: At least you're consistent. You support abortion, which some people also believe is killing.

MAHER: I'm like the antipope. The pope is very consistent about life: Don't fuck with it. I'm that way about death. I'm pro-death. I'm for the death penalty. I'm pro-choice. I'm pro-assisted suicide, and I'm pro-regular suicide. Whatever gets the freeway moving.

PLAYBOY: How about some other issues. What's your view of the poisoning of former Russian spy Alexander Litvinenko? Do you think Russian president Vladimir Putin was behind it?

MAHER: Would it surprise you if ex-KGB Putin did that? It was priceless when Bush said, "I looked the man in the eye. I was able to get a sense of his soul." I looked into his eyes and saw Satan. Bush's idiocy is amazing. How embarrassing. Like the G8 summit—a graphic illustration of a clown on the world stage. He and Laura arrived like the Duke and Duchess of Hazzard. He was spitting food, grabbing the German chancellor. When he called to the British prime minister, "Yo, Blair," even Fox News had to gasp.

PLAYBOY: How important a force is Fox News?

MAHER: It's peaked. And I think the ratings back that up. The American public has caught on, just the way it caught on to the Bush administration. "Oh, just because they're saying it on TV doesn't mean it's not complete bullshit." Now everyone knows it's not really a news organization.

PLAYBOY: But Fox has a sizeable audience.

MAHER: A loyal audience not interested in the truth. For Fox, "fair and balanced" means all the news that's shit we print. The audience turns to Sean Hannity and Bill O'Reilly and hears one side.

PLAYBOY: On your side, many liberals turn to comedians: you, Stephen Colbert and Jon Stewart.

MAHER: We mostly preach to the converted, though on my show we try to mix it up.

PLAYBOY: You have claimed to be the godfather of political humor. Are you proud to have Stewart and Colbert as progeny?

MAHER: Absolutely. They're good at what they do.

PLAYBOY: *The New Yorker* once called you a brainy bully. Are you?

MAHER: Yeah, I guess. I can get over-excited. Sometimes I don't realize I'm being as impassioned as I am, and that can probably come across as bullying—especially since it's my show and I have home-court advantage. I should watch that. The real bullies are O'Reilly and Hannity, though. They never let you finish a sentence.

PLAYBOY: Where do you get your news?

MAHER: I read *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *USA Today* and the newsmagazines.

PLAYBOY: Any blogs?

MAHER: I go to The Huffington Post. I watch the evening news—all three networks. I flip between the three newscasts, but all you get is about six or seven minutes of news and then segments like "Your Money," "Focus on the Family" and "How to Carve a Pumpkin."

PLAYBOY: How has the Internet changed politics?

MAHER: It's a bathroom wall. You can read great wisdom on a bathroom wall, and you can read, "Here I sit brokenhearted. Something, something and only farted."

PLAYBOY: Growing up, did you read the newspaper and watch TV news?

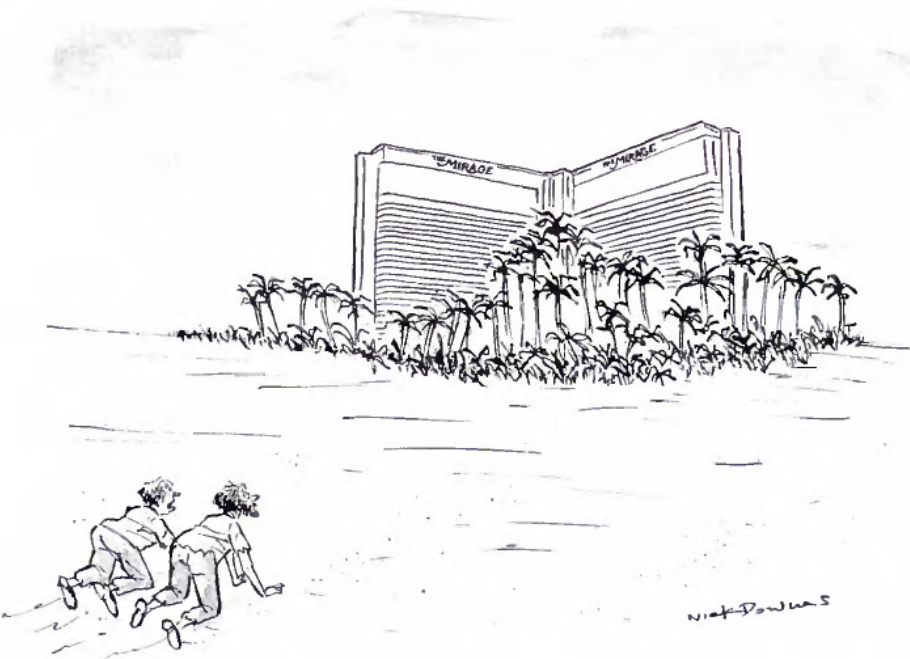
MAHER: Much more so than in the normal American family, because my father was in news as a radio staff announcer and then an editor. I can be a silly comedian one minute and then talk to Madeleine Albright the next because I've been reading the paper for 36 years. We had a Republican operative on one of our shows—I won't say who. Afterward we were discussing whether the Democrats would try to impeach Bush. I said, "I think what's impeachable is the fact that he went to war in Iraq without knowing Islam is divided between Sunnis and Shiites." This person said, "Well, five years ago did you?" Yes, I did. It's something you learn from reading the newspapers starting at 15. The people in this administration, however, know only that freedom's good and the other guys are bad.

PLAYBOY: How did having a Jewish mother and a Catholic father impact your life?

MAHER: My mother's Jewish, but I was raised very much a Catholic.

PLAYBOY: Were you a believer?

MAHER: Kids always buy everything. They have no power to resist. It's a form of child abuse. When kids are abused, very often they don't say much because they just figure, Oh well, that's what creepy uncles do.



"It's just the Mirage."

PLAYBOYonline

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They touch you. I was traumatized even though I wasn't abused by a priest—and I'm a little insulted, because I was cute. Maybe I was just too sensitive as a kid, but I always dreaded going to church. The nuns would scare the hell out of you. I was slumping over once, and a nun said, "The boy who's slumping is going to go to hell." When you're a little kid, you take that seriously. One of the main differences with Eastern religions is that you get more than one shot. You can come back. In Western religions, you're up to the plate once, and you'd better fucking get a hit or you're going to burn in hell forever.

PLAYBOY: Between your Jewish mom and Catholic dad, you must be very experienced with guilt.

MAHER: On my first *Tonight Show* I said I was half Jewish and half Catholic, so I used to bring a lawyer into confession. "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. I think you know Mr. Cohen." Johnny Carson loved that.

PLAYBOY: In clips from those early days, you have a mullet. Does that embarrass you now?

MAHER: Hair was pretty awful in the 1980s. There was something in the water. It wasn't really a mullet, though. I had a big squirrel on my shoulder from this giant flock of hair behind my ear.

PLAYBOY: Now you have a stripper's pole in your home. Has anyone famous used it well?

MAHER: It's amazing the way a woman of a certain age cannot pass a stripper's pole without at least wanting to try it. It's like a man picking up a baseball bat. You just want to take a few cuts.

PLAYBOY: Has Paris Hilton tried it?

MAHER: No, but if she ever comes over, she would be more than welcome.

PLAYBOY: At the age of 51 are you a confirmed bachelor?

MAHER: I know I have that reputation. Marriage never called to me, but I understand it works for a lot of people. You're a different person every decade. I don't know what's going to happen now that I'm 51.

PLAYBOY: You're not pretty much the same guy you were when you were younger?

MAHER: In my 20s I was a loser. High

school, college—not much. I didn't have the college experience we see on MTV. I went to Cornell. There weren't very many girls, the ones who were there weren't very cute, and I wasn't very good at getting girls. I was in New York in my early 20s and was desperately poor trying to be a comedian. That formula didn't make me a big player. I lived in a horrible roach-infested studio over a bus stop on Eighth Avenue. I came out here to L.A. when I was 27. I felt as though I'd found paradise, because I lived in a nicer place for the same amount of money. I had a little car. I had just enough to be dangerous. That was the era of girlfriends—steady girlfriends, one at a time, some more serious than others. I had a very serious relationship in my mid-30s. When I got out of that I became a real bachelor, a player. I had a good time in my 40s. I had learned a lot about women by then.

PLAYBOY: What did you learn?

MAHER: To talk to them as you would talk to anyone you aren't trying to fuck.

PLAYBOY: And then?

MAHER: Then you'll get laid.

PLAYBOY: Do you have a girlfriend now?

MAHER: Yes, I do. I try to keep it private. What will happen? Who knows? They always say life begins at 40. I understand what that means, especially for someone ambitious and driven. It takes a couple of decades to set up your life. By 40 you've laid the groundwork. You've got your own business or whatever it is. But what they don't tell you about life beginning at 40 is that the next step is 50. I think my 50s are going to be good, but you're always looking ahead. Fifty seems old when you're 40, but at 50 you're looking at 60. Now that seems really old. I'm still having fun, though, and when I get bored, well, thank God for George Bush. He may be the worst president we've ever had, but he's been good for me.

PLAYBOY: Will Bush leaving office be bad for your business?

MAHER: Well, there will never be anybody as good as Bush. He provided everything except sex, and dumbness is probably even better than sex. There's a contradiction between what's good for my country and what's good for my living. Between Bush and Clinton, I've been lucky. Since I've been doing this we've had a horndog and an idiot.

PLAYBOY: Which is worse?

MAHER: No question. I'd rather have a horndog any day. I can relate to a horndog.

PLAYBOY: And when there's no more George Bush to kick around?

MAHER: I hope I'm wrong, but sadly, and given our recent history, there's a better than even chance some other idiot will come along, screw up miserably and provide me with endless opportunities.



"How sweet. We just met and you've already given me a pet name. I'll always cherish the name Creepy."



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Dr. Steffanie Seaver PSY.D is an expert in the area of interpersonal relationships. Researcher, author and accomplished public speaker, she has lectured nationwide for over a decade. Dr. Seaver has also been involved with several publications covering relationship and lifestyle issues.

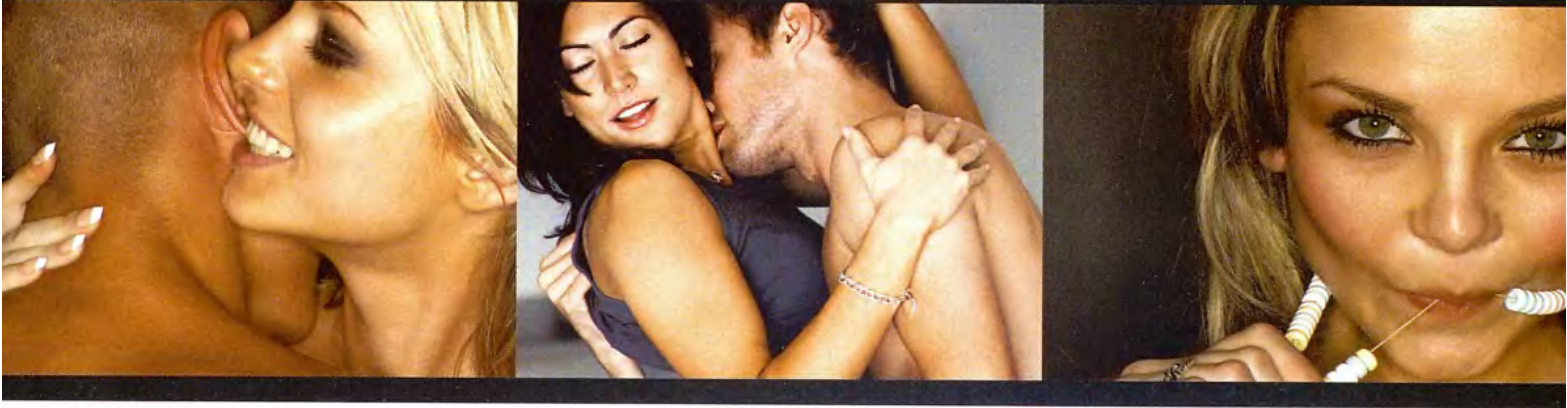
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Dear Steffanie,

I know a lot of men read your column and could really benefit from this important STAMINA secret my boyfriend and I recently discovered.

As much as I hate to throw him under the bus, my boyfriend's sexual performance was less than adequate when it came to his "timing". He tried hard to please me and I can tell that he believed he was doing a great job, which is why it was difficult for me to tell him the truth.

We've been together for about a year but last month, after what he thought was a "strong effort" for a Saturday afternoon, I couldn't help but be disappointed and I let him know there could be a bit of a gap between his perception of his sexual performance and our SEXUAL REALITY.

I told him that I love him but when it came to the "duration" of our lovemaking, I was often left feeling extremely frustrated - he always "got his" and that if he could "hold out" just a little longer, maybe I could "get mine."

He said he always thought that when he "punched the clock", he was pulling a "full shift." Of course, he was shocked by this huge blow to his ego but after some serious sulking and a whole lot of denial, he realized his sexual stamina really could use some improvement.

Dear Readers,

I did some research on Vivaxa and here's what I found: Vivaxa uses groundbreaking, advanced topical technology. It's the first sexual control and performance enhancer on the market to utilize Calmosensine™, along with Peptide 171. It soothes overstimulation to help men significantly enhance stamina and performance without desensitizing female partners. Check out Vivaxa by calling 1-800-458-6904 or visit www.MaxodermVIVAXA.com and receive a **FREE TUBE PLUS** get \$200 worth of **FREE GIFTS** with your order - **FOR A LIMITED TIME**. Don't let her question your staying power anymore. Call today! **GUARANTEED OR YOUR MONEY BACK!**

"I know he feels great knowing I'm completely satisfied and HE'S the reason why."

He was serious about improving his performance so he did some research and spoke to a doctor friend of his. His friend told him about a number of cheap desensitizing lubricants on the market that might help his stamina and performance but were known to possibly hurt erection quality and worse, they tend to numb a woman - which as far as I'm concerned, defeats the whole purpose! Great, so now he'd be able to last longer but I'd be numb too! That was the last thing our relationship needed!

