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GARY HART

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DAWSON**
20Q

**JAMES
ELLROY**
MIND-BLOWING
FIRST LOOK
**BLOOD'S
A ROVER**



**CAROL
ALT**
A TROPICAL
HOLIDAY
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**DENIS
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WHY
WE **SUCK**
AN EXCLUSIVE
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COVER STORY

"I have not had an easy life," says supermodel Carol Alt. "If I hadn't learned to look for the positive, I would have become one of those negative, nasty women. In a strange way I'm grateful. I learned a long time ago to bring something to the party. Never arrive empty-handed." Alt brings plenty of silky skin to the party that is our cover, shot by photographer Timothy White. Our Rabbit ties one on in the steamy tropics.





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THE WORLD OF PLAYBOY

HEF SIGHTINGS, MANSION FROLICS AND NIGHTLIFE NOTES



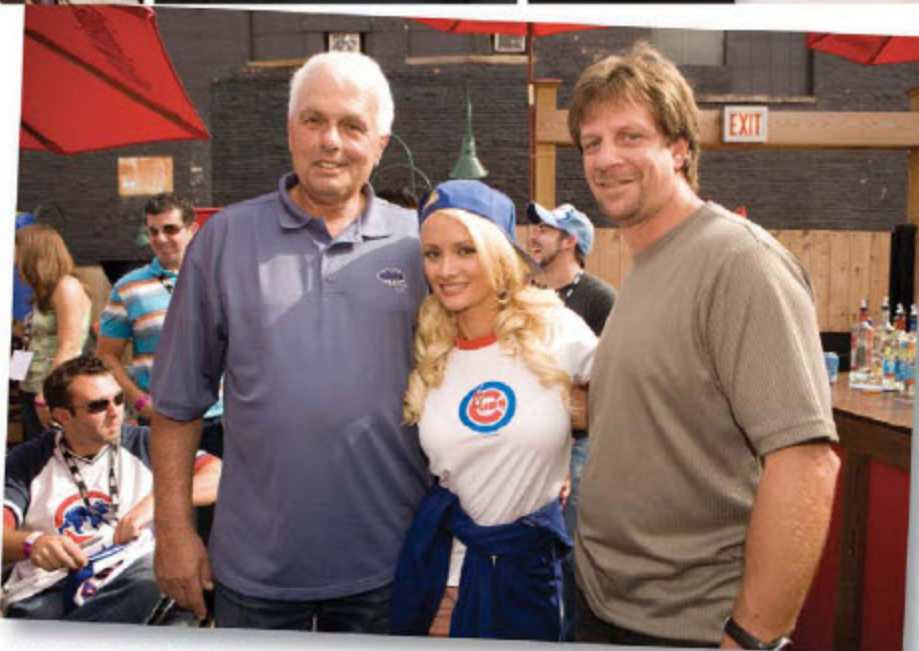
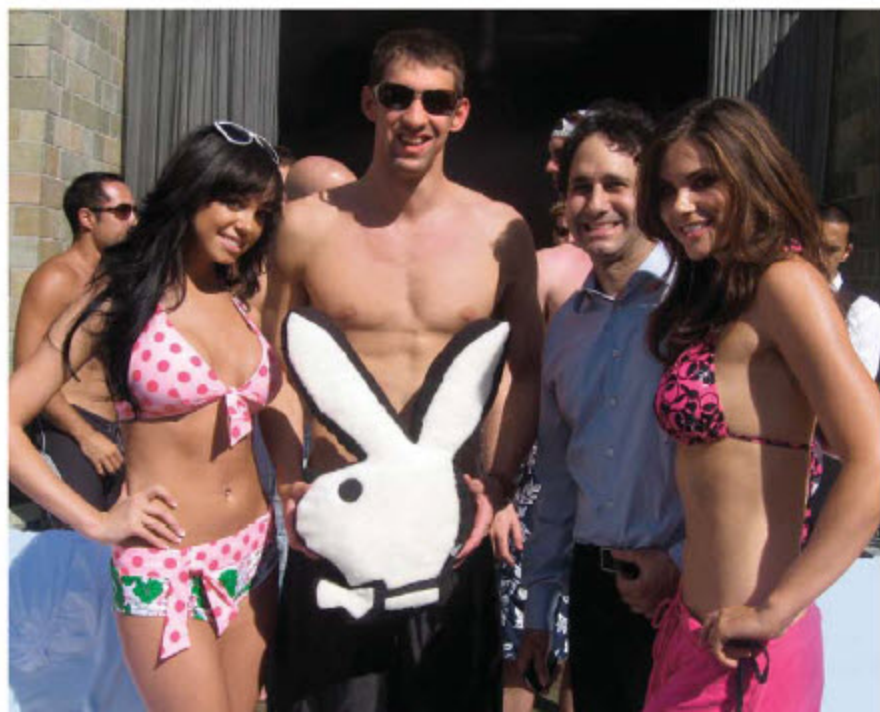
THE HOUSE BUNNY PREMIERE

The sexy comedy *The House Bunny*—about a Bunny booted from the Shangri-la lifestyle of the Playboy Mansion and forced to live in the real world—was tops at the box office on its first day of release. The red carpet at the big L.A. screening sizzled with stars, among them Hef and the Girls Next Door, who have a few lines in the film. Clockwise from below: star Anna Faris, ready for her close-up; Ashton Kutcher and Demi Moore show support for Moore's daughter Rumer Willis, who is in the film; Rumer with co-star Katharine McPhee; Tom Hanks's son Collin, who plays the main love interest; Bruce Willis and a sea of bunny ears (the good kind).



KING OF THE POOL PARTY

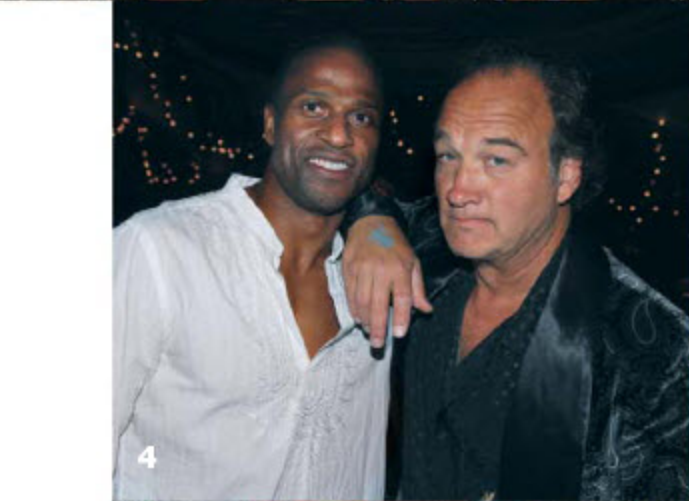
The first time we spotted über-Olympian Michael Phelps without a chestful of gold medals, he was holding a Rabbit Head poolside at the Palms with George Maloof and Playmates Valerie Mason and Alison Waite.



STRIKE A POSE

During a Cubs game, Holly crowned the winner of the Captain Morgan Ultimate Pose Off II at a Wrigleyville sports bar. Former Cubs Milt Pappas and Mickey Morandini were on hand.

MIDSUMMER DREAMS



The annual Midsummer Night's Dream party—a Shakespeare-inspired lingerie bacchanal—took Arabian Nights as its theme this year. Hef and his harem welcomed celebrities and beautiful women to their oasis for the summer's sexiest soiree. (1) The happy host, with his Girls Next Door. (2) PMOY 2006 Kara Monaco with Terrence Howard from *Hustle & Flow*. (3) Separated at birth? The Man and *Religulous*'s Bill Maher. (4) Former Bears and Raiders WR Willie Gault with Jim Belushi. (5) PMOY 2008 Jayde Nicole (left) with *The Hills*' Brody Jenner and Miss June 2007 Brittany Binger. (6) Mad Men Bryan Batt, Rich Sommer and Michael Gladis unwind after work. (7) PMOY 1994 Jenny McCarthy snuggles up to Hef. (8) Mr. Playboy poses with July's cover girl, Cindy Margolis. (9) Rappers Three 6 Mafia with ladies painted for the Arabian theme. (10) Miss October Kelly Carrington with funnyman Seth Green. (11) Jill and Tony Curtis. (12) *Last Comic Standing*'s Jeff Dye shares a laugh with PMOY 2007 Sara Jean Underwood. (13) Nicky and Paris Hilton are all smiles—and lingerie—with Hef.