His doctor friend also told him that if he really wanted to improve his control and performance and still maintain maximum firmness, he should try a new product called Vivaxa from the makers of Maxoderm (the #1 topical male enhancement product that's recommended by Leading Physician, Michael A. Savino, M.D., F.A.C.S. for instantly improving erection quality). The ingredients in this new "sex stamina secret" make it different from other products because it contains a clinically tested ingredient that is unlike anything else on

the planet! It actually HELPS erection quality and firmness. And best of all, the formula absorbs super fast upon application so it won't numb a woman! Improved erection quality AND enhanced stamina - it seemed too good to be true!

My boyfriend got a sample and that weekend we tried it. From the very first application, he felt more firm and full than ever before - by the time we'd finished making love, I'D GOTTEN MINE TWICE! Needless to say, this has been a record breaking month for us. I know he feels great knowing that I'm completely satisfied and he's the reason why. And trust me, his confidence wasn't the only thing that shot through the roof!

So Steffanie, please print this letter - I'm sure there's a ton of women out there wishing their men used Vivaxa, a quality control and performance enhancing product that lets him put in the extra time without numbing her! I know they're still offering a **FREE MONTH SUPPLY** if you call 1-800-458-6904 or visit their website at www.MaxodermVIVAXA.com. Tell your readers to hurry because supplies were limited when I called.

Pamela B., Nashville, TN



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"The problem is they often put stuff up with no fact-checking. The amount of untruth is unbelievable."

Lavandeira often gets photos by being invited to a party and posing with celebrities. He has become an Internet celebrity himself, complete with a failed reality-television show that never made it onto the air and lawsuits by paparazzi who claim he steals the photos on his site. "I'm on the Z-list," he says of his party invites. "Maybe one day I'll be on the S-list." Still, he counts Paris Hilton, Jessica Simpson and Courtney Love among his friends and says about 50 percent of publicists get the joke. Tara Reid, however, once tried to get him kicked out of a party. (A recent post mentioned her "porn-star hair" and ridiculed the company that paid \$100,000 for her to make an appearance.) He certainly has enough friends to keep getting big scoops. In January he broke the news of Britney spending the night at the W hotel in Westwood, California with a new guy, later identified as model Isaac Cohen. The next day *People's* and *Us Weekly's* websites followed Lavandeira's scoop; Gawker did too but didn't credit him. "Gawker hates me because I threaten its existence," he says.

Lavandeira may be branding himself as the Paris Hilton of gossip bloggers, but Levin of TMZ thinks bloggers shouldn't be stars. "I don't think people are into the personality of who gives them information," says Levin. "They're into the information." That's a far cry from what was once true of the Hedda Hoppers and Walter Winchells of the world, who leveraged their colorful personalities and exclusive perches to break news. The decreasing importance of having a bold-faced name writing a gossip column has also made the job less enticing. It used to be easy for Page Six to hire fresh talent willing to work cheap for experience, exposure and endless invitations.

When I started my writing career at *The New York Observer*, in 1999, most of the big publications in town had big gossip and society columnists. *W* magazine, the *Observer*, *New York* magazine, *Us Weekly* and the *Times* had a boldfaced-name columnist chronicling the rich and famous. Now most of them have abolished their gossip sections entirely. Only the fiercely competitive *Daily News* and *Post* still have established columnists cranking out daily copy—often lifted from websites. "Gossip blogs have certainly undermined lazy columnists," says Gawker founding editor Elizabeth Spiers, who now edits Dealbreaker, a Wall Street gossip blog. "Gossip blogs are threatening to traditional columns inasmuch as they can break news or have access to their celebrity subjects. And some of them do.

a fluffy society column and you're not really breaking anything, it's going to be increasingly hard for you to compete because there are far more people who can and want to scoop you."

Lavandeira may get into some parties, but his presence is hardly coveted the way that of print gossip columnists has been in the past. For decades publicists have sucked up to those columnists enough for them to start feeling as if they're celebrities too. If you've ever read about a celebrity working out with a certain trainer, you'd better believe that trainer is also whipping the gossip columnist into shape. A random sighting of a celebrity at a store you never heard of? Not an act of charity. A table of B-list celebrities mentioned as dining at a mediocre restaurant? That came with a free meal—or five.

I wrote the gossip column for *New York* for two years, and I still get bins of invitations to exclusive events, even from publicists who would call me on publication day to scream about an unflattering item I'd written. During those two years I don't think I ever waited for one minute outside a red velvet rope or paid for a drink at a new club. One event planner sent an orchid every time I ran a picture from one of his movie screenings, so I usually had a fresh supply of flowers on my desk. A venerable publicist once called to beg—"I'm on my hands and knees!" she shrieked—for me to include a picture from her event, and I did because I liked attending her movie screenings and she could be a useful source. We all needed each other, and I was pretty popular—until I wasn't. But we'll get back to that.

Blogs have made it hard for publicists to play nice and get what they want. It has never been easy for a publicist to kill an unflattering item about a client, but there are ways. The best tactic is to trade: offer something better, preferably about a competitor. This works well with the romantic lives of starlets, since someone is always hooking up or breaking up in a big soap opera that warrants endless coverage. (See Nicole Richie, Paris Hilton, Lindsay Lohan.) Another old strategy is to announce something sensitive on a holiday when the public is too distracted to care, the big columnists are on vacation and most magazines are closed. Mike Myers announced his divorce on Christmas Eve, and Jessica Simpson announced her separation around Thanksgiving. Publicists also like to release exclusive photos of their clients looking perfect exiting a store or working on a set.

But it all went bust with the blogs.

"Enough of these staged photos with perfect hair and perfect makeup," says Levin, who has provoked the ire of paparazzi agencies for hiring his own photographers. "It's not real. We show celebrities in real life. People are into that."

And if the celebrities aren't into that, they're in for even more trouble. When Woody Harrelson choked one of TMZ's photographers, the video image of the assault was immediately posted online. His publicist couldn't use the traditional tactic of refusing ever to give TMZ an exclusive interview with Harrelson or any of her other clients—a risk most glossy magazines can't afford to take. Blogs, however, don't need any gilded access. "My feeling is the rules have changed," says Levin. "It used to be publicists could bludgeon the traditional media, but I don't give a shit about getting a sit-down interview. They don't have that bargain with us."

Sunshine wishes bloggers would regularly call more for comment, confirmation or denial—as is protocol for most old-media gossip columnists with whom he has worked for decades. "The problem is they often put stuff up with no basis of fact-checking," he says. "We may not tell them what they want and we may not answer their questions, but we can be guides about whether or not it's true. The amount of untruth is kind of unbelievable."

Instead of tips from publicists and celebrity friends, new-media gossip sites thrive on intelligence from loyal readers. Gawker gets about 500 e-mails a day from readers, many anonymous, though only 10 percent of those end up being useful. However, readers love writing in about celebrity sightings for the Gawker Stalker feature and even use old gossip-column lingo, such as "canoodling" for a couple making out. "Now everyone is a self-appointed journalist," says Gould. (Back when I was a gossip columnist, I rarely got anything but spam and press releases e-mailed to the address printed at the bottom of my column. Only crazies called in tips.)

Bloggers also have the luxury of hurling a rumor into cyberspace and seeing if it sticks. They can often figure out if it's true based on readers' e-mailed comments. If it's bullshit, there's often silence—never a good thing. In contrast, at *New York* magazine, I had to get each item I wrote fact-checked, confirmed by two sources and reviewed by a lawyer before going to press. I often had a hot tip I couldn't use because I couldn't get it through all that red tape, and I increasingly saw it pop up on the blogs. The result was a fairly boring, albeit accurate column of about six items a week. Gould, meanwhile, writes 12 posts a day.

Besides getting tips via e-mail, bloggers can instantly correct something if they get it wrong. Print columnists, however, have to wait at least a day before

running a correction. Even worse, when a glossy screws up, the gaffe is on newsstands for a week. Last August *Us Weekly* ran a cover story about Jennifer Aniston and Vince Vaughn getting engaged, and the magazine's editor touted the "exclusive" on the *Today* show. Aniston quickly rebuffed the engagement claim to gold-standard *People* magazine (which along with every other celebrity title has beefed up its website in the past year). Bloggers, however, just update their mistakes, making them part of the commentary—which brings us back to my brush with unpopularity in the gossip industry.

Last spring Random House published my first novel, *4% Famous*. It's a fictional account of my experiences as a gossip columnist, and it didn't win me any friends in the industry. Right before it was published, Jared Paul Stern was fired from his longtime gig at Page Six for his alleged shakedown of supermarket tycoon Ron Burkle, which had been caught on videotape. The fedora-sporting Stern allegedly proposed a deal with the much-covered billionaire: Burkle would invest in Stern's clothing line in exchange for friendlier coverage in the *Post*. As soon as the scandal broke online, almost all the major television networks and newspapers started calling me for commentary. (They didn't want to interview anyone at the *Daily News* or the *Post*, and not many other gossip columnists were left, for the aforementioned reasons.) I told pretty much anyone who asked that I thought Stern, whom I had known socially for years, was guilty of unethical behavior. I also said some bitchy stuff about how Page Six reporters think they're invincible—stuff I probably shouldn't have said out of professional courtesy to my former peers. "Anytime you want to stop trashing me is fine by me," Stern e-mailed me. I considered it a fair enough request and told him I would heed it. Needless to say he didn't show up for my press lunch at Le Bernardin. Stern got the last laugh in January when, for lack of evidence, the government refused to press charges.

The *Los Angeles Times* incorrectly referred to me as a "former Page Six reporter" in a story about the scandal because I had worked in the features department at the *Post* for a year before going to *New York*, during which time I wrote about a dozen Page Six items. This perceived capitalizing on the Page Six reputation to promote my book provoked the ire of a Page Six reporter with whom I had been off-and-on friendly for years. (I'll call her Jane because if I use her real name she'll probably kill me.) We have a history of miscommunication, competition and fighting, a particularly volatile cocktail considering our profession.

Predictably, it didn't take long for our fight to hit the blogs, and it wasn't pretty.

It all started when Jane sent me a slew

of threatening e-mails accusing me of misrepresenting my ties to Page Six and calling me pathetic and shameless. She had always been tough-talking, but I found her tone particularly terrifying and even lost sleep over it. I forwarded the messages to the *Post*'s publicist, who happened to be an old friend, and to Jane's editor, who knew about our rocky relationship. Jane didn't like that much, either. "May your climb up the social ladder of New York not have you shed so many friends—or 'frenemies' as you so proudly call most everyone—as this opportunistic stunt did," Jane e-mailed me.

Soon after, a reporter from *Women's Wear Daily's* media column called to get the scoop and wanted the e-mails, too. I wouldn't give them up, but he ran an item about the spat anyway. He mentioned I had taken a catty swipe at Jane regarding her book deal a year earlier and how it may have been a kickback for Page Six's favorable coverage of the publisher. Did I really say that? Yes. Was it wise? No. Karma's a bitch.

I gave *WWD* a quote saying I felt compassion (a word I learned in yoga) for Jane because she had a lot of anger and jealousy. Jane thought I had planted that item, but I hadn't. I also hadn't given her threatening e-mails to Gawker, even though Denton had repeatedly asked me to. I thought it was time to act like a lady and let it die down. But of course it didn't. Jane declared me her archenemy, which I have to admit I consider a bit of an honor, considering her long and illustrious list of enemies.

It got only more dramatic. Last June I organized a "Gossip Lit" reading with other former gossip columnists at a downtown bar. A publishing gossip site, GalleyCat (part of Mediabistro.com), ran an item about how one of the writers, whose book party Jane was hosting, had pulled out. GalleyCat remarked that Jane's "anti-Schoenemania is perhaps the worst-kept secret in New York." Fair enough. But then it got weird.

Early the next morning Gawker posted an item about how I hadn't shown up for the reading. I quickly e-mailed to say that item—which had already been linked on Jossip—was false: I had read from my book to about 100 people. Instead of deleting the item, the site ran an update: "Contrary to linkage below and elsewhere, Deborah e-mails to clarify that she did not cancel but actually read in front of a large crowd last night."

It was hardly a coincidence that Jane was friendly with a previous Gawker editor who had written that post, as well as with Hauslaib of Jossip. I e-mailed Hauslaib, and he called me back right away. He alluded to Jane's hostility toward me being at the root of his nasty coverage of me and also posted an update about the reading. Still, it didn't stop him from taking a swipe at me months later in an e-mail about the swanky launch party for

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Culture & Travel magazine. "We understand Deborah Schoeneman RSVPs to Diet Coke bottles opening," he wrote in a post blasted out to his entire mailing list. I e-mailed Hauslaib in protest (I went as a friend's plus one!), and he responded right away, saying it wasn't personal. *Right*. He didn't change a word.

I decided to meet with him to ask about his tactics and was surprised at how sweet he seemed. At 23, he's the baby of the blogger group, having started his site while studying journalism at Syracuse University. "If someone is going to take the effort to reach out to me, I'm more than happy to hear their case," said Hauslaib over snacks near his downtown apartment. "If we did something wrong, I'll own up to it." But still, his nasty items about me (and there are a bunch) pop up at the top of a Google search of my name. Thanks, Jossip.

We didn't speak about Jane at all, but

she was clearly on both our minds, and I suspect she remains one of his best sources. "At the end of the day," he said, sipping a Diet Coke, "I'm a firm believer that all press is good press. I understand what I do for a living. If you dish it out, you have to be able to take it."

Hauslaib broke the news about controversial book publisher Judith Regan being fired at the end of last year after the failed launch of O.J. Simpson's book *If I Did It*. He was heading home around seven P.M. on a Friday (the tabloid gossip columns for Saturday, Sunday and Monday had already been written) when a source e-mailed the information to Hauslaib's BlackBerry, perhaps the most important tool for any blogger. He quickly posted the news from his computer. "It was the timing," he said, shrugging. "I got lucky." He claimed it as an exclusive, but soon after his post the *Times* ran a

more thorough story. In the next week the news was constantly updated and dissected—pure blog candy.