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VEGAS PLAYBOY  NEW FRAGRANCE FOR MEN

WHO SAYS
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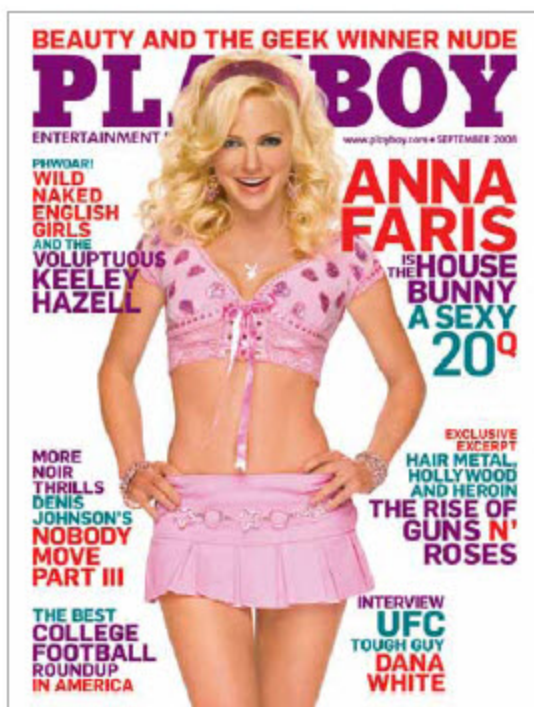
HOLLYWOOD PLAYBOY  NEW FRAGRANCE FOR MEN

ANNA FARIS

You do a wonderful job showcasing the talented, funny and gorgeous Anna Faris (*20Q*, September).

Ansley Drennen
Hendersonville, North Carolina

I fell in love with Faris's comic talents after watching *Just Friends*. I fell even more deeply in love after seeing



Anna Faris scores big at the box office.

The House Bunny. Is she on her way to becoming the next Lucille Ball?

Jack Cassell
Mount Dora, Florida

Why is it that during every movie or television show in which characters visit the Playboy Mansion, someone gets thrown out? *Sex and the City*? Thrown out. *Beverly Hills Cop II*? Thrown out. *Entourage*? Thrown out. *The House Bunny*? Thrown out. Do guests get kicked out that often?

Jake Price
Fort Rucker, Alabama

No, but getting tossed from paradise is a rich source of comic inspiration.

UPSET ABOUT UPSETS

Your college football forecast (*Playboy's 2008 Pigskin Preview*, September) presents a list of the greatest upsets of all time, but it overlooks the absolute biggest, which took place on November 21, 1942 when the University of Georgia played Alabama Polytechnic Institute (now Auburn). Georgia's fearsome lineup included a Heisman Trophy winner (Frank Sinkwich) and a number of other players who would go on to play in the pros. They were unbeaten and untied, ranked number one and had just

crushed Florida 75-0. Earlier, Auburn had lost to Florida 6-0. Decades later a member of the Georgia team told me he and his teammates were so confident of victory they stayed up all night before the game, drinking and playing poker. He said many were still drunk at kickoff. Auburn won 27-13. Georgia went on to win the Rose Bowl and a national championship, but the Auburn team should be recognized for its historic achievement.

Allen Johnson
Augusta, Georgia

After much debate, we excluded games in which the favored team was intoxicated.

DRINK LIKE A REPUBLICAN

In September's *After Hours* you describe a cocktail you call the democrat and ask readers to suggest a recipe for the republican. Here's mine:

- 2½ oz. scotch
- ½ oz. dry vermouth
- ½ oz. simple syrup
- ½ oz. lemon juice
- 2 dashes bitters

Combine and serve on the rocks in a frosted highball glass. Old-fashioned, bitter, slightly sour, cold and on the rocks—sounds like a republican to me!

Mack Swiney
Bristol, Tennessee

Mix 151 rum, dark rum, light rum, triple sec, Chambord and pineapple-orange juice. Serve over shaved ice and garnish with a lime. It will knock you on your ass for at least four years.

John Bittman
Vermilion, Ohio

PARADISE CITY

For years people have said Axl Rose broke up Guns N' Roses (*Young Guns*, September). But Steven Adler was the only member who was fired; the rest quit. As it stands, Rose is the only one who has stayed true to his principles and the supposed principles of the band. He has waited 15 years to put out *Chinese Democracy* and may wait longer. In an age of one-hit wonders and record companies content to cash in, it's his music, his band and his way.

Wylie Hnat
Coralville, Iowa

Guns N' Roses are my modern-day Rolling Stones. It is a shame that Velvet Revolver, which needs a singer, and Rose, with his revolving-door backup, can't set aside their issues and become the most powerful rock band again.

Larry Brehm
Redondo Beach, California

Guns N' Roses were the "last" rock band? Who does Stephen Davis think he's kidding? I discover at least five great rock bands a week. Maybe PLAYBOY should find writers who know music didn't die with big hair and leather pants.

Matt Perrine
Superior, Wisconsin

FIGHTING WORDS

Although he calls me, rather unkindly, a "scumbag dirtbag" and "maggot," I would like to thank Dana White for fulfilling my boyhood dream of seeing my name in PLAYBOY (*Playboy Interview*, September). Of course, White is an idiot. He went to sleep one night and woke up standing on third base, thinking he hit a triple. In reality, without promoter Lorenzo Fertitta's money, he would still be making Jazzercise tapes. To his credit, White has done a wonderful job branding the Ultimate Fighting Championship, but he didn't invent mixed martial arts, and the UFC doesn't have a monopoly on great fighters. (Given his head start, he should have 10 stars like Chuck Liddell, but instead he keeps trotting Liddell back out to take



White: "UFC will be bigger than the NFL."

beatings.) The fact is, White resents that I introduced MMA into the mainstream via Showtime and CBS. Meanwhile, he's not exactly moving the sport forward by preventing women from participating in the UFC—they can fight in Iraq but not in the Octagon?—and refusing to allow interleague bouts. Think of how much money we could both make with UFC-EliteXC matchups. White may be a skilled marketer and office manager, but he fails as a businessman to

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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW:

AMANDA WARREN

A candid conversation with one of the Playboy Mansion's go-to insiders about Hef's private get-togethers and what the color of his pajamas reveals

As the West Coast Editorial Coordinator for Cartoons, Amanda Warren is the go-between for Hugh Hefner and the magazine's many contributing artists. Like most Playboy Mansion employees, her role in keeping the Holmby Hills estate operating like a well-oiled machine goes beyond what her job title implies, as she makes Hef's travel arrangements, daily schedule and more. The 31-year-old California native, whose grandparents are friends with Hef, remembers coming to the Mansion for Easter egg hunts when she was a little girl. Warren later graduated from UC Berkeley with a degree in architecture and ran a sound-stage facility until an opportunity opened at the Mansion more than four years ago. Now this energetic young woman works tirelessly behind the scenes to keep Hef and the Girls Next Door happy and on schedule.

PLAYBOY: Cartoons have been important to PLAYBOY since the magazine's beginning. When did Hef become interested in them?

WARREN: Hef has always drawn cartoons himself. In high school the comic strip he drew documented his transformation into Hep Hef, which is what he called himself, from the kind of dorky guy to the cool guy. It was a love of his, and in the first few issues he drew his own cartoons.

PLAYBOY: Is Hef's personal time as regimented as his workdays?

WARREN: Hef is a workaholic, so for him personal time comes after work hours.

Monday is "manly night," when 10 or 12 of his best friends come over, have dinner, chat, smoke cigars and listen to music. Tuesday is an off night, when he'll sometimes play backgammon with his son Marston, who lives next door. Wednesday is card night, and Hef and his friends play poker or gin in the library. On Thursday, Hef, his girlfriends and some Playmates will go out to a great restaurant and hit a club.

PLAYBOY: You're one of the first people to see Hef after he comes out of his room. How does your daily interaction with him start?

WARREN: You prepare for your boss to come down at noon in his pajamas, and your day is kind of dictated by what type of pajamas he is wearing. If Hef's wearing black silk pajamas, he is ready to work. All is well. Sometimes he'll come down in his blue flannel pajamas and you'll know it's not going to be a good day. If he has an interview or a meeting with a lawyer or something, he'll throw on his red or purple smoking jacket over the black silks. That's typically his uniform.

PLAYBOY: Do you know where his affinity for pajamas comes from?

WARREN: Well, legend has it that he started wearing pajamas during the early days of the magazine when his secretary arrived one morning and he was still working away in his pajamas from the night before. But, if you ask Hef, he

will simply tell you that he wears them because he finds them to be more comfortable.

PLAYBOY: Please explain the audition process for women who want to attend one of the Mansion bashes.

WARREN: Basically girls have to submit a photo of themselves to get invited to a Mansion party. Nothing untoward—just a headshot and a body shot of a girl in jeans and a T-shirt is great. We get stacks and stacks of pictures. They get sent over to Hef, and he goes through the pictures and basically says yea or nay based on them.

PLAYBOY: What if a woman gets accepted and she wants to bring a friend?

WARREN: If they get approved, they are told not to bring a date. It's definitely a singles party—no boyfriends. If they want a friend to come, a woman has to send her friend's picture, too.

PLAYBOY: Are there off-limits areas of the Mansion?

WARREN: The second floor is basically off-limits unless you work in the offices there, as I do. It's basically treated like a hotel. If the door is closed, you knock first. Hef and Holly share the master suite, and down the hall from there you first arrive at Kendra's room and then Bridget's. It's all hardwood until that point and then there's a long hallway that's carpeted, and that's the dividing point between personal living space and office space.



"In high school the comic strip he drew documented his transformation into Hep Hef, which is what he called himself, from the kind of dorky guy to the cool guy."



"You prepare for your boss to come down at noon in his pajamas, and your day is kind of dictated by what type of pajamas he is wearing."



PHOTOGRAPHY BY ELAYNE LODGE

"Basically, girls have to submit a photo of themselves to get invited to a Mansion party. We get stacks and stacks of pictures."


JAMESON
IRISH WHISKEY

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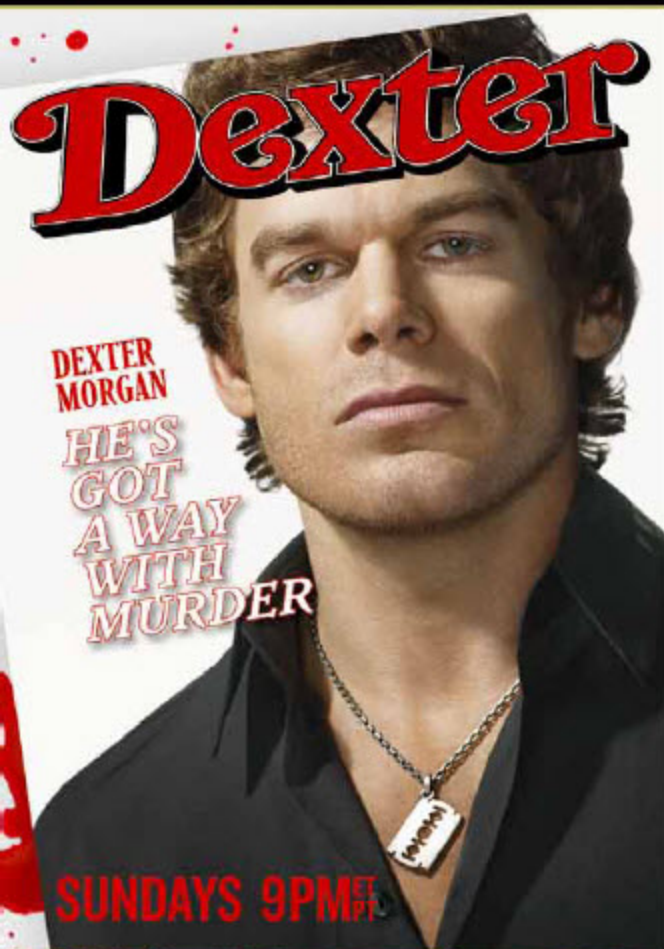
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understand that competition is good for the fans and investors in any sport.

Gary Shaw
Wayne, New Jersey

Shaw is the founding president of EliteXC Live Events.

Kevin Cook regurgitates the same tired rap about White and his cohorts "making the sport safer." They did nothing to change the rules, and the sport was already regulated by New Jersey's State Athletic Control Board. It's notable that Lorenzo Fertitta served as vice chairman of the Nevada State Athletic Commission when the UFC was told it would not have the votes for sanctioning. A year later Fertitta and his brother bought the UFC at a discount, with Nevada's blessing. White drops far more F-bombs than your average politico, but his talent for spin puts them to shame.

Jake Rossen
Binghamton, New York

White is turning the UFC and the mixed-martial-arts world into his own version of World Wrestling Entertainment. While the fights may be real, not all of them are judged fairly.

Jacen Roberts
North Babylon, New York

White credits his success with the UFC to fate. But if he hadn't done it, someone else would have.

Matt Huey
Olive Branch, Mississippi

Your interview with White is on the money. Boxing is dead. The debacle they call Olympic boxing (any fan could see that at least 10 bouts in Beijing were scored incorrectly) proves my point. At least with the UFC, there is an obvious winner. Honesty in sports is paramount, and the only true fight game with this characteristic is White's UFC.

Al LaVigne
Glendale, Arizona

HUSBAND SWAPPERS

As the publishers of the swinger site kasidie.com, we love your sex-positive reporting. However, we must take issue with your use of the derogatory term *wife swapping* in *Swinging From A to Z* (September). In fact, it is generally the woman who leads the couple into the lifestyle and initiates sexual activity at parties. For lack of a better term, swinging is better referred to as *negotiated nonmonogamy*, since both partners have an equal voice and must agree on boundaries.

Scott and Nicoleta
Denver, Colorado

Of course you're right, but "negotiated nonmonogamy" never gave anyone a boner.

WOMEN ALWAYS WRITE

The September issue is perfection. Anna Faris is hilarious, the *Playboy Interview* with Dana White is such a good read, and I finally got to see Playmate Valerie Mason (*Southern Charmer*) after her appearance on *The Girls Next Door*. If that wasn't enough, the Page 3 girls are hot. It will be hard to top this one.

Lauren Crawford
Rockville, Maryland

I realized as I was reading the September issue (thank you so much for the delightful Ms. Faris) that *PLAYBOY* is not only the coolest magazine ever but is no doubt the best written. Every woman, no matter her appearance, should strive for the playful and sexy attitude of your models.

Marja Johnson
North Hollywood, California

BIRD WATCHING

Great job on the busty British babes (*Page 3 Girls*, September). We need to see a lot more of Sophie Howard. Skip



Sophie Howard: Who needs Page 1 or 2?

the dopey questions next time and ask her something important, like what time I should pick her up.

Aaron Mason
Saint John, New Brunswick

Wow! Englishwomen are almost as hot as American women.

Jason Green
St. Albans, New York

Having Irish roots, I never thought I would say this, but long live the queen.

Kevin Shahan
North Port, Florida

Read more feedback at playboy.com/blog.