In the tradition of print gossip columnist feuding, Gawker's Shafir is quick to discredit Hauslaib's big Regan break. "Jossip claims exclusives, but it's just an exclusive for 10 seconds," Shafir says. "We don't want to claim anything as an exclusive," adds Gould. Unlike print columns, however, blogs need each other. One of the biggest pains of writing a weekly column is getting scooped by a daily one. "Readership and ad dollars don't rise and fall if another gossip blog has a big break," Hauslaib says. "When it comes to a blog, it's more crucial to have a distinct voice."

One link Jossip didn't pick up was a recent Gawker post about Jane. She had introduced a reading of famous authors on the topic of sex with a diatribe about her dismal dating history. "A concerned member of the community" transcribed Jane's candid speech and e-mailed Gawker the next morning. I read it with train-wreck fascination, feeling simultaneously giddy and guilty. "You know it's not going well," she said, "when 14 minutes into dinner you ask your date, who's a well-known Wall Streeter—you all know him; I just can't say his name—who's been going on and on about homosexuality, 'Excuse me, are you homosexual?' and he looks at you and goes, 'Not right now.'" The dating dispatches got worse. "It's also not going well when you notice your boyfriend of several months—a well-known TV personality—can only get off if he's having sex with you from behind while watching himself on TV. It's kind of like getting spit-roasted by the same guy."

After I read the post first thing in the morning, I went to yoga. On the walk back home I was gossiping about Jane's dating diatribe with another media friend on my cell phone. I was just gabbing away, talking trash with my friend as if we were in *Mean Girls*. I stopped on a street corner, waiting for the light to turn. That's when I noticed Jane walking her dog on the other side of the street. I quickly hung up the phone—when I looked back up, she was gone. Part of me wanted to run and catch her, to say I would help her get that post taken down. I wanted to ask why she hadn't responded to my two e-mails asking her out for drinks to try to smooth things over. I wanted to assure her we would both fall in love one day, despite our checkered past romances with egocentric men who wanted to date a gossip columnist. I wanted to say we weren't really all that different. Maybe there wasn't room in this big city for the two of us back when we were both gossip columnists, but I had moved on. I was out of her way. The nature of the beast had changed, and it would never be the same.

I wanted to say I'm sorry.



"I just don't know why you gynecologists bother coming in here during your conventions...."



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BIG TUNA

(continued from page 80)

from anything he had seen in the Big Apple. "At least in New York you had the families, so you could identify who was working with who," he says, "but Chicago was just a mess."

No caper typifies the crazy-quilt nature of Chicago crime more than the Levinson's jewelry burglary, one of the biggest Chicago scores of the 1970s. Stuck on a block with an adult bookstore and seedy bars, Levinson's didn't look like a good target for a high-value heist. Although Harry Levinson insisted on being called a jeweler in the press, the word *loans* was prominently displayed on the sign over his store. Like any other pawnshop's, his windows were cluttered with the faded and tacky.

But there was treasure buried inside. A relentless showman, Levinson had purchased one of the world's largest diamonds, the 70.2-carat Idol's Eye, and every so often trotted it out for auctions, claiming he would accept only bids of more than \$1 million. Although he had no takers by December 1977, he did attract another sort of unwanted attention. The Saturday night before Christmas, a crew of what police later described as highly skilled technicians made their own bid for Levinson's jewels. From the roof they threw a tarpaulin over the alley side of the building and used an acetylene torch under the shroud to cut through the bars on a second-floor bathroom window.

Once inside they found five different vaults to crack, a diabolical challenge. They came away with a haul worth more than \$1 million in jewels and fur but didn't open the largest safe, which held the Idol's Eye. Not that they didn't try. They stayed through the day on Sunday and into the early hours of Monday morning. By the time they left, the water they had used to cool the metal their torches had cut stood inches deep on the showroom floor.

Some investigators now believe two different crews may have teamed for the operation—one mostly Mob connected, the other independent. One thing was certain: Only Mendell could have engineered the elaborate setup that overcame the five different alarm systems supposedly making Levinson's burglarproof. To maintain a continuous circuit Mendell trailed cables—camouflaged with garbage—100 yards down the alley, up the side of an apartment building and into a black box that sat in the middle of a vacant first-floor apartment.

After opening his doors that Monday, 80-year-old Levinson sloshed dumbstruck through the store. In 60 years of business he had never suffered as much as a robbery, let alone a heist of this magnitude. He called the police, but according to Roemer, in *Genevieve Godfather*, he also called Tony Accardo, who was soon seen lunching with Levinson

at Chez Paul, a restaurant not far from the store. Roemer writes that Spilotro (by this time based in Vegas) had fingered Mendell. In days, he asserts, the loot was coughed up and dutifully returned to Levinson.

Today no one intimately familiar with the Levinson's burglary or the Outfit believes Roemer's rosy scenario is true. First, since Mob burglars were involved, Accardo wouldn't have needed Spilotro's help to identify the wire man. In addition, Accardo would probably have felt no obligation to return anything to Levinson other than a finder's fee. The jeweler had already filed a police report, which forced him to make an insurance claim, so he was likely to get something back for his loss.

As for the burglars, Accardo made them learn their place in the Outfit food chain. They were told to fork over Levinson's loot to Mob fences, who would charge far more in commission than independents.

Although Mendell's crew complied with these edicts, they regretted it immediately and let others know of their unhappiness. FBI agent Zack Shelton investigated their deaths and today has no doubt Mendell and some members of his crew went on to burglarize Accardo's house. "Obviously, it was a stupid thing to do, but it could have been a 'Screw you, Mob' sort of thing," he says.

The thought that Accardo would have kept the jewels in River Forest has always seemed the most preposterous part of the break-in story. But in the world of the Outfit a little knowledge was a dangerous thing, and for anyone familiar with the history of Accardo's house, the notion of a hiding place would not have seemed far-fetched.

Ernest Hemingway once wrote that his hometown, Oak Park, was a neighborhood of "wide lawns and narrow minds." In that case, River Forest—Oak Park's neighbor—had even wider lawns if not narrower minds. The village is contiguous with Oak Park but almost exclusively residential, an enclave for a few thousand families. By the middle part of the 20th century it was home to industrial magnates, executives and professionals. As late as 1967 the village still required a minimum home-construction cost to "maintain a high-standard residential town."

Despite those standards, River Forest had another reputation—for housing the royalty of the Outfit. No doubt its proximity to downtown Chicago was a plus. It was also surrounded by gritty blue-collar suburbs where the crew leaders and their soldiers lived. Paul Ricca, Accardo's best friend, was among the first River Forest mobsters. A direct heir to Capone, Ricca nevertheless set a subdued tone with his stately Prairie-style home. When a Hollywood extortion racket he was involved in went awry, a federal prison became Ricca's principal residence. In his absence Accardo took the Outfit reins and never released them.

At five-foot-11, with broad shoulders,

Accardo was a big man by Outfit standards. To much of the world he was known as Tony. But to those who knew him best, he was Joe, as in Joe Batters, a nickname that harked back to his days in Al Capone's crew when he brought the great American pastime down on the head of anyone who dared defy his boss. If he made his bones with brute strength, he later made his mark with cunning: first when he organized Chicago's five Mafia groups into one clenched fist and next when he extended its reach all the way to California. His hammerlock on unions, the Teamsters in particular, gave him access to the pension funds that built the Las Vegas strip for the Mob.

Accardo's River Forest lifestyle expanded as his criminal empire did. In 1951 he moved into a Roaring Twenties mansion built by the flamboyant manufacturer of Majestic radios. A monstrous English Tudor, it had 22 rooms, an indoor swimming pool and a bowling alley. Unlike some of the other kingpins in town, Accardo was no recluse. He sent his two sons and two daughters to local schools and threw open his doors to their friends and parents. On Fridays in his study he and his understated wife, Clarice, hosted movie night, showing first-run features direct from downtown theaters (supplied by his brother, who ran the projectionists union). Joe Batters himself would carry trays of hot dogs for the kiddies.

Such overtures went unreciprocated by his neighbors. The children were rarely invited to birthday parties. In a town where the country club was an important part of society, Accardo was blackballed when he applied for membership. He finally gave up and bought his own golf course in a nearby town. Yet despite the snubs, his oldest daughter chose to live in River Forest and enrolled her children in the public schools.

Maybe to keep close to their grandchildren, the elder Accardos decided to remain in River Forest when they became empty nesters. In 1963 they purchased a corner lot on Ashland Avenue, down the street from where they had first lived in town, and commenced to build their retirement home. Accardo reportedly paid careful attention to the design, and to oversee construction he picked a local contractor who was also a neighbor: Van Corbin, who had changed his name from Sam Panveno and whose cousin ran the rackets in the southern suburbs. With this pedigree, Corbin was someone Accardo must have felt could be trusted, but his faith likely wavered two years later, after Corbin experienced financial reverses. During negotiations with the IRS Corbin was encouraged to share the blueprints of 1407 Ashland, something he made the mistake of divulging to Accardo. Soon after, Corbin decided to downsize himself—from a house to an apartment—and checked his family into a courtyard motel the night before the move. The next morning, as another motel guest was shaving with his door open, he saw Corbin

being cornered in the parking lot by two tanned, muscular men wearing sunglasses. He watched as they pulled out .22-caliber pistols with silencers and gunned Corbin down—as professional a hit as you could see outside the movies.

The murder was never solved, and no further Accardo connection has been proved, but with Corbin's death 1407 Ashland was born in blood and clouded with rumor, like a pirate's buried treasure. On the street, Outfit wiseguys would always wonder what was so special about the house that Accardo would kill to keep it hidden.

Vincent Moretti, the wisest wiseguy ever, was probably well acquainted with the Corbin story. He lived in Elmwood Park, the working-class suburb just across the road from River Forest and near both Accardo's house and the motel where the contractor was killed. Any effort to make sense of the break-in story must tail back to Moretti. By stomping him, the Mob had singled him out for special punishment, perhaps because he should have known better. He was as much as 20 years older than the others and was, obviously, Italian.

But he could also have been beaten for playing a more pivotal role in the burglary plot than previously thought. There's some debate about whether he was given up by Mendell or his nephew, a burglar who worked with Mendell and also snitched to the Mob. But there is no doubt Moretti was involved with the break-in. When police searched his possessions after his death, they found boxes of cuff links Accardo used to send out as Christmas gifts, items that could have come only from Big Tuna's home.

Moretti was no longer a burglar when he was killed but a fence for independents like Mendell, Garcia and Ryan. He had the most to lose when the burglars were forced to use Mob fences for the Levinson's loot. But could he have been blamed for encouraging Mendell and the others to steal it again? Could he have been so reckless as to challenge Accardo? Those who knew him answer with an unqualified yes.

Born into a large brawling family, Moretti and two of his brothers started out as policemen but showed no inclination for law enforcement. They killed and were killed. All were eventually ousted from the force, and in 1968, after his conviction for burglary, the papers referred to Vincent as a hood. Although the Outfit always had its share of renegade ex-coppers, it wanted no part of Moretti. He worked as an independent and graduated to loan-sharking and fencing. Big and burly with a shaved bullet head, he terrorized Chicago's swank bars and clubs, making obscene comments to attractive women and threatening to fight their men.

Vice cop Andy Murcia had an unnerving brush with Moretti when he was moonlighting as a security detective for the Ambassador East Hotel, then a Chicago hangout for visiting celebrities. He was summoned to the disco by the hotel's owner, who was appalled by Moretti's behavior at his bar. Describing the incident for the website The Columnists.com, he writes, "All I saw was a tough-looking guy with a half-crazed look on his face. He was wearing an unbuttoned shirt that exposed his gorilla-hairy chest and too many gold chains." Coming up from behind, Murcia stuck his pistol in Moretti's back, identified himself as a policeman and escorted him out of the hotel. Left on the curb, Moretti swore revenge. Marshall Caifano, then an Outfit underboss and mutual acquaintance of Moretti and Murcia, attempted to intercede. He commanded Moretti to stay away from the Ambassador East but warned the cop to watch his back. Caifano told Murcia that Moretti was "his own worst enemy." Even to an underboss Moretti could be "at times uncontrollable."

At this point Caifano, a tiny former enforcer, was in his late 60s. Like the septuagenarians Accardo and Joey Aiuppa, his longtime right-hand man, he no longer had the physical presence to

strike fear in a mindless thug. But if Moretti thought the old men who ran the Outfit were literally toothless, he would soon be surprised.

Through spring and summer 1978, FBI agents Pecoraro and Shelton continued to make important breaks in the burglar case. The two were unlikely partners: Shelton was dapper with a neatly trimmed mustache, brushed-back hair and a distinctive Louisiana accent (one agent's wife called him the Cajun Casanova); short, dark and intense, Pecoraro was often confused by the mobsters with one of their own.

Between the two of them, they could disarm or intimidate just about anyone. In a chance meeting with Accardo's son-in-law, they got him to volunteer that there had been a burglary at 1407 Ashland and that the old man was so "pissed," he had rushed back from Palm Springs. In another break they tracked a low-level participant in the Levinson's burglary to a Texas campground, where he confirmed that the thieves were forced to give the loot back to the Outfit. Most important, they subpoenaed mobster phone records for the times prior to each murder. Although the records listed only the numbers that were dialed, they revealed a chain of calls, starting with Accardo and then branching



Art Lubbock

"It is tiny, but it's got a great view into the bedroom of a beautiful blonde who never pulls down her shades."

out to his underbosses (in particular to Aiuppa, then 71), the suspected hit men and ultimately to the victims. In each case it appeared that the burglars were being set up by someone they knew—perhaps on the ruse of participating in a juicy score.

Steve Garcia had already fled to Miami when another burglar lured him back to Chicago. Phone records show Mendell last talked to Ron Jarrett, his violent South Side buddy from the aspirin heist. FBI agents are convinced Jarrett assisted in Mendell's murder along with John "Little Tony" Borsellino, another, much slicker crew leader.

According to FBI agent O'Rourke, who had an informant who was friendly with Little Tony, the hit man later had qualms about what he'd done, especially when the informant told him Mendell had been "a real good kid." Borsellino replied, "That kid went through hell. We tortured him pretty bad. I feel like tearing up my union card now."

Borsellino went on to say the whole affair had gotten out of hand. He believed some burglars were killed who had nothing to do with the Accardo break-in, but when he suggested that to Aiuppa, the old man replied, "Kill all the burglars. They're all beefers [informants] anyway." Borsellino would be killed a year later but more mercifully, with a couple of .22s to the back of his head.