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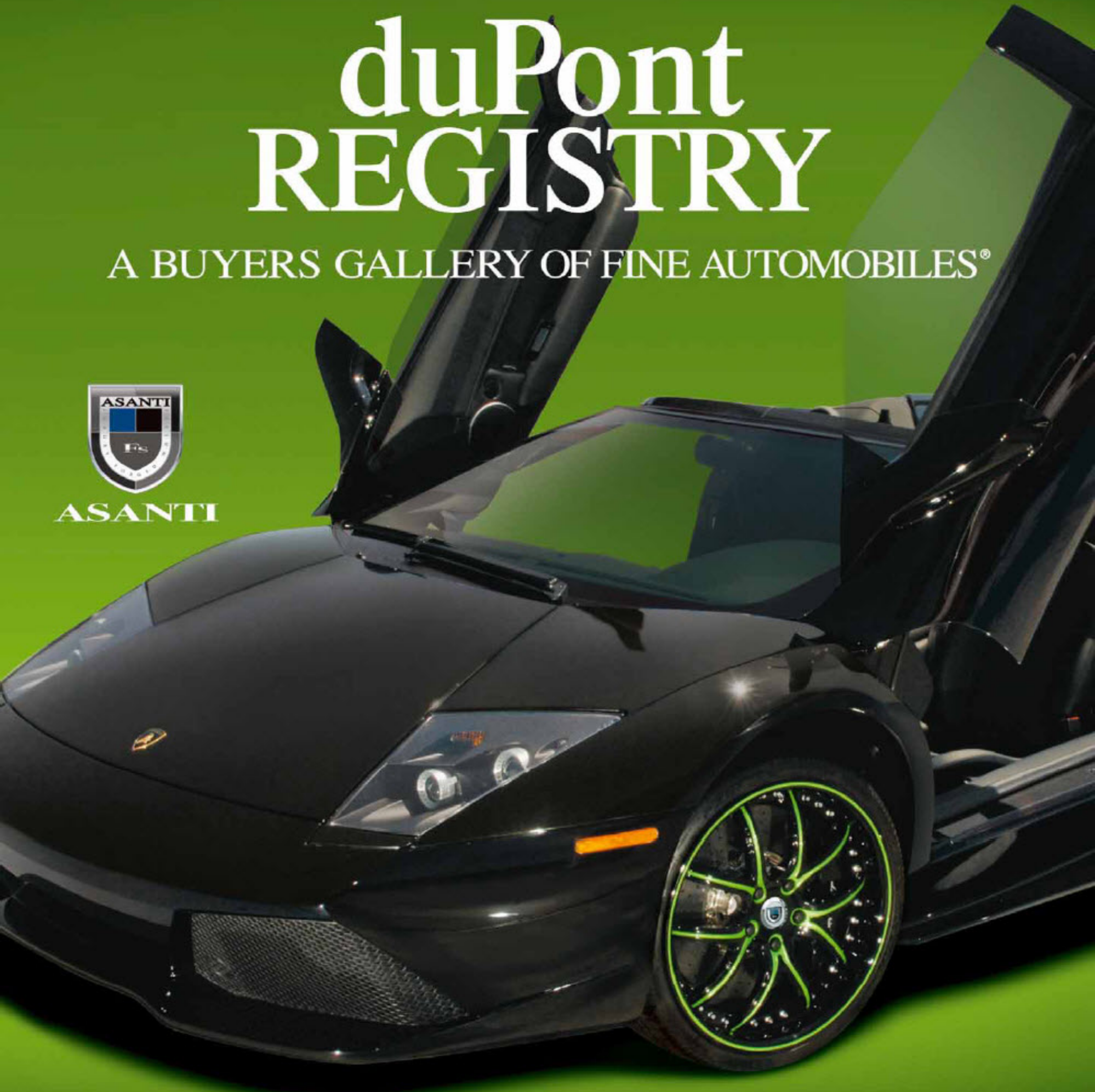
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PLAYBOY

after hours



“I don’t worry about a wardrobe malfunction. If it happens, it happens.”

babe of the month

Mariqueen Maandig

The first thing to know about Mariqueen Maandig, vocalist and eyeball magnet for the L.A. space rockers West Indian Girl, is that she’s Filipino, not West Indian. The second thing is that she’s tired of explaining her name and so answers to “Q.” Third, intriguing if not important, she does not wear underwear. “Never,” she says. “I like to be as aerodynamic as possible.” Does that pose a problem when she does her thing onstage? “I don’t worry about a wardrobe malfunction,” she asserts. “If it happens, it happens. It probably has. But it’s not as if I’m doing high kicks up there.” Indeed, lost in West Indian Girl’s trippy, sun-drenched sound, Q is usually

INDIE ROCK NEVER LOOKED SO GOOD

swaying with eyes closed, wailing alongside co-vocalist Rob James and handling light percussion with aplomb. “I can play the shit out of a tambourine,” she brags. Though critically acclaimed—the All Music Guide gives the band’s most recent LP, *4th & Wall*, four and a half out of five stars—West Indian Girl (named for a strain of LSD) is a decidedly indie act, and we wonder aloud how Q’s sex appeal plays with the anti-Britney crowd. “People have asked me to tone it down,” she admits, “but I’m not ashamed of my body, and I certainly won’t dress to hide it. My whole family is built this way, with tiny waists. We were corseted by God.”

hoppy holidays

The Best Winter Brews

FIVE LIMITED EDITIONS WORTH THE SPLURGE

Around this time of year our grocery and liquor stores entertain some interesting visitors. They're called seasonal brews, winter stouts, Christmas ales and the like, and no matter how much you stare at their festive labels you can't tell if they will actually taste any good. We asked beer expert Stephen Beaumont to pick some reliable yuletide specials. A bit of general advice: These are beers for sipping and savoring, not guzzling.

He'brew Jewbelation Twelve, Shmaltz Brewing Company, San Francisco Twelve malts, including two kinds of rye, combine with 12 varieties of hops to create this 12 percent alcohol monster of a Hanukkah beer.

Our Special Ale, Anchor Brewing Company, San Francisco

Although different each year, this classic Christmas beer is usually spiced and always beautifully balanced. A moderately strong and perennially tasty treat.

Hibernation Ale, Great Divide Brewing Company, Denver

You could call this rich toffee-ish ale a malty masterpiece, except the brewery balances all that luscious sweetness with a boatload of hops. A Colorado legend.

Expedition Stout, Bell's Brewery, Kalamazoo, Michigan

Michigan winters beg for big, potent, in-your-face stouts like this. Expect to be bowled over with flavors from espresso to port to raisins and a big, warming finish.

The Mad Elf Ale, Tröegs Brewing Company, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Tart cherry taste? Check.

Belgian-esque spiciness?

Check. Rich depth of flavor?

Check. Potent, soothing

alcohol? Check. A rebuttal to the misconception that all fruit beers are girly.



footballology

Test Your College-Bowl IQ

There's nothing like filling out a bracket for March Madness—too bad it's December and we're busy wrapping up another thrilling college-football season. But what if there were some way to measure your bowl-game aptitude beyond simply picking winners and losers? There is: It's called a confidence pool, and it threatens to make the college-bowl season as exciting as the NCAA Basketball Tournament. There are 34 bowl games in the 2008–2009 postseason; before the action starts, on December 20, pick the winner of each game and assign your picks a confidence ranking from one (you have no idea who will win) to 34 (you think it's a lock), using each number only once. For every correct pick, you will receive a point value equal to the game's confidence ranking. The system rewards smart picks that go against conventional wisdom—last year West Virginia played the role of bracket buster by beating heavily favored Oklahoma. Even better, it's hard to recoup big losses with lucky guesses, since you'd be foolish to weight those heavily going in. If you were to pick every game correctly, you'd have 595 points. (Note: You will not get 595 points.) Here's what your score says about you:

500+: Blowout. Give yourself the Heisman *and* the Butkus.

400–499: Convincing. Notre Dame may be calling.

300–399: Squeaker. The band was on your field.

200–299: Heartbreaker. Wide right—again.

100–199: Thumped. You have heard of this game “football.”

0–99: Shamed. You have not heard of this game “football.”

what not to do

Party Fouls: Office Christmas Party Edition

HOW TO LOSE FACE AND ALIENATE COLLEAGUES OVER FESTIVE WORKPLACE WASSAIL

1. Bring mistletoe.
2. Ask Jewish co-worker whether this whole thing pisses him off.
3. Suggest that female co-worker has been naughty and proffer your lap.
4. Give pornography as gag Secret Santa gift (does not apply to PLAYBOY editorial-office party).
5. Eat anything that is obviously for display purposes—i.e., sprigs of holly or an ice sculpture.
6. Ask fattest co-worker when he'll put on Santa suit.
7. Have sex with co-worker on boss's desk. Correction: *Get caught* having sex with co-worker on boss's desk. (On the bright side, although your dismissal will be swift, you will achieve folk-hero status among your peers.)
8. Call boss Scrooge and tell everyone your son is getting a new crutch for Christmas.
9. Decline raffle prize due to mistreatment of Native Americans.
10. Be photographed having fun of any kind. It can only come back to haunt you.



DARE

THE NEW FRAGRANCE FOR MEN

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DARE

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management material

Todd Barry Cleans Up on Aisle Five

A VETERAN COMIC GOES TO THE MOVIES

Fans of stand-up comedy know Todd Barry for his understated delivery and thick sarcasm; from physique to demeanor he's an anti-Sam Kinison. He also does voice work for various animated comedy series and recently showed up as the bongo-playing "third Conchord" on *Flight of the Conchords*. Nothing on his résumé suggests he would appear in a film that won top honors at the Venice Film Festival, yet he is in Darren Aronofsky's latest, *The Wrestler*, haranguing title character Mickey Rourke.

What are you doing in this award-winning film? I play the manager of the supermarket where Mickey Rourke's character works. I'm his boss. **Why does a wrestler work at a supermarket?** He needs the money. He's a bit past his prime, working the independent wrestling circuit, and those guys don't always make big money. **What sort of supermarket manager do you play?** Let's just say my character isn't the nicest guy in the world, a lot like many of the bosses we've all had at some point. **Are you going Hollywood on us?** No. I've been doing stand-up for more than 20 years, and I'm on the road about four months out of the year. I'm not going to stop that. **Got any interesting comedian war stories for us?** A few years ago I did a show in Alaska, and a schoolteacher charged the stage. Fortunately, she charged at a very slow pace, so some people intervened. **Was she angry at a joke?** She was mad at something I said—I don't really remember. But mainly she was just hammered. **What's the worst reaction you've gotten from an audience?** Well, silence isn't great. But actually, silence is better than groaning. I'd rather have an audience not get the joke than go "Aww...." **Do comedians have groupies?** Yes, tons. Being a comedian is like being in Whitesnake in 1983. **Do you have a girlfriend?** No—and let me guess, one of the Playmates has a crush on me. **Do you like how you look naked?** Yes, but I am not posing in your magazine. **How do you feel about boob jobs?** I think mine turned out okay. **When was the last time someone called you an asshole?** Probably today. I'll have to do a Google blog search.

The Wrestler opens December 19.



yule be swell

Deejay Your Christmas Party for \$29.70

IT'S A PARTY, AFTER ALL

After a year like this the last thing you want to do is spend a bunch of money on holiday compilations that bomb. More than ever, iTunes is your friend—99 cents a pop, and every song is a sure thing. Our advice is to embrace the classic, the soulful and the hokey. Avoid the churchy (songs about Jesus), dreary ("Silver Bells" et al.), dumb (anything sung by animals) and remotely modern (sorry, 'N Sync). Here's our recipe for a winning 80-minute Christmas-shindig disc. Shuffle as needed.

"Back Door Santa," Clarence Carter
 "Blue Christmas," The Platters
 "Boogie Woogie Santa Claus," Mabel Scott
 "Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)," Darlene Love
 "Christmas Comes But Once a Year," Amos Milburn
 "Christmas in My Home Town," Charley Pride
 "Cool Yule," Louis Armstrong
 "Frosty the Snowman," The Ronettes
 "Gee Whiz, It's Christmas," Carla Thomas
 "Good Time Christmas," Lou Rawls
 "Hey, Santa Claus," The Moonglows
 "Holiday on Skis," Al Caiola & Riz Ortolani
 "Jingle Bells," The Ventures
 "Jingle Bells Boogie," Jody Levins
 "Jungle Bells," The Blue Hawaiians
 "Mambo Santa Mambo," The Enchanters
 "Mele Kalikimaka," Bing Crosby and the Andrews Sisters
 "Merry Christmas, Baby," Otis Redding
 "New Year's Resolution Blues," Roy Milton
 "Please Come Home for Christmas," Charles Brown
 "Presents for Christmas," Solomon Burke
 "Run Rudolph Run," Chuck Berry
 "Santa Baby," Eartha Kitt
 "Santa Claus Is Back in Town," Elvis Presley
 "Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town," The Crystals
 "Sleigh Ride/Santa Claus' Party," Les Baxter
 "Soulful Christmas," James Brown
 "Trim Your Tree," Jimmy Butler
 "What Christmas Means to Me," Stevie Wonder
 "White Christmas," The Drifters



made book



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It's bigger than U.S. Steel. Taschen's *Godfather Family Album* collects more than 400 rare photos from all three films in a limited edition that will cost you 700 clams. Follow every Kodak moment of Al Pacino's Michael Corleone, from untainted war vet to middle-aged Mephistopheles to lost old soul. Just when you thought you were out, it will pull you back in.

The Bombay Advisor

It seems as though people call most any fruity concoction in a long-stemmed glass a "martini." For the record, what constitutes a bona fide martini?—S.G., Kenosha, Wisconsin

Blame it on those sassy *Sex and the City* ladies. While there are as many "martini" recipes as there are lovers for *Sexy Samantha* (good Lord, who invented the vodka-tini?), a true martini typically comprises two parts of gin and a splash of dry vermouth. (Some inveterate imbibers, such as the late, great Winston Churchill, prefer to play down the vermouth for the dry effect or even do away with it altogether.) The glass should be chilled in the freezer or filled with ice cubes and water and allowed to sit for a minute. As far as the garnish is concerned, a stuffed olive or a twist of lemon completes the picture. Anything else spilling from cocktail shaker to cocktail glass positively screams *Amateur Night*.

Some co-workers and I were discussing how the martini got its name. One guy insisted it was named after Dean Martin. Is he right?—L.T., Mamaroneck, New York

We'll give Dean Martin credit for a lot of things, but we have to draw the line when it comes to giving the martini its moniker. No one is absolutely certain where the name comes from, but most cocktail connoisseurs seem to agree the martini is a descendent of the martinez, a sweeter sibling made with sweet vermouth, Old Tom gin, a little maraschino liqueur and a dash of bitters. A plaque commemorating the birth of the martini can be found in, yes, Martinez, California. You might impress your co-workers by informing them that Martinez is also the birthplace of Jolien' Joe DiMaggio.

Everyone knows James Bond's preferred manner for having his martini prepared. But a bartender recently told me a martini should actually be stirred, not shaken. Surely 007 can't be wrong?—T.C., Atlanta, Georgia

Alas, even the suave spy can't be right all the time. Our mixing mavens tell us the martini should, in fact, be stirred, not shaken. Veteran bartender and master mixologist James Moreland says Bond was originally portrayed in the Ian Fleming novels as an unmannered brute. "Bond was not the sophisticated guy you see today—he was created as a bit of a thug," says Moreland. "That's why he preferred his cocktail that way, back when it was considered rebellious to have your martini prepared in such a manner."



Moreland says shaking the martini breaks up the ice and adds extra water to the mix, thus weakening the drink. Shaking it also contributes to what is known around more refined watering holes as "bruising the gin"; in short, the gin's molecules bond with oxygen, resulting in a slightly sharp taste. "Ask a bartender to prepare one shaken and one stirred," says Moreland. "You'll see how different the two are, and you'll never go back to having your martini shaken again."

In short, bruising a foe such as Goldfinger is perfectly commendable. Bruising your gin, however, is not.

Most Fridays on the way home from work I pick up flowers for my girlfriend. But the flower thing seems like such a cliché. Can you recommend another gift to show my lady how much I appreciate her?—E.A., Alameda, California

Flowers are so last year—how about gifting her with a lovely bouquet of botanicals that you both can enjoy? A bottle of **Bombay Sapphire** holds no fewer than 10 expertly balanced botanicals, including delectable delights such as juniper berries, licorice, cubeb berries and coriander. Flowers will start to wilt after a few days, but the **Bombay Sapphire** stays zesty and flavorful until the last drop. Treat your sweetie—and yourself—to a well-earned **Sapphire** martini.

I love a martini after a hard day at work, but the only thing I don't like about ordering one in a bar is the shape of the glass—I lose some of the precious liquid every time some knucklehead bumps into me. Why don't they just serve martinis in a highball glass?—J.A., Parma, Ohio

The distinctive shape of the cocktail glass—or martini glass, as it's commonly known—is essential to the taste of the martini. Holding those rich botanicals hostage in a highball glass would be like hanging a Picasso in a bomb shelter. The glass's wide opening gives those botanicals room to breathe, which brings out the citrus, spice and all things nice in your gin. As our mix master James Moreland puts it, "The wide, open shape of the glass opens up the aroma" while also allowing the juice from your garnish, be it olive or lemon, to spread over a wider surface.