Before long Shelton and Pecoraro had enough evidence to empanel a grand jury. In October 1978 Michael Volpe, the elderly caretaker who had discovered the break-in, came to give his testimony. His lawyer did not arrive in time to brief him before he was called into the grand jury room. Even in his broken English, the caretaker blurted out more than his employer expected. Five days later he disappeared, never to be seen again.

While this was an unfortunate development for Volpe, it was no setback for the investigation. Shelton could then go

before a magistrate and request a search warrant for Accardo's home, claiming there was absolutely nowhere else to search for the missing witness. After three tries he got his warrant.

On November 11, 1978, with no warning, Shelton, Pecoraro and a team of two dozen other agents assembled in the driveway of 1407 Ashland Avenue. As the *Tribune* reported, "The raid was believed to be the first time law enforcement authorities have entered and searched the crime lord's home."

Accardo had already left for California, so the agents summoned his 39-year-old daughter, Marie Kumerow, who lived a few blocks away, and asked her to open the door. At the sight of the agents, she balked. Shelton recalls, "She said, 'I don't think I can. Daddy will be really mad at me.' Then I said, 'You don't understand. I have a search warrant. You can let us in, or we'll have to tear the door down. I think your dad would be madder if we have to tear down his front door.'"

Kumerow opened the door, but her sister, 37-year-old Linda Palermo, soon arrived with Bernard Bruno, their father's obstreperous pint-size lawyer. "She was cussing us out, and he kept asking everyone for their name and number," Shelton says. The agents proceeded as delicately as possible through the house. Two agents were assigned to a room, and a floor leader would consult with a government lawyer before anything could be seized.

Once inside, Pecoraro could see that the first floor sprawled farther than he would have thought from the street, but aside from gold faucets in the bathroom he found nothing especially opulent. Plaques from churches and other charitable institutions hung on the wall, offering gratitude for Accardo's contributions. Pecoraro was assigned to the master bedroom, where he discovered a little black notebook in the nightstand. "It was filled with an amazing

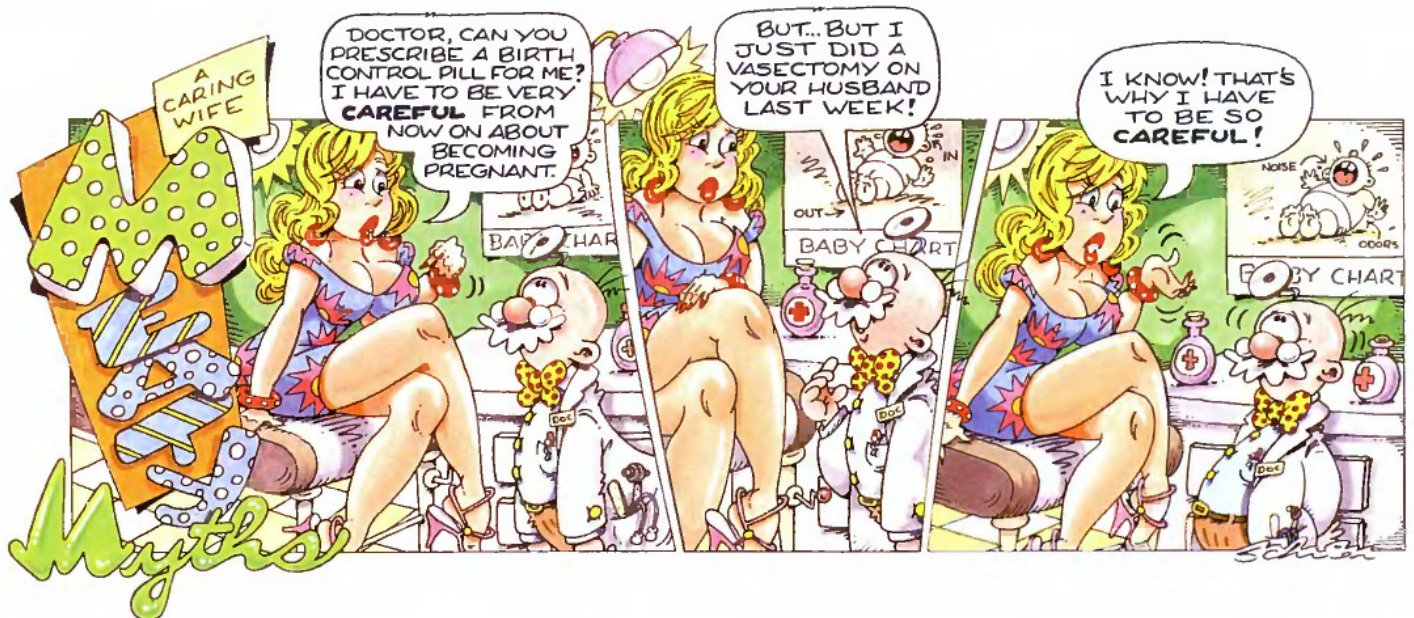
amount of stock transactions in blue-chip companies," he says. "Hundreds and thousands of shares. It looked like he was trading in other names, too, but I wasn't allowed to take it." Among the few items they did take was a message pad from the kitchen, with the cryptic notation "Harry—Jeweler."

Oddly enough the day's most important finds were in the basement. But the basement at 1407 Ashland was not just any basement. It was accessed through one of the mirrored panels in the foyer. Once down the stairs and past the restaurant-size stainless-steel kitchen, the agents saw a cavernous room more than 50 feet long that amazed everyone present. "You could fit the entire upstairs in that one room," Pecoraro says. It held a round conference table with 34 chairs and a movie screen.

To one side was Accardo's office. "When we opened the door," Shelton recalls, "the daughters were more interested to see the inside than we were. You could tell there were places in that house where they were not allowed." The heads of stuffed animals were mounted on the walls. The agents also remember several pictures of Accardo the angler, holding up big fish to make light of his nickname.

More disturbing was the furnace room with an array of open incinerators. They found a pair of glasses in one. "We couldn't get a prescription out of them because they were burned so badly," Shelton says. "But we all think they were Volpe's and that they burned him in there."

O'Rourke made the biggest discovery, behind an oversize door next to the walk-in cooler. It was pulled open to reveal a walk-in safe. This could have explained Accardo's secrecy about the house's construction; it may also have been what Mendell and the other burglars were looking for. After a few more hours of negotiation the safe too was opened, revealing a vault 10 feet wide and 15 feet long. Levinson's jewels were not there, but something that



seemed almost as rewarding was: cash in bundles of \$5,000 stacked inside a wine box—a total of \$275,000. Two Smith & Wesson .38s sat on another shelf.

Since Palermo had testified for the grand jury that her parents' house held nothing of value, Shelton seized the money on the slim pretext that it was "the fruits of a crime—the crime of perjury."

The agents knew the source of the money. Other investigations had started to uncover the Outfit's methods for skimming casino cash. Working with the Federal Reserve, Pecoraro and Shelton could track most of the bills back to Las Vegas banks. The serial numbers in some bundles were still in the order they were printed at the mint.

As the grand jury investigation went into 1979, Pecoraro and Shelton thought they had the final piece to link Accardo to the killings. They were turning up the heat on Gerald Carusiello, a well-liked Outfit thief. Phone records showed him talking to both the Mob bosses and some of the burglars. He could have provided the bait that drew his friends to their death. Then, one night in September, Carusiello fell for such a trap himself. He was found dead outside a condo complex in the black clothes, gloves and hat of a booster. "We probably caused his death," Shelton says. "We were just about to revoke his parole to convince him to talk."

There was no one left alive—or willing to talk—who could tie the deaths to Levinson's, the break-in or the Mob bosses. Eventually even the cash went back to Accardo: An appeals court ruled it could not be seized unless it was tied to a criminal investigation. In his decision, the judge had fun with the case's "strange" facts. In one footnote, he writes, "An interesting question arises as to whom a 'known burglar' is known. If the government's theory is correct in this case, the occupation of the deceased persons involved must have been known to some large segment of the population. Such a reputation could not have been advantageous and indeed must sometimes be fatal."

It was no laughing matter for the FBI agents who had worked on the burglar case. "It would have been nice if we could have seized that money," Shelton says, "but at least we kept it from him for 18 months."

Just a few years later the skim investigations would bear fruit with Operation Strawman, which won the conviction of Aiuppa and other major Outfit underbosses. If the feds had had the cash from the safe, they would have snared Accardo, too, but he dodged another bullet, as he would do until he died, in 1992, at the age of 86.

If nothing else, the case spoiled the house for Accardo. In 1979, just months after the feds executed the search warrant, he put 1407 Ashland on the block. It has passed through only a few hands since. The incinerators have been removed and a hot tub installed. A real estate agent says one owner used the safe to store her wrapping paper.



DR. T

(continued from page 102)

wait for those additional studies, appropriating Rudman's instead and declaring it proof, for all intents and purposes, that HGH was the fountain of youth. "My husband was shocked by what the anti-aging people did with his studies," Inge Rudman says. "He had no idea. He was flabbergasted by the attention, which he didn't demand and didn't enjoy."

In the early 1990s Robert Goldman and Ronald Klatz were searching for a big idea, which made them the perfect audience for Rudman's study. Goldman, a short, muscular, reticent man from a tough Brooklyn neighborhood, once had pretensions of becoming an Olympic athlete, though he won't say in what sport. Instead he has had to settle for those curious athletic achievements that warrant mention only in the *Guinness World Records* book. He holds the record for most consecutive sit-ups (13,500) and most consecutive handstand push-ups (321). "I always wanted to see how far I could push the envelope," he says.

Klatz was not an athletic youth. He was a portly, brash, combative man who had always been interested in "futuristic science-fiction comic books, technology, the future of mankind, stuff like that," he says. At 18 he became the "youngest respiratory therapist in the country," partly because he was interested in health care and partly so he could be a caregiver to his father after his stroke. Klatz saw medicine as divided into three segments: infectious diseases, trauma and degenerative diseases related to aging. When he learned that 90 percent of all medical dollars are spent on degenerative disease, he decided to make that his specialty. That's when he and Goldman read Rudman's article in *The New England Journal of Medicine*. To say that a lightbulb turned on over both their craniums is an understatement. It was a nuclear glow of worldwide significance.

Two years later Klatz and Goldman founded A4M. They held their first anti-aging conference in 1993, attended by only a handful of doctors and delegates. Today they hold more than 30 conferences a year in locations across the globe: Bali, Bangkok, Melbourne, Kuala Lumpur, Bucharest, Istanbul, Zurich, Dubai, Caracas, London, Cancun and Las Vegas. At any given conference they can expect a good percentage of their 18,000 A4M delegates and 11,500 A4M-certified antiaging doctors to attend.

In fact, Goldman and Klatz make much of their money hosting antiaging conferences and certifying doctors as antiaging specialists, since the field is not recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties. It costs from \$900 to \$1,800 to attend one of their conferences. A4M does not transcribe and distribute its conference lectures on paper; instead, each of a conference's 25 lectures are recorded on CDs that sell for \$99 to \$149. Doctors who attend a convention and

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Goldman and Klatz, both 51, are the Scrooge and Marley of the antiaging movement. They are experts at making money by credentialing doctors in their chosen medical field, despite their own suspect credentials. In fact, they didn't get their medical degrees until 1998, six years after they founded A4M, and those degrees are dubious at best. Goldman and Klatz claim they received their osteopathic medical degrees from the Central American Health Sciences University in Belize two years after the school opened. They explain that they got their degrees so quickly because they had done a lot of clinical work outside of Belize. The American Medical Association refuses to recognize those degrees, and in 2000 the Illinois Department of Professional Regulation fined Klatz and Goldman \$5,000 each for claiming to be M.D.s and prohibited them from using those letters after their names in that state. Yet in all the A4M literature, Klatz and Goldman have M.D. and D.O. after their names because, as Goldman once claimed, they are recognized as doctors on the island of St. Vincent. Both men are given to grandiose proclamations. "You can always tell the pioneers by the arrows in their back," Goldman says. And Klatz has repeated numerous times, "I expect to live to be 150."

Dr. Thomas Perls, an associate professor of medicine at Boston University Medical School, is the Simon Legree of the antiaging movement. Klatz has already sued him once for defamation. (The suit was settled out of court, and neither party will discuss it.) When I talk to Perls before going to the A4M confer-

ence in Las Vegas, he practically foams at the mouth with indignation at the antiaging movement. He calls it hucksterism, quackery—an organization of snake-oil salesmen. I ask him to tell me what he really feels. He says, "I wouldn't trust anything anyone in the antiaging movement said." (Dr. T says of Perls, "He's the quack. He's been ignoring thousands of studies in hormone replacement for years. He's just trying to make a name for himself with his stuff on TV.")

Perls claims the antiaging movement's doctors don't operate like mainstream doctors. "They have no clinical trials to support their claims," he says. "There is a substantial concern that growth-hormone therapies can promote the growth of dormant cancer cells. As we get older, our bodies' decrease in growth hormones is nature's way of keeping those cancer cells dormant." He adds that "maybe there will be a role for HGH in the future, but it's too soon to tell. It's a lazy way out to take it to look younger. It all smacks of the Mafia and RICO stuff."