As for those "knuckleheads" who spill your beloved post-work potable, Moreland says it's primarily the barkeep who's at fault for overpouring—the standard martini should be filled to within a finger's width of the top of the glass.

What's the story behind the water used to make **Bombay Sapphire**? Does it come from India?—W.S., Topeka, Kansas

Good question. In fact, the water hails from a craggy corner of Wales called Lake Vyrnwy, a picturesque nature preserve dotted with spectacular waterfalls and dense forest. At the heart of the preserve is a reservoir that's reinforced with a stone-built dam. It is from there that the water for **Bombay Sapphire** is extracted. Lake Vyrnwy is popular with hikers, cyclists, bird-watchers—and fans of the finest gin in the world.

Some people insist the martini can be made with either gin or vodka. To me that's like saying the woman who lives next door could stand in for my wife. Does vodka have a rightful place in a real martini?—A.S., Sarasota, Florida

Repeat after us: The martini is made with gin, not vodka. There are vodka-tinis, sake-tinis, appletinis and chocolatinis. Let the tini-boppers have their sugary vodka cocktails. Only a gin-based martini offers the level of smoothness and rich, complex flavor that an individual of wealth and taste such as you deserves. The proper gin martini—and its sipper—is in a class by itself, says Moreland. "It's the sexiest drink in the world," he asserts. "It says a lot about the people who order one. There's something interesting about them—they're just wired differently."

Bombay Sapphire. Explore Responsibly.

Lebua Skybar, Bangkok

Have you ever had a dry martini during monsoon season?



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employee of the month

We Shot the Sheriff

LILLIANNA TRAVER IS ARMED AND GLAMOROUS

PLAYBOY: So you're Johnny Law?

LILLIANNA: Yes, I guess. I'm a sheriff.

PLAYBOY: Take us through a normal shift.

LILLIANNA: Well, no two shifts are the same. I might be babysitting inmates, saving cats out of trees, serving warrants or doing something completely unexpected. I just go in to work and give it my all. I always have the fight inside and know that no matter what, I will go home safe.

PLAYBOY: Do you find the work rewarding?

LILLIANNA: Ha! Inmates spitting on you is not rewarding, but the way I see it, there are two types of people in the world: those who complain about life and those willing to do something about it. I go to sleep every night knowing I played the game and didn't sit on the sidelines. I'm happy with who I am when I look in the mirror each day. That is rewarding.

PLAYBOY: We can see what you mean. What do you think is your best physical feature?

LILLIANNA: I've been told I have amazing doe eyes, even though they're probably not what people notice first—I mean, come on, who doesn't like boobies?

PLAYBOY: On the job, does the bulletproof vest hide the girls?

LILLIANNA: Well, I call mine the boys, and yes, my uniform does me no justice. No pun intended.

PLAYBOY: What's more thrilling: shooting a gun or having sex?

LILLIANNA: Shooting a gun is sexy. But if you think shooting is better than sex, you may be doing it wrong.

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now 'n' later

Year-Round Gifts

FIVE CLUBS ANYBODY WOULD WANT TO JOIN

The "of the month" club is an old and often overlooked gift idea. Give the right one and you'll look cool for at least the next 12 months. And what goes around comes around—send a buddy some cheese for 2009 and maybe you'll be melting Appenzeller or Danish Tilsit over your burgers come 2010.

Coffee of the Month Club (\$225 for one year) What they get: a pound of roasted organic fair-trade beans. Give to: a coffee snob who wants to change the world, albeit somewhat passively. Browse to: groundsforchange.com

Threadless 12 Club (\$200) What they get: arty T-shirts designed for hipsters by hipsters. Give to: someone under 30 who works from home and still owns a skateboard. Browse to: threadless.com/12club

Cheese of the Month Club (\$480) What they get: three half-pound chunks of boutique cheeses. Give to: someone who entertains a lot of guests—among them you. Browse to: cheesemonthclub.com

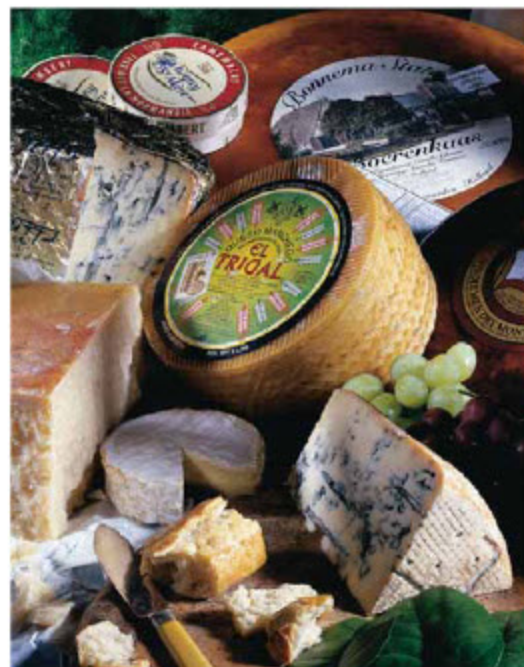
Beverly Hills Cigar Club (\$1,000)

What they get: five high-end cigars selected by a "cigar master."

Give to: someone who smokes cigars? Just a thought. Browse to: beverlyhills cigarclub.com

PLAYBOY Magazine of the Month Club (\$12)

What they get: entertainment for men. Give to: everybody. Browse to: playboy.com/subscribe



sooth said

Appear Both Worldly and Wise

OBFUSCATION CAN BE SO ILLUMINATING

In cocktail-party conversation nothing wows like an exotic aphorism applied to the events of the day. It doesn't even matter whether you use the old saw correctly—your audience will be amazed regardless. Here are a few handy ones we learned from *Peculiar Proverbs* by Stephen Arnott. Preface each with "As they say in...."

China, "You cannot buy honorable rice from a dead uncle."

Scotland, "Cripples are great doers. Break your leg and try."

Denmark, "It's a foolish woman who blames her cabbage."

West Africa, "It is no use trying to sell a ring to a leper."

Japan, "If you throw cakes at a man, he'll throw cakes at you."

Germany, "When the deaf man gives the blind man a lamp, he receives bagpipes."

France, "A dealer in onions is a good judge of leeks."

India, "The man with nostrils is Mr. Nose among the noseless."

Iraq, "Women are the whips of Satan."

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Forget PowerPoint presentations. On *School of Sex* the prof, Tera Patrick, and live models demonstrate the ins and outs of lovemaking. "I share my secrets with viewers, from intimate details on how to please your partner to swinger etiquette," Tera says. "And I don't expect any complaints about doing homework."

120 issues

Decade of Excellence

YES, YOU CAN OWN THEM ALL

Born in the 1950s, PLAYBOY conquered the culture in the 1960s, a fact amply proven in the virtual pages of *Playboy 60s: Under the Covers*. The fully searchable DVD-ROM set collects our every issue from 1960 to 1969. Those were some very good years—1962 alone saw the debut of the *Playboy Interview*, the *Playboy Philosophy* and *Little Annie Fanny*. Including a 249-page book edited by Hugh Hefner, this one is on Santa's own wish list.



bounce pass, press pass

Calling All College Sportswriters

Is the next Red Smith or Frank Deford scribbling away at some two-bit school newspaper? Playboy.com aims to find out with its Search for the Best College Sportswriter contest. Hopefuls should hustle to playboy.com/sportswriter to enter; the winner gets two tickets to the NCAA Final Four and the chance to cover it for Playboy.com. Is there a deadline? Probably, but don't sweat it. Rule number one of sportswriting is that deadlines are to be ignored. *[That was a joke. The deadline for entry is January 1, and it is not to be ignored.—Ed.]*

beats working

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We hired students hungry to crack the media biz and filmed their endeavors. But it wasn't all sipping Playboy Energy Drink (that's Ashley Rappaport from the U. of Delaware) and being tutored on the turntables by Kanye West's DJ A-Trak with Playmate Kelly Carrington (the McLovin stand-in is Wesleyan's Jonathan Golbe). Dream job? You judge. Now, where's our coffee?