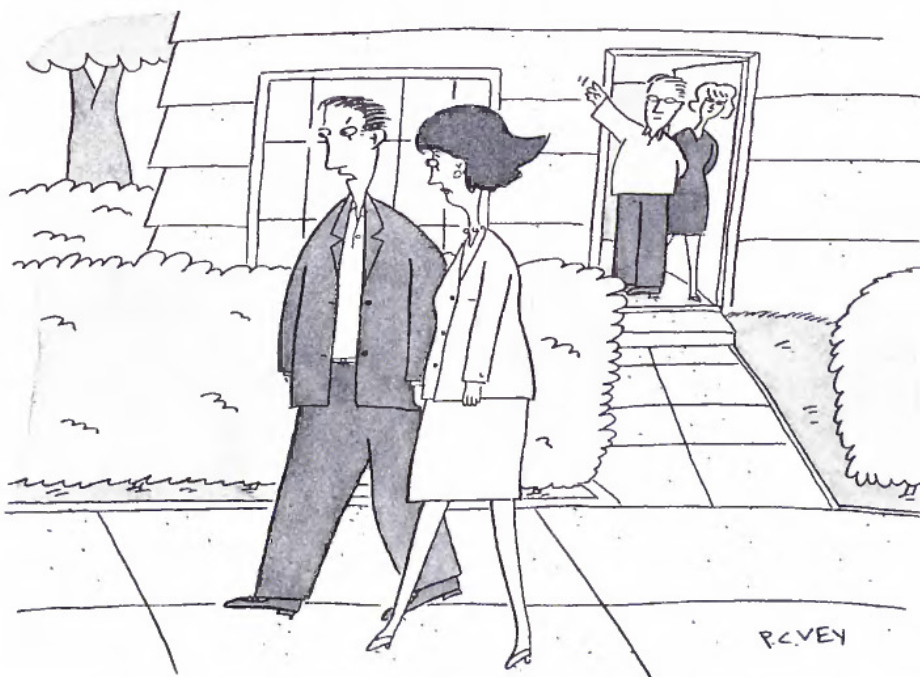
Dr. Mary Lee Vance, an aging specialist at the University of Virginia Medical Center, is not as rabid as Perls. She admits that if the claims for HGH therapy were proven someday, she might take HGH too. But she tells me that the way the antiaging industry currently prescribes HGH is "wrong, immoral, probably illegal, and it could be harmful." Vance says there are medically approved reasons for prescribing HGH to patients who are severely growth-hormone deficient, but many of the reasons antiaging doctors prescribe HGH are not medically approved. "HGH doesn't affect libido, for example," she says. "Testosterone does."

A few years ago the National Institutes of Health called hormone-replacement therapy hot news but then added that the "reality is no one has yet to show that supplements of these hormones prevent frailty or add years to people's lives.... They can also cause harmful side effects."

The medical term for HGH is somatotropin. It's an anabolic protein secreted by the anterior pituitary gland that stimulates growth and cell production in humans, causing the body to build up tissue, muscles, skin, bone, organs and the heart. Somatotropin secretion is at its highest during puberty, and it decreases rapidly after the age of 30. (The same is true of testosterone.) A deficiency of somatotropin in children can lead to dwarfism, and in adults it leads to extreme and premature frailty, diabetes and reduced sexual function. An excess of somatotropin, however, can lead to a host of dangerous and sometimes fatal conditions. The crux of the debate concerning the efficacy of HGH therapies hinges on what exactly makes up an HGH deficiency in adults. The antiaging movement takes a liberal view of what the word *deficiency* means, while the mainstream medical community is much more conservative. All adults are deficient in HGH in relation to the amounts they had as children, teens and young adults, but the mainstream medical community claims this is a normal deficiency brought on by the nature of aging.

In an experiment with rats, those given growth hormone tended to be bigger, more muscular and more active than rats with hormone deficiencies, but the bigger rats died sooner (they were also dumber), which has led many mainstream doctors to claim growth-hormone therapies are merely cosmetic. They simply mask aging, with no benefits and with potentially dangerous side effects. As proof they point to the fact that increased muscle size in rats receiving growth hormone brought no increase in strength, and to another study in which a dying dog was given growth hormone, frolicked like a puppy for a few days and then died.

It has been proven that excessive HGH in humans can cause acromegaly, or gigantism. Acromegaly thickens the bones of the feet, hands, jaw and forehead, producing a Neanderthal look. It has also been proven that excessive HGH causes enlargement of the organs, especially the heart, which can be dangerous and sometimes fatal. This condition usually occurs in athletes who have taken massive doses of HGH to enhance their performance. HGH has been the supplement of choice for athletes since the mid-1980s because the antidoping community has yet to formulate a usable test to detect it. Shortly before he died of brain cancer, in 1991, former NFL star Lyle Alzado claimed he had taken HGH for 16 weeks. Florence Griffith Joyner, the darling of the track world in the 1990s and an Olympic



"We could have done without the Viagra demonstration."

medal winner, never tested positive for illegal drugs during her career, yet she died in 1998 at the age of 38 from a brain abnormality. Flo-Jo had the visible signs of acromegaly and the facial hair of a testosterone user when she died. Apparently she never heeded the warnings passed along by those who took steroids in the 1990s: "Athletes with excessive HGH rarely live past 60."

In 1981 the pharmaceutical company Genentech discovered the recombinant DNA of HGH in a laboratory. The FDA approved it for treating dwarfism in children, and 11 years later it was approved for treating healthy children considered abnormally short. By 1996 nearly half of all the HGH in use was being prescribed to short, healthy children under the premise that short children grow to be short adults who are less happy and successful than tall adults. Shortness had become a kind of disease.

By then most of the big pharmaceutical companies had patented their own versions of Genentech's HGH, and prescribing HGH had become a big business—but not big enough for Big Pharma. Growth-hormone therapies for children cost between \$20,000 and \$30,000 a year and were covered by insurance companies, but Big Pharma sought new "diseases" for which it could market HGH, which had cost it hundreds of millions of dollars to discover.

After the *NEJM* published Rudman's study about using HGH as a therapy for old-age frailty, Big Pharma, along with Goldman and Klatz, perked up. Almost simultaneously they all found a new disease for HGH to treat: aging, a "disease" that has never been recognized by the mainstream medical community, which is why to this day insurance companies refuse to cover HGH therapies for it.

Rudman died of a pulmonary embolus in 1994, at the age of 67, after having only glimpsed what the anti-aging industry was doing with his HGH study. Before he died Rudman pleaded that people understand HGH "is not

a fountain of youth." The *NEJM* saw how the antiaging industry was using Rudman's studies, however, and was horrified. It didn't distance itself from Rudman's studies, but it did distance itself from how the antiaging industry was using them. In 2003 Vance wrote an article in the *NEJM* that claimed the "long-term effect of HGH could be potentially harmful with regard to the risk of cancer." She added that people who believed HGH was a magic bullet that "retards or reverses" aging were "whistling in the wind."

I flew to Las Vegas to attend the six-day A4M antiaging convention and spent those six days interviewing doctors, patients and delegates about their antiaging

hadn't had a platoon in years; women in their 20s wearing low-slung miniskirts and jeans that exposed their navel rings; older women with taut, shiny facial skin, stretched-back eyes and trout lips, who looked as if they had been preserved in aspic. I saw a Japanese person of indeterminate sex who kept smoothing back his or her upswept, pomaded hair.

Three old scholarly-looking men, dressed identically in navy blazers, sat hunched over on a bench, perusing through bifocals the A4M program of lectures. I studied my program too and marked off certain lectures. "Breaking News for Doctors, Clinics and Pharmacies: The Latest Legal 'Ins' and 'Outs' of HGH and Testosterone Replacement Therapy,"

by Rick Collins, Esq., J.D. "How to Open a Successful Anti-Aging Practice—The New Cash-Only Specialty of Anti-Aging Medicine." "Testosterone Replacement Therapy: A Recipe for Success," by John Crisler, D.O. "Hormone Balance to Intimacy Health [i.e., sex] and Quality of Life," by Thierry Hertoghe.

That afternoon I took a cab to the Cenegenics Medical Institute on the outskirts of the Las Vegas desert. Cenegenics bills itself as the largest antiaging institute in the world, with branches in Las Vegas; Boca Raton, Florida; Charleston, South Carolina; and Tokyo, Hong Kong and Seoul. Asians, it seems, are very passionate about the antiaging movement.

Cenegenics was founded in 1997 by Alan Mintz, a

Chicago-area radiologist and amateur bodybuilder. He won the 1996 Amateur Athletic Union Mr. Illinois bodybuilding contest in the Grand Masters division at the age of 60. His Cenegenics brochures feature photographs of him in bodybuilding poses, alongside pictures of other doctor-bodybuilders such as 67-year-old Jeffrey Life, a Cenegenics physician; Mitchell Wagner, a 44-year-old orthopedic surgeon; and Bob Jones, 76, who "keeps company with a 33-year-old."

Cenegenics, it seems, is about looking buff and having sex with a lot of young women. A 45-year-old patient of Mintz's crowed that he now has "a big-time libido." Still, like most people in the antiaging

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therapies. I wanted to learn for myself exactly what tune they were whistling.

On the morning of my first day at A4M, I sat in the lobby where the convention's lectures and workshops were held and watched delegates and doctors register. They were a diverse lot: Euro types with Freudian beards and strange clothes; Birkenstock types with full beards and ponytails; women who looked like Wiccans (or maybe Morticia Addams), with black headbands, black-rimmed eyes and long black cloaks; older bald musclemen with jutting jaws and the angry demeanor of Marine drill instructors who

industry, Mintz likes to gloss over the muscle and libido gains from his therapies with a patina of health benefits. He claims his therapies have eliminated the symptoms of Parkinson's disease in one patient and allowed another paralyzed patient to move his toes.

Mintz has been profiled in *GQ* and on *Today*, *60 Minutes* and *Geraldo*. What he does not promote in those profiles is the cost of his therapies, upwards of \$12,000 a year for a typical patient. (Mary Lee Vance says of Mintz, "He's a good salesman.") A typical patient visits Cenegenics for a day and is subjected to a battery of tests: hopscotching on a floor pad to measure agility, a little light weight lifting to gauge muscle tone, a blood test and a few other tests. At the end of the day Mintz writes out his therapies, which usually include HGH, testosterone, vitamins, supplements and a workout routine, and the patient is sent home to await the arrival of his medications in the mail. Mintz won't see that patient again, though the patient can consult with him over the phone.

I met Mintz after a brief tour of his facilities, which are housed in a faux Greek neoclassical building that looked like a small Parthenon. He sat behind his desk in his office, surrounded by photographs of his children and grandchildren and many antiaging certificates. I

asked him a question. "Not yet!" he said. "Here, take this." He handed me a sheaf of papers: articles on HGH accompanied by scientific-looking graphs and symbols. I started reading the first article.

"Don't do that!" he shouted. "Don't look until I tell you to!" I glanced down at the papers. "Behave!" he shouted. I felt like a first-grader. "Now, Cenegenics is more about aesthetics than longevity," he began. "We call it age management. Our goal is the highest possible quality of life and sexual function and then a quick death of a heart attack at 94. We don't make outrageous claims about longevity like Klutz. Look at him. He's fat! A4M has no proof people can live much beyond 100. There's no way you can affect aging at a cellular level. That Frenchwoman who lived to 122—she was just one! What's that tell you? Cenegenics is about a productive older population, the quality of life. Energy, sexual function, cognitive issues. Okay, now you can look at page one."

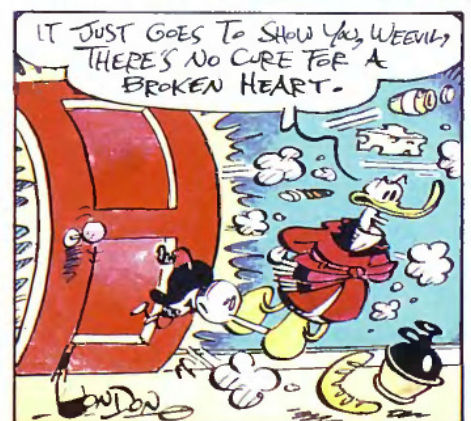
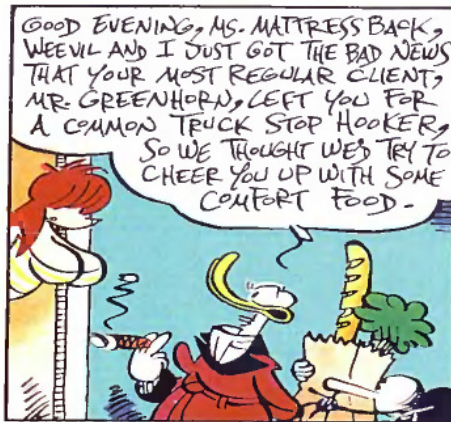
While Mintz read from the papers in front of him, ranting and raving like a mad scientist about how HGH and testosterone therapies are misunderstood by the mainstream medical community, I stared at him. He was a strange-looking man. His thinning hair could not conceal the hearing aid behind his ear. (He said cryptically, "I'm 95 percent functional.") He wore

glasses with Coke-bottle lenses that magnified his froglike eyes. When I described them to Vance later, she wondered if they were a sign of hyperthyroidism. His skin was a bluish red and his swollen lips a strange blue. He was physically fit, except for his stomach. It was distended but not with fat. It was like a hard barrel, similar to the distended bellies of starving babies in Darfur—possibly a sign of acromegaly from too much HGH, Vance told me.

"Are you paying attention?" Mintz shouted at me. I nodded. (Vance also told me hyperactivity was another sign of excessive HGH.) Mintz went on and on and on about IGF-1, somatic growth metabolic dysfunction and apoptosis, and how no medical studies have found any proof that HGH causes cancer or diabetes. "None!" he shouted. "Kids have been using it for 50 years! What do you want? That's a bullshit response that it hasn't been studied enough. Not one single kid got cancer." He explained, "Insurance companies don't want to pay for HGH therapies because they say it may cause cancer. That way they don't have to pay."

Growing up, Mintz was a fat Jewish kid in Chicago. He described his father as the worst Jewish businessman ever, "the only Jewish businessman to go broke owning a liquor store." In his 20s Mintz visited Israel, got dysentery, lost about 50 pounds and

Dirty Duck by Bobby London



became a health-and-fitness nut. He ran marathons to keep his weight down. Then in 1990, after reading Rudman's study in the *NEJM*, he began to take HGH.

When Mintz's monologue finally ran its course, I asked him if I could interview one of his patients. He gave me the name and number of Richard Weisman, an exotic-car dealer at the Forum, a high-end shopping center in Caesars Palace. I thanked Mintz for his lecture. He stood up and shook my hand, his big belly hanging over his belt. He said, "My greatest gift as a doctor is to give people a better quality of life and then a quick end."