 **interns**

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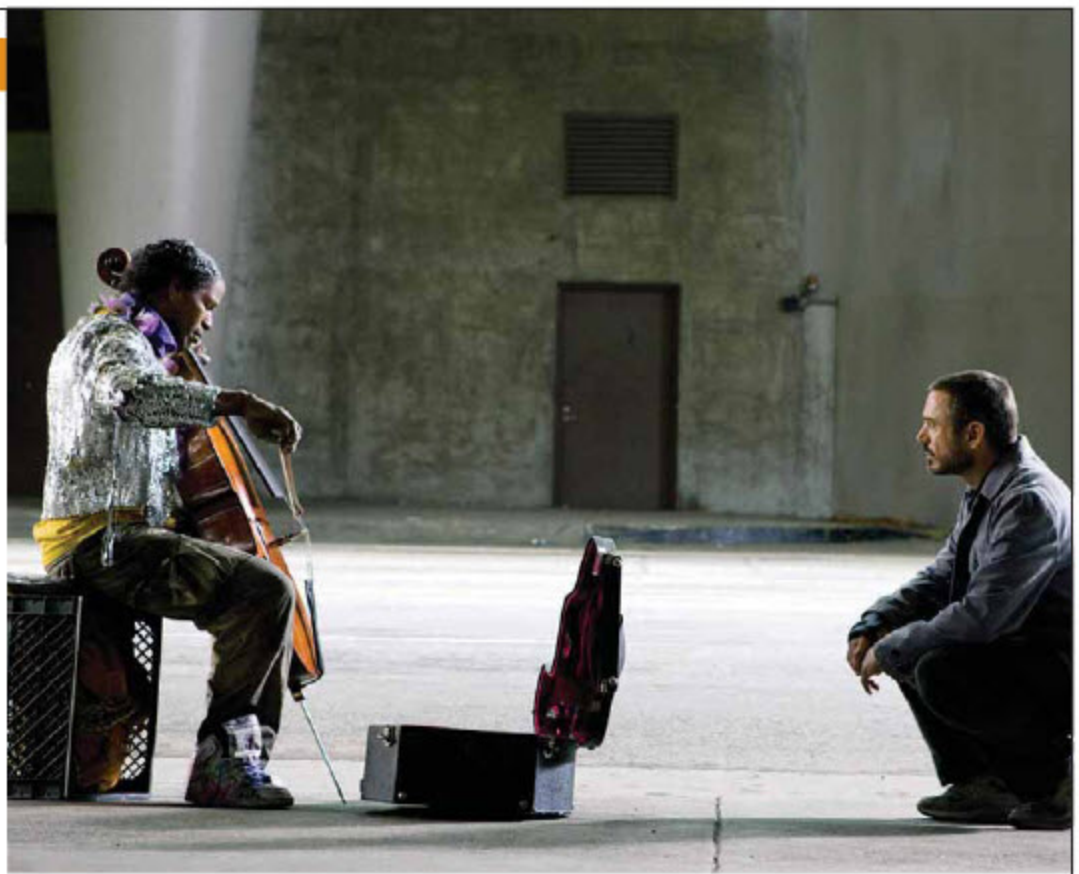
movie of the month

The Soloist

A HOMELESS MUSICIAN FINDS AN UNLIKELY CHAMPION

By Stephen Rebello

Audiences aren't likely to leave the theater unaffected after seeing the new fact-based film *The Soloist*. Jamie Foxx stars as Nathaniel Ayers, a former musical prodigy from Juilliard who suffers from schizophrenia and lives on Skid Row, and Robert Downey Jr. as journalist Steve Lopez, who became Ayers's friend and advocate. "I've always found Downey mesmerizing on film. The fictionalized version of me that he plays isn't me, but it works artistically," says Lopez, who wrote a nonfiction book and a series of columns about Ayers for the *Los Angeles Times*. The writer, who has been compared to such in-the-trenches news guys as Jimmy Breslin, was gratified to see that the project brought out the better angels in the moviemakers. Director Joe Wright spent countless late-night hours sitting on curbs, talking with denizens of L.A.'s Skid Row district, where the film's production offices were headquartered and where as much as half the population struggles with mental illness. Although the real-life Ayers's mental challenges preclude him from watching films, television or JumboTron screens, Lopez comments, "He has been doing well for some months now, and there could come a time when seeing the film would be therapeutic. One of my primary



concerns about the movie was how Skid Row and people with mental illness were going to look. But it shows a tremendous respect and dignity, and it certainly doesn't end with Nathaniel buttoning his shirt, tying his tie and going off to play in a concert. It's a grown-up movie, the perfect combination of art, commerce and social commentary. It's not often you get that from a major studio these days."

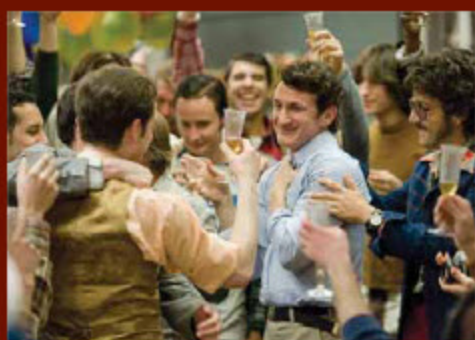
now showing



Frost/Nixon Personalities, tempers and agendas clash when shallow Brit talk-show host David Frost (Michael Sheen) conducts those famous post-Watergate interviews with fallen Republican president Richard Nixon (Frank Langella). Director Ron Howard has a blue-ribbon cast and a razor-sharp, Oscar-baiting script by Peter Morgan. Expect *Frost/Nixon* to score votes with many critics.



Doubt Director and writer John Patrick Shanley's screen version of his Broadway hit casts Meryl Streep as the principal and mother superior of a Bronx Catholic school who in 1964 suspects a priest (Philip Seymour Hoffman) has molested a male student. No sign from above is needed to foresee awards for the actors, including Amy Adams, who plays a nun caught in the cross fire.



Milk Sean Penn and Josh Brolin star as victim and assassin, respectively, in director Gus Van Sant's biographical movie about Harvey Milk. The San Francisco city supervisor and gay activist was slain in 1978 along with Mayor George Moscone—a crime that devastated the city. In a month when Hollywood rolls out pre-Oscar big guns, consider Penn one of 2008's cannons.

flashback

The intelligent, low-key 1951 antiwar film *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, directed by Robert Wise and starring Michael Rennie and Patricia Neal, has been hailed by many, including author Arthur C. Clarke and the American Film Institute, as one of the all-time great science-fiction films. It



now undergoes a 2008-style makeover by director Scott Derrickson that involves a slew of special effects and action sequences and an ecological message—plus stars Jennifer Connelly, Jon Hamm, Kathy Bates, John Cleese and the ever inscrutable Keanu Reeves as the alien from another planet who tries to save mankind from its self-destructive ways. Reeves has played superintelligent philosophy-spouting characters before, but that's no guarantee of quality. This is the actor who gave us *The Matrix*—and *Johnny Mnemonic*.


Heading to the movies? Read critic Stephen Rebello's film reviews at playboy.com.

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A museum display of a wooden sailing ship model with a lit candle. The background features a large painting of a ship at sea and a string of warm white lights. The text is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif font.

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PURITANS REACHED
AMERICA
THE SECOND THING
THEY BUILT
WAS A CHURCH**

THE FIRST WAS A BAR

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For the man who loves women: Vivian Gornick's *The Men in My Life*. A feminist critic catalogs literature's bad boys.

For the man who loves to look at women: *The Book of Olga*. Bettina Rheims photographs an oligarch's hot wife.

For the man who came out of the cold: John le Carré's *A Most Wanted Man*. The master of espionage enters the age of terror.

For your uncle: See Bettina Rheims, above.

For your favorite aunt: John Updike's *The Widows of Eastwick*. The witches return to the scene of their most delicious crimes.

For your favorite militarist: The Great Generals series edited by Wesley Clark. Concise bios dedicated to the genius and missteps of commanders from Jackson to Patton.

For frustrated liberals: *The Wrecking Crew: How Conservatives Rule* by Thomas Frank. A brisk indictment of D.C.