The following morning I had breakfast in the Venetian's Grand Luxe Cafe with Belgian antiaging doctor Thierry Hertoghe, president of the World Society of Anti-Aging Medicine and author of *The Hormone Handbook*. Hertoghe was boyishly handsome and looked much younger than his 49 years. He wore a peach summer sports coat, a lime-green shirt, a patterned peach tie and peach slacks. He seemed dressed for an outing on a luxury yacht floating down the Nile in a Hercule Poirot novel. Hertoghe began his medical career as a psychiatrist, then branched off into endocrinology. In the late 1980s he began treating depression patients with hormone therapy. "At first it was controversial," he told me. "The majority in Europe was suspicious of it." By 1995 he was prescribing HGH for depression, symptoms of fatigue, sexual problems and longevity. "They say in the Bible that 120 years is the limit, but it's never been proven. I believe we can live to 200, maybe 500 years. I have been taking HGH since the age of 30. It got rid of my saggy cheeks. My fat is down seven percent. There were no negatives."

Hertoghe said the typical HGH user is "more intelligent than normal, a striver, goal oriented. When I run on the treadmill, I run with a book to learn German. Activities invigorate me. HGH gives you insight, and it makes you calmer, too. Like with my wife: She's very fearful, so I have to be a leveling influence for the children. If I don't take HGH, I have anxiety, and I can't afford that." I told him I try to control my anxiety through an act of will. He smiled at me. "I am not a hero like you," he said. "Your effort to control your stress is admirable, but it prevents you from doing other things. When you have an HGH deficiency, you're polluted by parasitic emotions. As for me, I will take HGH for the rest of my life. I'd like to live at least 130 years." I asked him how old his father lived to be. He said, "He died at the age of 62."

That afternoon I walked across the Strip to the Forum to see Richard Weisman. At 45, he had unnaturally black hair and a round face with chipmunk-like cheeks, a

pronounced jawline and a thick neck. He told me that as an adolescent in Queens he was fat but grew out of it in his teens. I asked him what his aspirations were as a teenager. He gave me an enigmatic smile and said, "I wanted to grow up and be an international playboy."

Weisman moved to Las Vegas from south Florida in 2004 to open his exotic-car business. After a year or so he put on weight. "I hadn't worked out in years," he said. In Vegas he had become a short, plump man; he had always thought of himself as a player and had grown fearful of what he was becoming. "I was overweight, tired, with no libido," he said. "A friend told me about HGH and Cenegenics, so I did some research. It was all positive. The only negative was a fear of the unknown. So I did it."

He didn't begin to notice changes until after 90 days. "I lost weight and gained muscle and energy, and I was horny all the time. I went from having a 45-year-old's libido to having a 25-year-old's. I felt younger, that I was getting back my youthful potential. I could run around with my kids and stay up all night drinking. It changed my temperament, too. I didn't get as hot anymore. HGH breeds confidence."

Weisman said the only downside to HGH was it caused problems in his marriage. He chased his wife around the bedroom so often, "bothering her every night," that she got sick of it. He saved his marriage by getting his wife on HGH, which increased her libido to match his own. "Now there's no problem," he said. Then he got his 70-year-old father to take HGH and noticed he began to have more energy as well.

Weisman and most other HGH users don't talk much about longevity, unlike Klatz, who claims he'll live to be 150. "Longevity in my family is not spectacular," Weisman said. "Both my grandfathers died in their 60s. I have three young kids. I'll be 57 when my son is 15. I want to be able to throw a football with him. That's why I'll stay on HGH for the rest of my life or as long as I can afford it."

Weisman's motivations for taking HGH are not much different from those of most HGH users I interviewed or read about: vanity and vitality. One A4M delegate who used to work in the high-fashion industry told me that "most fashion models are on HGH. It allows them to eat and party and still keep their weight down. You can see it in their faces, that chiseled look." Philly Bromberg, 57, said, "Vanity took me to Cenegenics." Dr. Cecilia Tregan, 50, said she wanted to look 30. A pugnacious man of 74 said he wanted to reclaim the vigor of his youth, when "if you annoyed me, I'd punch you in the nose." The wife of a rock star said she went on HGH because she was afraid of losing her husband to younger groupies.

Dr. Adrienne Denese is an antiaging

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specialist in New York City. She is vague about her age, sometimes admitting to being in her 40s, sometimes admitting to 50. She never got married because, she says, "I couldn't bother with marriage, relationships. I'm a true workaholic." Denese started taking HGH to circumvent the aging process and immediately noticed profound increases in her memory, stamina and muscles. "I'm an anomaly," she says. "I look at least 10 years younger than 50. I mean 40."

Denese says her patients are generally 40- to 50-year-old men with high-pressure jobs on Wall Street who want to get rid of their bellies and regain their energy. Some of her other clients are celebrities, rock stars or designers, but not athletes. "I send athletes home," she says. "Athletes take high doses of HGH when they're young and already have high levels."

According to Denese, the jury is still out on what the downside of HGH may be, but that doesn't worry her. She's not concerned with a long life span. "The quality of my life is so superior," she says, "I'll take the good with the bad. I think it's irresponsible to say someone is going to live 120 years." If HGH is administered in the proper doses, she adds, there should be no negative side effects. When I ask her what the proper doses are, she says, "250 to 300." I ask, 250 to 300 what? Exasperated, she replies, "I don't recall right now. I'll have to look it up."

•

Two days into the conference, I sat in a large hall filled with A4M delegates and listened to a lecture by Klatz and Goldman. Goldman introduced Klatz as "the guru of antiaging medicine," as he was described by *BusinessWeek*.

In a dark business suit, Klatz welcomed the delegates from more than 90 countries who had "come together to enhance the quality of the human life span." He looked as if he could use some life enhancement himself. He had a jowly face with the up-slanting eyes of a man who either has had a too-taut face-lift or is a younger relative of former Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev. He also had a big, soft belly.

Klatz parodied his favorite author, Dr. Seuss: "The golden years have come at last; the golden years can kiss my ass." The audience laughed. He said the human life span was expanding not because of the medical community but in spite of it. This is the antiaging movement's mantra. The mainstream medical community treats diseases; the antiaging movement prevents diseases. Then Klatz used a PowerPoint slide show to display the average life spans in different countries. Andorra had the longest average life span, at 83. The U.S. was 48th, with citizens having an average life span of 77. Then he asked,

148 "What is your life span worth to you?"

Remember, aging is 100 percent fatal." More laughter. Then he concluded, "Thank you for making it possible for me to enjoy my 120th birthday in the near future." I wondered what happened to his expectations of 150.

Klatz introduced his partner by reading off a list of Goldman's *Guinness* world records. Goldman took the microphone and began talking about "merging the field of sports medicine with antiaging medicine." He showed slides of bodybuilders in their 70s and 80s and of the 104-year-old 100-meter champion, who was a champion because "everyone else his age is dead." More laughter. Goldman said, "I'm just a dumb jock trying to go through walls." He finished his talk by saying that Sophia Loren at 72 is going to "pose for a magazine wearing only earrings." His audience clapped and cheered.

After their lecture I went up to Klatz and Goldman's suite to interview them. We sat across from each other on sofas.

"A4M is an umbrella," said Goldman. "It's the next generation of sports medicine." I asked him if he had ever taken

The jury is still out on what the downside of HGH may be. If HGH is administered in the proper doses, says one doctor, there should be no negative side effects.

drugs to improve his sports performance. "I never took steroids or hormones," he said. "I'll probably take them someday."

Klatz seemed annoyed at the tack our conversation was taking. He shifted the conversation to his favorite topic, human longevity. "In the next 15 years the antiaging movement will change religion, science, politics, work. People will be able to have a second career at 75 if they can live to 150. They can live two or three life spans. Parallel life spans. They might be a minstrel in their first 20 years and travel the world before they go to college." He leaned toward me and said seriously, "Nobody has broached that subject in the mainstream media yet. You can be the first. It could make your career." I nodded gratefully.

•

Early that evening I stopped in at the "Anti-Aging Is the New Cash-Only Specialty" lecture, given by pharmacist John Grasela and antiaging doctor Ron Rothenberg. Grasela had the slanting eyes and still-fresh scars behind the ears of a man who'd had a recent face-lift, and

both he and Rothenberg had the reddish glow of HGH users. Grasela spoke first about marketing an antiaging practice. He said if doctors buy quantities of HGH for \$185, they can charge their patients \$300 or even \$350 for it, though "\$350 is pushing it," he said. "But the nice thing is Costco and Walgreen's don't have it, so you can pretty much charge what you want. Patients can't shop around."

Rothenberg, a little man with strange chestnut hair and a colorful Hawaiian shirt, reminded doctors to tell patients that this therapy is not covered by their insurance and that even if patients say they feel great without HGH, they should be told that doctors can keep them feeling that way with HGH. I left before the lecture was over and went upstairs to the suite where the cocktail party was being held.

The skinny blonde with the too-short dress was pressed close to the ex-porn star, looking up into his eyes. The man with the villain's mustache had finished his lecture on pomegranate capsules and was having a cocktail. The Chinese woman from Boston was still grazing at the hors d'oeuvres table. The lawyer in the muscle T-shirt was talking to a very buxom, very short woman who looked like Maria Bartiromo. I was talking to John Crisler, the infamous Dr. Testosterone.

Crisler said that as a kid he was a "science nut" who at 15 built an electron microscope. Then he went to college for a "little bit" but dropped out to wander for 20 years. He worked on an assembly line for Oldsmobile, sold insurance door-to-door, painted houses, was a prison guard and then went back to college in his 30s. He got his doctor's degree in osteopathy at Michigan State. Most antiaging doctors are osteopaths, he said, because "osteopaths are more holistic and open-minded than the mainstream." As an osteopath Crisler worked on a lot of athletes, which brought him in contact with testosterone. This became his specialty in his 40s, when he developed the Crisler protocol, a weekly injection of testosterone and human chorionic gonadotrophin. "It worked magic on my patients and made me famous in my field overnight," he said. Crisler doesn't prescribe anything he doesn't take first himself. He works with other physicians who prescribe him testosterone, say, as a treatment strategy to develop his protocols.

At his Man Cave in Michigan Crisler treats mostly men in their 40s. "TAT—tired all the time," he said, "with the 'usta' syndrome—talking about all the things they *usta* do. They've lost their edge. They look at girls in *PLAYBOY* and wish they could have them. It's sex that brings them to me. They'll tell me they're tired, and then when their hands are on the doorknob they'll say, 'By the way, doc....' Sometimes their wives bring them in. One guy hadn't had sex with his wife in a year. I rubbed a little testosterone on his

arms at 2:30 P.M. and by 6:30 he and his wife were having sex.” (Mary Lee Vance says this is impossible: “It takes a day or two for testosterone to work.”)

A few days later I sat in a Florida restaurant with Victor Shabanah, an Egyptian-born doctor who had attended the conference. “Most of my patients complain of low sex drive,” he said. “Sometimes their drive is not bad, but their performance needs help. They go to a mainstream doctor, and he says, ‘You’re getting old.’ That’s rubbish. Then they come to see me. They can’t discuss it with their wife or friends, but when their libido is low they get depressed. Your manhood is the biggest thing in your life. Sometimes the wife asks, ‘What’s wrong with me? He’s not turned on by me?’ They either settle for less sex or go out and fool around. I have a city councilman in his mid-40s who was going crazy because his wife was screwing around.”

Shabanah says he doesn’t treat men who want to be Superman, with big muscles. “I treat people who just want to be normal again,” he said. “I based my practice on health, not cosmetics.”

The waitress brought our bill. Shabanah paid it, but he had no intention of leaving until he got something off his chest. After a moment he blurted out his distaste for A4M. “A4M accredited its antiaging doctors,” he said, “but it’s a fraud. The degrees aren’t worth a shit and aren’t accredited by any recognized medical board. Klatz and Goldman are brutal, money-grabbing men. It’s all about money with them. Something’s wrong with them. You can’t get reports of the meetings on paper. You have to buy the CDs, which are always defective. I sent my CDs back and never saw my money again. I have no use for people like Klatz. Look at him! He’s fat, with a gut! What kind of advertisement is he for the antiaging movement? He should take HGH! He is like Scrooge, except Scrooge got the lesson. Those two will never get the lesson until they die.” Shabanah calmed himself for a moment, then said, “I see so much suffering in men. My main mission in life is to do something for them.”

The problem with the antiaging movement is that its huge umbrella covers not only the quacks and quick-buck scammers but also sincere men like Shabanah and Crisler, doctors who truly believe their purpose is to improve the quality of life for men and women through HGH and testosterone therapies. Everyone in the antiaging movement, it seems, gets painted with the same brush as far as the mainstream medical community is concerned.

During the weeks leading up to the A4M conference and a few days after it, I had been trying to find Inge Rudman, Daniel Rudman’s widow. Finally I found a

Brooklyn Jewish hospital. He was about five-foot-eight and wore glasses, but he was very handsome, a great guy. But he was shy at parties,” she sighed. “He had no money, and he was not a fast worker. It took him two years to marry me. I wasn’t able to prod him if he didn’t want to do something. After we married we set up an apartment on 168th Street across from Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center. As a doctor Dan was always thinking how he could contribute. He made young doctors aware that there was more to people than their disease. He’d ask the doctors, ‘How many children does that patient have? What does he do for work?’ He tried to make a human being out of the patient in a bed

having blood work.”

“Dan was happiest when doing his research. That’s why that *NEJM* article on HGH made him so happy.” Inge went silent for a moment. When she began talking again her voice was flat, without inflection, almost cold. “Dan wasn’t aware of the antiaging movement before he died. It would have been awful for him to see how they were misusing his studies. Do you know that Klatz and Goldman of A4M asked me to accept an award for Dan posthumously at one of their conventions in 1995? I didn’t realize what I was getting into. I sat there, listening to speakers talk about how HGH did this and that. They showed slides of pictures taken out of magazines of people with beautiful bodies.

Then one of them said, ‘If Dr. Rudman had taken HGH, he’d be alive today.’” Inge’s voice broke, and she began to sob softly. I waited for her to compose herself—a 78-year-old widow talking about her beloved husband to a stranger over the telephone. Finally she said, “I realized it was all a charlatan thing. I disassociated myself from them and tried desperately to stop these people. But it was too late.”

After I got off the phone with Inge Rudman, I realized why she was concerned about my being an identity-theft scammer. She and her husband had already been the victims of identity theft once.

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telephone number for her in California and called. A tremulous voice answered the phone. I asked if I could talk to her about her husband. She was silent for a moment and then said, “How do I know this isn’t some kind of identity theft?” I told her she could check my credentials on my website. I hung up, waited 20 minutes, then called her back. She was more relaxed, so I asked her to tell me about her husband.

“Oh, Dan was interested in everything,” she said. “Reading, classical music, baseball, tennis. Tennis was the love of his life. He went to Boston Latin, then Yale and Yale Medical School. I met him in 1952 when he was a resident at



WILL ARNETT

(continued from page 113)

in Hollywood for two comedy superstars named Will?

ARNETT: There's no way you're gonna crush Will Ferrell. You can't destroy him. He's indestructible. I'm flattered that anybody would compare me to him, but I don't know how to respond to something like that. Will is so fucking hilarious, and he's got to be one of the sweetest people on the planet. But just between you and me, off the record: I would love to see him go motherfucking down. And if it's at my hand, all the sweeter. Believe me, I will not look twice when I put my foot on his head to step up.

Q7

PLAYBOY: Ferrell shot to fame after showing his naked ass in movies like *Old School*. Do you have any plans to expose yourself on film?

ARNETT: I don't think a lot of people want to see me nude. But there's a scene in my next film, *The Brothers Solomon*, in which I'm naked. I'm hugging Will Forte, and he asks me to put on a towel. I turn around, right at the camera, and you can see the top half of my pubes. People

love pubic hair. You show an audience the short and curls and they go nuts.

Q8

PLAYBOY: Speaking of *The Brothers Solomon*, the plot involves your trying to sire a child as quickly as possible. Do you have any interest in becoming a father?

ARNETT: You have moments when you realize everybody around you is having kids. A lot of the gals on *Saturday Night Live* have had kids recently. And from *Arrested Development*, it turns out Jason Bateman's sperm work. Who knew? I gotta be honest: I always thought he was born with an extra-big clitoris and they just decided to call him a man. But his wife gave birth not long ago, so I guess that proves something. So yeah, when all your friends are getting pregnant, you start thinking about it.

Q9

PLAYBOY: Most people know you best as Gob, the lovably inept magician from the now-canceled Fox sitcom *Arrested Development*. Gob has become urban slang for "making an error or mistake, particularly of great magnitude." Is that flattering, or do you feel bad that Gob has become the cultural equivalent of failure?

ARNETT: No, that seems pretty accurate. Gob

is an egomaniac with an inferiority complex. He's a selfish, self-pitying, self-aggrandizing jackass. Not long ago a guy came up to me and said, "My friends call me Gob because I'm so much like him." And I said, "You know they're not complimenting you, right? Because Gob is a fucking idiot."

Q10

PLAYBOY: You were nominated for an Emmy for *Arrested Development*. If you had won, would you be more or less obnoxious than you are now?

ARNETT: Oh, definitely more obnoxious. But I never had a chance. I was happy just to be nominated. But if I'd won? I would've shoved that Emmy in so many faces. You would've seen that shit from satellite images. Instead I just lost graciously.

Q11

PLAYBOY: Were you a Gob-like kid growing up?

ARNETT: I grew up in fear of authority but with a general dislike for it as well. I was at odds with my keepers in any sort of scholastic environment. I never did anything all that bad, except for, you know, moving a tremendous amount of white horse from Colombia for some dudes. I was a mule for a while. I got involved in some human trafficking during college. But we've all done that, right? We've all laundered money out of the former Soviet Union, right?

Q12

PLAYBOY: All kidding aside, are you telling us you've never done anything illegal, or just that you've never been caught?

ARNETT: I was a bad kid for a while. I'd break curfew, smoke bud, drink booze, all the usual stuff. My parents sent me to an all-boys boarding school when I was 12—a school designed to even out uneven boys—and I was constantly caught smoking. You had to chop wood if you got caught smoking, so I was always chopping wood. It was a very outdoorsy school. You got graded on white-water canoeing, or they'd send you out into the woods with a pack of matches and you had to build a quinzee and survive out there for a few days. I liked that aspect of it. When I was 16 they asked me not to return. I technically wasn't kicked out, but I guess they caught me smoking and drinking one too many times. I still look back at it fondly as the place I learned to smoke. I can kill butts with the best of them.

Q13

PLAYBOY: In the past five years you've had a lot of small supporting roles on TV shows like *The Sopranos* and *Third Watch*. Was it difficult to make the transition from comedy to drama?

ARNETT: Not really, because I'm very good at what I do. [laughs] *The Sopranos* was particularly challenging. In one scene I held a baby. In another scene the woman playing

(continued on page 153)



DAVE COVERLY

PLAYMATE NEWS



SETTING THE SCENE



No wonder Hollywood casting directors tap the Playmate talent pool so frequently; it is as deep as it is alluring. Recently a special connection has been established with CBS's runaway hit *CSI: Miami*. The show has featured appearances by Centerfold after Centerfold, including Qiana Chase, Jillian Grace, Marketa Janska, Monica Leigh, Amanda Paige, Christi Shake and Alison Waite.

"We try to do a show that emphasizes how beautiful Miami is, so it makes a ton of sense to cast Centerfolds," producer Don Tardino remarks. "They come to work prepared and willing to do what we ask them to. Mostly, that's to be beautiful."

Qiana, Monica and Christi participated in one of the more memorable scenes in the series. "We were acting out a high-fashion photo shoot with live tigers," Qiana says. "I was standing right next to them. I was so scared." Agrees Monica, "They're cute but a little frightening." Marketa, Jillian and Amanda had a tamer experience, playing members of the entourage of Omar Gooding's character in the "Death Pool 100" episode. "He kept us in stitches throughout the day," Jillian reports. Perfectly suited for her part was Alison. "I was essentially a body double in a bikini," she says. "I hope in the coming months I'll have more to tell." Fire up the TiVo, baby!

25 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

When we met the petite Linda Rhys Vaughn, the five-foot, 98-pound Miss April 1982 was a dedicated equestrienne. After her pictorial Linda's life took an unusual turn when a smitten fan tracked her down and won her heart, an event that inspired the TV movie *I Married a Centerfold*, starring Teri Copley.



LOOSE LIPS

"In my 20s I was one of those people who never dated. I always had a boyfriend. And then when I got divorced I was dating all the time, going out with all these different guys, making up for lost time. I was like some kind of crazy person." —Tina Bockrath



IN A FLASH

Lights, camera and more Playmate red-carpet action. From left: Colleen Shannon accents the MOBO Awards at the Royal Albert Hall in London; newly single Shanna Moakler represents at Entertainment Weekly's pre-Emmy soiree at Republic in West Hollywood; Tamara Witmer is in the pink at a CD-release party hosted by Gene Simmons; Pam Anderson makes a splash at the Bay-watch DVD event at the Hollywood Virgin Megastore; Jayde Nicole keeps the Playboy fashion event short and sweet.



HOT SHOT



CARRIE STEVENS

MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

By Derek Fisher

—of the NBA's Utah Jazz

My favorite Playmate is Miss July 1997 Daphnee Duplaix Samuel because she represents beauty, charisma and style.



POP QUESTIONS: VICTORIA VALENTINO

Q: You are often praised for your Mediterranean looks, but in fact you are of northern European ancestry.

A: I am Mediterranean only by virtue of my married name. My great-great-grandmother and her sister on my mother's side were ladies-in-waiting to Queen Victoria, and on my maternal great-grandfather's side we were Quakers who arrived in America in the 18th century.

Q: How did expectations affect your acting career?

A: I got terribly typecast for a long time after the Centerfold. They all wanted me to play topless Latinas, Italians or Greeks. It was frus-

trating and did not reflect my years of training. I studied in New York in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and I have been a Screen Actors Guild member since 1966.

Q: How did your family react to your decision to pose in PLAYBOY?

A: Not positively. All my family members were in the arts. My stepfather was a background artist who worked on all the old Disney classics, and he was a member of the Academy. They were horrified that their daughter, who was supposed to become a Broadway star, wound up in a pinup magazine. They didn't speak to me for years!



CENTERFOLD QUIZ

MATCH EACH OF THE FIVE PLAYMATES TO HER MYSPACE HEADLINE

PLAYMATE

MYSPACE HEADLINE

1. Deanna Brooks

A. Age ain't nothin' but a number.

2. Lauren Anderson

B. Good thoughts... good life!

3. Shanna Moakler

C. Watch out, I can disappear....

4. Krista Kelly

D. Put that in your pipe and smoke it.

5. Alison Waite (left)

E. Wicked awesome.



PLAYMATE GOSSIP

Here's a shocker: Miss July Sara Jean Underwood was spotted working the Taser display at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas....

Miss December 1982 Charlotte Kemp and Miss August 1971 Cathy Rowland have a fitness video for women over 40 called *Beautiful Body Beautiful Life*.... Miss August 2005

Tamara Witmer appeared in a national print ad for Dodge.... Miss January Jayde Nicole returned to her hometown of Port Perry, Ontario to sign her

Centerfold issue.... Miss December 2001 Shanna Moakler earned a two-page profile in *Star* magazine.... Sara Jean Underwood, Miss July 2005



Jayde breaks hearts back home.

Qiana Chase, Miss March 2005 Jillian Grace, Miss October 2003 Audra Lynn and Miss January 2001 Irina Voronina have audiences howling in the comedic farce *Epic Movie*, by the zany minds behind *Scary Movie*.... Miss February 2001 Lauren Michelle Hill appeared on the cover of *Women's Health*....

Tamara Witmer, Miss July 2002 Lauren Anderson, PMOY 1997 Victoria Silvstedt and Miss May



It's better in slow motion.

2003 Laurie Jo Fetter appeared in *Vanity Fair* for the magazine's coverage of *Borat*.... Miss January 2006 Athena Lundberg tested her mettle on the second season of *The Janice Dickinson Modeling Agency*.

MORE PLAYMATES

See your favorite Playmate's pictorial in the Cyber Club at cyber.playboy.com, or download her to your phone at playboymobile.com.

WILL ARNETT

(continued from page 150)

my wife was on the phone and I was in the background. So those were tough scenes.

Q14

PLAYBOY: You portrayed a pedophile on the crime drama *Law & Order: SVU*. Did you play pedophilia for laughs?

ARNETT: Well, I didn't technically play a pedophile. I was a pedophile enabler. I was a travel agent to pedophiles, leading them to countries where the laws against such things are a little more lenient than in this country. It was definitely an unsavory character. The night the show aired, I was in Toronto having dinner with my sisters. My mom said she was going to watch the show, and when it ended she called my cell phone. Right away I could sense something weird in her voice. She just said, "Is your sister there?" And I said, "Yeah. Hey, did you see *Law & Order*?" There was this long silence, and she said, "Yes. Yes, I did." Nothing else. That was it. *Ookay*. We never discussed it again.

Q15

PLAYBOY: You also provided the voice-over for a series of GMC truck commercials in which you made the memorable announcement, "It's not more than you need, just more than you're used to." Have you used this same line to hit on the ladies?

ARNETT: I usually say, "It's not more than you're used to, just more than you need." That seems to be more accurate. But you know, it's not as if people are clamoring to hear the tagline for GMC trucks. I sometimes get recognized for my voice, which is always surprising. People come up to me and say, "Hey, will you leave your voice on my outgoing message?" Uh, I don't know, man. I've never been comfortable with stuff like that. But I guess it's kind of cool.

Q16

PLAYBOY: You're starring in a remarkable five films this year. How long before the inevitable Arnett backlash?

ARNETT: I don't know. When do you think? Are a lot of people talking about the backlash already? Who told you about it? It was my publicist, wasn't it? Goddamn it, why does he keep putting that out there? You're the eighth person who has mentioned it to me. He keeps telling people, "Ask Arnett about the backlash." God, I need to fire that prick. Goddamn him! It's good, though. I was lucky enough to be on a show that wasn't highly rated, so I think the bulk of the country has no fucking clue who I am. So people haven't been inundated with me yet, which is the exact opposite of how I'd like it.

Q17

PLAYBOY: How does a guy like you sweep Amy Poehler off her feet?

ARNETT: Amy and I were introduced by a mutual friend, but I'd actually known

about her for a few years prior to that. I went to see her when she was performing in the Upright Citizens Brigade in New York. I used to live around the corner from the UCB Theatre, and I'd go see her do improv all the time. That sounds a lot creepier than it was. I mean, I never cut up letters from assorted magazines in order to create a note for her. But I eventually won her over with sex—I'm not going to lie. And the fact that we're both in comedy was just icing on that cake. [His cell phone rings.] Hey, look, Amy's calling now. [He picks up.] Hey, babe, I'm just finishing up here. Are you gonna be up for a few minutes? [pause] Really? [long pause] Really? [long pause] Okay, I'll call you soon. [He hangs up.] Bitch. God, what a ballbuster.

Q18

PLAYBOY: In addition to *Blades of Glory*, you and Amy are performing together in the upcoming movies *On Broadway* and *Spring Breakdown*. Who is riding whose coattails?

ARNETT: We don't like to think of it that way. [whispers] I'm definitely riding her coattails. Prior to *Arrested Development*, Amy was obviously a more known entity, and I was just Amy's husband. When we came out to L.A. because she was working on *Mean Girls*, we stayed at a fancy hotel. I called room service to ask for some coffee, and the concierge said, "Very good, Mr. Poehler." I told Amy, and we had a good laugh about it, though she laughed a little harder than I did. We've been asked to do a romantic comedy together, but we're just not interested. [pause] Unless we're talking big money. Then fuck yeah, I'll sell my relationship out.

Q19

PLAYBOY: A lot of comics are superstitious and wear lucky clothing or follow strange preshow rituals. Do you have any superstitions?

ARNETT: I kill a baby before every performance. It's dangerous, especially in this age of DNA and all that crap. You have to stay one step ahead of those forensic pathologists. Oh, just so we're clear, when I say "baby" I mean cigarette. You know that, right? In Canada, we refer to cigarettes as babies. They're my little babies. Twenty fresh babies every day. You didn't think I meant an actual baby, did you? Oh God, no. That would just be awful. [long, thoughtful pause] But you know, if that worked, I'd probably do that, too. Yeah, I'd kill a baby if it meant I might get an Oscar.

Q20

PLAYBOY: You speak fluent French. Will you teach us a few dirty words in French?

ARNETT: I know nothing that would impress you. The best French Canadian swearwords are *tabarnak*, which means tabernacle, and *câlisse*, which is chalice. All the French Canadian swears are based on religious artifacts. It's like the worst thing you can say. "Oh, *câlisse*!" See, I told you it wasn't that impressive. French cursing is hilarious. Eventually they just defer to English. I don't think you could say anything in French that would compete with *cocksucker*.

Read the 21st Question at playboy.com/magazine.



"Tell me again how to recognize girls, Dad."

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THE LEGEND REBORN

Playboy On The Scene

WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHERE IT'S HAPPENING AND WHO'S MAKING IT HAPPEN



Where the Road Ends and Beyond

You think you have a road-trip story? Try driving to the South Pole

In 2008 a team of 10 adventurers called Drive Around the World will attempt to travel from the coast of Antarctica to the South Pole in four specially modified vehicles: one electric, one powered by hydrogen, one by biodiesel and one by lean gasoline. That's 1,000 miles over the most unforgiving terrain on earth—across a three-mile crevasse-ridden zone with 42 natural ice bridges and over the Transantarctic Mountains. There are no roads. The team members include 77-year-old Buzz Aldrin, who in 1969 became the second man to stand on the moon, and Steve Wozniak, co-founder of Apple. How cold

will it be at the South Pole when they get there? About 30 degrees below zero at noon. Sponsored by a variety of companies including K&N Engineering, the project will be shot for a 3-D documentary film and will raise money for Parkinson's research. If you wish to tag along, tune in to team leader Nick Baggary's blog at drivearoundtheworld.com. Baggary previously journeyed around the globe in a Land Rover, starting and finishing in Sunnyvale, California—44,000 miles, 16 months, 30 countries (pictured above: Australia's Gunbarrel Highway). Yup, this gritty trekker means business. Godspeed.



Ghost in the Machine

The new art sensation Banksy is a true unknown

Nobody ever listened to me until they didn't know who I was." That statement comes from the recently published *Wall and Piece*, a portfolio of work by the artist known as Banksy. The mysterious "art terrorist"—who has never revealed his identity—debuted six years ago, posting politically charged graffiti and paintings throughout London, including the one pictured here being removed by police. In 2005 he began hanging his own bizarre paintings inside the world's top museums—the Louvre, the Met. Last fall he mounted a sculpture of a tortured Guantánamo Bay prisoner inside Disneyland's Big Thunder Mountain Railroad. The opposite of an art thief, he's a master of nihilistic humor. When (and if) he reveals his identity, will he be celebrated or arrested?

Buried Pirate Treasure

In Into the Blue JESSICA ALBA dove deep for buccaneer booty. The form that landed her a PLAYBOY cover was no special effect—she really does have the best body in Hollywood.



Santa Boobies

Want to be invited to the next Christmas party thrown by randy U.K. tabloid *Daily Sport*? Here's a tip: Be a stripper who will get 'em out while feigning lesbianism.



Sorry, Miss Jackson

It wasn't a crisis when TONI BRAXTON popped out at a sporting event; after all, it's not as if anyone was watching—it was just the World Cup.



Our Favorite Martina

How does a just God allow bad things to happen to good people? We guess He gets cranking on His more perfect creations (like all-natural model MISS MARTINA), loses track of time and lets a few things slide. Cut the Guy a break.

You Can All Just Kiss Off

Earlier this year gossip pages reported that KIM KARDASHIAN was shopping a sex tape to adult DVD publishers. (The leading man? Ex-boyfriend Ray J, brother of R&B singer Brandy.) At press time the tale was looking like an unfounded rumor. Damn.



Slap and Tickle

What happens at the Playboy Mansion stays at the Mansion, but what you do in your limousine on the way home from the party is fair game—particularly if you invite paparazzi in for a look, as NICKY and PARIS HILTON did.



Just a Runner-Up? That's Criminological

Criminology major ANDREA VARGO made the finals of *Maxim's Hometown Hotties* contest but didn't win. Tough luck, *Maxim* readers. As this picture shows, PLAYBOY is where she belongs.

Potpourri



LOVE THINGS

While Mama always said, "Life is like a box of chocolates; you never know what you're gonna get," Pa was fond of the lesser-known maxim "Life is like a tin of panties; everything comes in threes." Ah, folk wisdom. True to the saying, Hanky Panky's limited-edition tin (\$55, available at Saks Fifth Avenue) is packed with three things that, thanks to the wonders of modern science, are one size fits most. Concerned about the universal sizing? Don't be. A random survey conducted by PLAYBOY's editors found hot women universally love Hanky Panky thongs. You can't go wrong.



CAR, TALK!

Your car knows a lot about itself. Problem is, the two of you aren't really on speaking terms (and that damn CHECK ENGINE light seriously lacks nuance). Now instead of paying \$150 for a crooked mechanic to tell you it's your alternator when it's just your wiper fluid, you can get a CarMD (\$90, carmd.com) and plug it into your car's diagnostic port (if your car is a 1996 or later). It'll kibitz with your car's brain and immediately tell you how severe things are in general. Afterward hook the CarMD up to your PC to get a full report on what's going on with your darling, from basic statistics to diagnoses of serious problems.

SAVING FACE

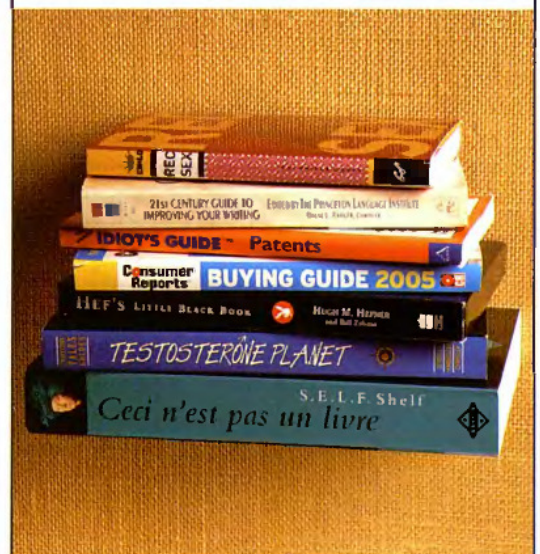
Once, a man's grooming regimen comprised a bar of Dial, a can of Barbasol and the cool brutality of Aqua Velva. Now artisanal grooming options are abundant. Elemis (timetospa.com) began in the U.K. with gentle, botanically derived spa products and later branched out with a line specifically for men. The Deep Cleanse Facial Wash (\$28) and recently released Daily Moisture Boost (\$45) are fantastic for everyday use, and the fine Energising Skin Scrub (\$46) and Post Shave Recovery Mask

(\$46) are best used a few times a week to get the deep-down crud. Lovely, mate.



BOOK 'EM

Your choices in literature say as much about you as your choices in design. Now you can say something about both at once with the Self Shelf (\$30, firebox.com). This clever optical illusion makes it look as though you're holding up your books with mind power alone. Of course, the title of the brilliant work on the bottom slyly gives it away: It's not a book at all but a shelf holding the rest of them up.



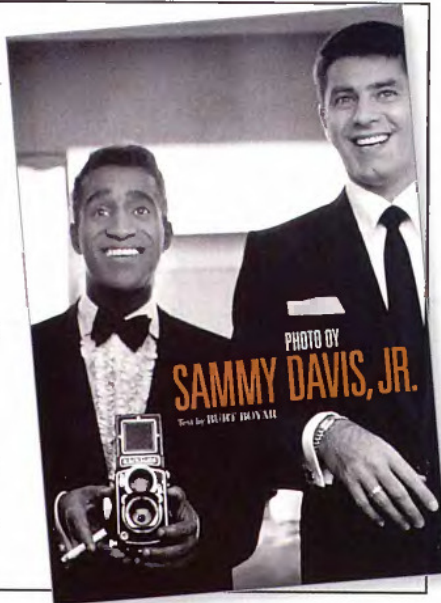
POWER PLAY

Whatever your stance on global warming, we all dig a lower electric bill. A Skystream 3.7 windmill (\$9,000 to \$12,000 installed, skystreamenergy.com) in your backyard could save half your kilowatt-hours each month. Simple to operate and maintain, the generator hooks directly into your electrical system. When it makes more power than your house needs (say, at four a.m.), your meter will run backward as you upload power to the grid (if you live in one of the more than 35 states where that's allowed).



CELLULOID HERO

When he wasn't singing, dancing, acting, playing musical instruments, doing stand-up, drinking with the Rat Pack or bedding beautiful women, Sammy Davis Jr. was taking photographs. "Sammy never went anywhere without a camera," says Burt Boyar, Davis's longtime friend and the author of the new coffee-table book *Photo by Sammy Davis, Jr.* (\$50, ReganBooks). From Bogie to Bacall, James Dean to Dean Martin, Sammy captured them all on film. No one else could've gotten away with photographing Sinatra in his PJs.



THE LATEST BUZZ

Tanqueray's new Rangpur gin (\$22, in liquor stores) is made with rare Rangpur limes (*Citrus x limonia* Osbeck), strange and juicy orange-colored spheres grown in India. Unlike any other gin we've ever tried, it is a touch sweet and citrusy, best served in the sun over ice, with a dash of tonic and cranberry if you like. Do not mix it with vermouth. For a Rangpur dirty martini, pour two shots of chilled Tanqueray Rangpur into a cocktail glass, then drop in a naked woman named Olive.



GRECIAN FORMULA

When New York was down and dirty—like, before Starbucks—locals took their coffee in classic blue-and-white "Greek" cups. Even if the burned deli swill that came in them looked and tasted like the nearby East River, it cost little and furthered New York's reputation as the city that never sleeps. Those paper cups are quickly disappearing, but ExceptionLab, Inc. has immortalized them in reusable ceramic (\$12, wearehappytoserveyou.com). Smart, huh? Fuhgeddaboutit!



THE MOVIE TRADE

Peerflix (peerflix.com) is a smart new alternative to DVD rent-by-mail services. You list the DVDs you want, along with ones you own but don't want anymore. When someone requests one of yours, print a postage-paid mailer on regular paper, tape it up and send. That earns you credits you can use to order DVDs on your want list. Discs you get are yours to keep, and you can cash out at any time. Very clever.



Next Month



RUBBER MAID.



WINTER STORMS RAGE.



THE 2007 PLAYBOY BASEBALL PREVIEW.



THE GIRLS OF CONFERENCE USA.

AMERICAN BEAUTIES: THE GIRLS OF CONFERENCE USA—OUR TALENT SCOUTS SWEEP THROUGH THE SOUTH IN SEARCH OF BEAUTY AND A PERFECT SMILE. OUR PHOTO TEAM HIT MARSHALL, RICE, TULANE AND THE OTHER UNIVERSITIES THAT COMPRISE THE CONFERENCE. A BRAND-NEW REASON TO FEEL PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN.

STEVE NASH—ONLY TWO POINT GUARDS HAVE EVER BEEN NAMED THE NBA'S MOST VALUABLE PLAYER IN CONSECUTIVE SEASONS: MAGIC JOHNSON AND THE SUNS' STEVE NASH. EVEN MORE NOTABLY, THE UNASSUMING CANADIAN IS JUST NOW HITTING HIS PEAK, AT THE AGE OF 33. **KEVIN COOK** NETS A REVEALING INTERVIEW.

SEX IN IRAN—**PARI ESFANDIARI** AND **RICHARD BUSKIN** REVEAL HOW A SEX TAPE FEATURING A FAMOUS ACTRESS IS SHAKING IRAN'S CONSERVATIVE ISLAMIC GOVERNMENT. ONCE AGAIN, AN AUTHORITARIAN REGIME IS HAVING TROUBLE WITH SEXUAL FREEDOM.

FERGIE—THE SEXY BLACK EYED PEA REVEALS THE ESSENCE OF FERGALICIOUSNESS, THE KEY TO HER SOLO SUCCESS AND WHAT BRINGS HER TO *GRINDHOUSE*. 20Q BY **JASON BUHRMESTER**

PLAYBOY'S 2007 BASEBALL PREVIEW—AFTER AN OFF-SEASON MARKED BY RECORD-BREAKING DEALS, OUR HALL

OF FAME PROGNOSTICATOR **TRACY RINGOLSBY** SENDS YOU OUT TO THE BALL GAME WITH HIS ANNUAL ANALYSIS OF AMERICA'S NATIONAL PASTIME.

A STRETCH OF THE IMAGINATION—BRITISH GLAMOUR PHOTOGRAPHER AND LONGTIME *PLAYBOY* CONTRIBUTOR **BYRON NEWMAN** TURNS HIS LENS ON VINYL-CLAD VIXENS FOR A VIVID PICTORIAL.

WINTER STORMS—A LONELY MAN ANGUISHES OVER THE FATE OF HIS DAUGHTER, A WAR CORRESPONDENT, AS A NOR'EASTER RAGES OUTSIDE HIS HOME. FICTION BY **EDWARD FALCO**

TO THE BAD GIRLS GO THE SPOILS—ANGLING FOR A SPOT AS REALITY TV'S NEXT SEXY VILLAIN, **MICHELLE RICHMOND** CELEBRATES THE HIGHLIGHTS OF HER WILD PAST WITH AN EYE TO AN ADVENTUROUS FUTURE, IN AN OPEN LETTER TO PRODUCER MARK BURNETT.

THE NEW URBAN WARDROBE—MOVING BEYOND HIPSTERS, HIP-HOPPERS AND HYPE, *PLAYBOY* HELPS REDEFINE THE WAY COSMOPOLITAN SOPHISTICATES WANT TO LOOK. THE KEY: A FEW CHOICE PIECES AND YOU'RE GOOD TO GO.

PLUS: AUDI'S NEW R8 AND HOW **ANNA-MARIE GODDARD** STARTS HER DAY. ALSO, HOWARD STERN DISCOVERY MISS MAY **SHANNON JAMES** PUTS A SPRING IN YOUR STEP.

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