For people who pretend to be smart: *The Moral Obligation to Be Intelligent* by Lionel Trilling. Extraordinary essays from one of our best cultural critics.

For your busted brother-in-law: *Panic: The Story of Modern Financial Insanity* by Michael Lewis. Historical and topical. If it came out a year ago, Paulson might not be stuttering now.

For the fanatic: *Raven* by Tim Reiterman with John Jacobs. The definitive story of the Reverend Jim Jones and Jonestown.

For your bro: *Brocabulary* by Daniel Maurer. Dude-talk glossary: "ho-bot—a chick who's hot but has the personality of an automaton."

For the history buff: *From Colony to Superpower* by George



C. Herring. How the U.S. has been kicking ass since 1776.

For your girlfriend: *The Handjob Handbook* by Marsha Normandy and Joseph St. James. You'd better wrap up jewelry with the book, too.

For fans (and detractors) of Newark: Philip Roth's *Indignation*. A good Jewish boy from Jersey discovers sex in Winesburg, Ohio.

For the design freak: *Le Corbusier Le Grand* by the editors of Phaidon. A stupendous survey of the Swiss designer's work.

For your mother, the pugilist: *Boxing: A Cultural History* by Kasia Boddy. Why the sweet science matters.

dvds of the month

Happy High-Def Holidays

ALL WE WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS ANY ONE OF THESE DISC DELIGHTS

Though there's nothing new on disc from Elvis Presley, it will still be a blue Christmas as more Blu-ray high-definition offerings figure into our list of the season's best. Blu-ray is the better way to experience *Wanted*, which

comes in a limited-edition gift pack with a booklet, postcards and a "bullet-shattered" plastic sleeve.

There's no BD version of the *300 Limited Collector's Edition*, but the package still rocks with a new documentary, a digital copy for your portables, a hardcover book and more. *Indiana Jones:*

The Complete Adventure Collection has the original three movies plus *Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* (only the latter will be available separately on BD). *James Bond* goes Blu this Christmas too, with six of the films available individually or in two three-packs: *Dr. No* with *Die Another Day* and *Live and Let Die*, or *For Your Eyes Only* with *From Russia With Love* and *Thunderball*. *Planet of the Apes* fans will beat their chests for the new *40-Year*



Evolution Blu-ray Collection, a gatefold compendium packed with a glossy book and the five *Apes* flicks Fox produced between 1968 and 1973. The *Dirty Harry Ultimate Collector's Edition* will make your day with all five

films on DVD or BD, the *American Masters* tribute to Clint Eastwood, a book and Inspector Harry Callahan's badge. *Casablanca* also gets Warner Bros.' *Ultimate Collector's Edition* treatment on DVD and BD with seven hours of bonus material and a laser-etched box packed with memorabilia. Fans

will sing the praises of Fox and MGM's *Hollywood Musicals Collection*, a 50-movie set featuring *A Chorus Line*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, *The Sound of Music*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and more. *The Rat Pack Ultimate Collector's Edition* delivers *Robin and the 7 Hoods*, *Ocean's 11*, *4 for Texas* and (for the first time on DVD) *Sergeants 3*, complete with memorabilia and a *Rat Pack* of playing cards. Finally, *The Sopranos: The*

tease frame



Alexa Davalos prepares for her daily grind as a coffeehouse worker in *Feast of Love* (pictured). Catch her next as Daniel Craig's love interest in the indie *Defiance*.

Complete Series has bada bing to spare, with all 86 episodes, three CDs of music and two bonus discs of new retrospective material, all stuffed in a box Tony would proudly display on his mantel. —Greg Fagan

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Paris + Baltimore = Amour

WHAT CONNECTS THEM? BOOTY BASS

In new-music circles, three scenes drew particular buzz this past year: One is the dystopian, primitive eight-bit indie-electro being pumped out of Toronto by bands like Crystal Castles and Woodhands, much of it indebted to local innovators MSTRKRFT and Toronto émigré Peaches; another is the slick 1980s-inflected electropop being generated in Australia and New Zealand by Cut Copy, the Presets, Ladyhawke and other bands for the most part associated with the Modular label. But the heaviest—and most overtly sexual—of the scenes is the so-called Baltimore sound.



It's a floor-shaking, teeth-rattling, speaker-frying, synth-generated boom-boom, simple and fast, akin to what used to be called ghettech. Its signature lyrical style is all about ass—kicking it, shaking it or waxing it. (Check out Spank Rock for a taste.) Of course, all these scenes betray a fondness for Parisian electro house in general and Daft Punk in particular. So it comes as little surprise that Paris loves these scenes right back. Don Rimini (pictured) is a prized

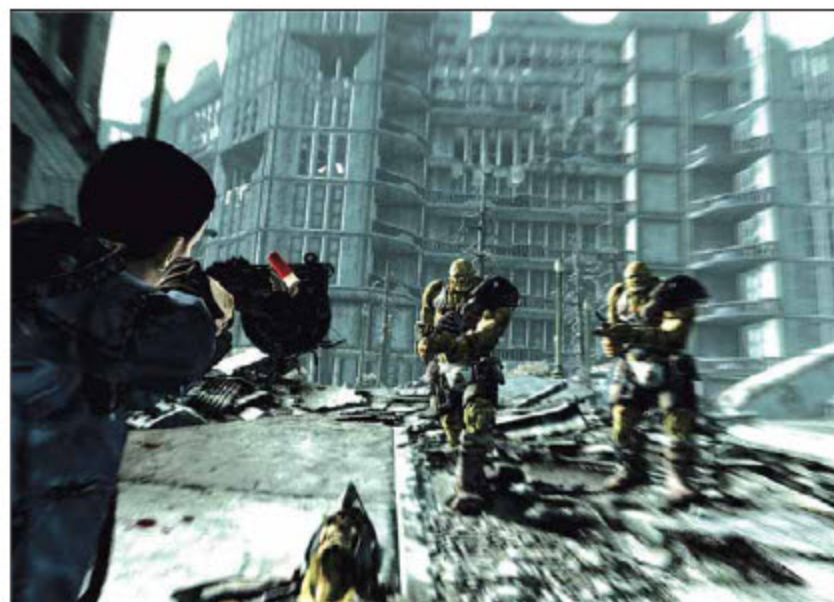
Parisian remixer and DJ whose *Kick'N Run* EP also made waves this year. His tracks are in constant rotation in the DJ sets of MSTRKRFT, Diplo and Busy P (who also happens to be Daft Punk's erstwhile manager). While Don Rimini hails from the City of Light, his sound is all Charm City, crossing the brutal jackhammer utility of straight-up rave music with the funk and swagger of hip-hop. It's like crunk on speed. There's only one way to react to it: *Parté!*

DOWNLOAD A FREE 70-MINUTE DON RIMINI DJ MIX Exclusively for PLAYBOY, Rimini gathered some girls in his studio to inspire the ultimate booty mix, featuring Digitalism, Aaron LaCrate, Young Joc and more.

Donny McCaslin Trio

BRAWNY JAZZ FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

It's tough to play in a tenor trio because musicians have no place to hide and limitations are hard to conceal. The format of tenor sax, bass and drums was pretty much established by Sonny Rollins. But the best examples—like Rollins's *Freedom Suite* and Elvin Jones's *Puttin' It Together*—are defined by great drumming. Donny McCaslin Trio's *Recommended Tools* is no exception, with drummer Jonathan Blake relentlessly pushing the music forward. And McCaslin comes into his own here as a big-league tenor man.



game of the month

The Nuclear Option

POST-BOMB LIFE IS BLOODY GOOD FUN

If you want a friend in Washington, get a dog. *Fallout 3* allows you to do just that, only he'll be helping you forage for food in a postapocalyptic D.C. instead of consoling you after a hard day in the Senate. An improvement in almost every way over its creators' previous offering (*The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion*) and requiring no prior knowledge of the *Fallout* universe, this game is as wide-open as it gets yet tightly tuned for maximum immersion. The paths you take through the thought-provoking scenarios are entirely up to you, whether you choose to solve problems through cunning, altruism or brute force. There's not a goblin or dwarf in sight; rather, you'll deal with everyone from homicidal S&M bandits holed up in an elementary school to the denizens of a frontier town built on an unexploded nuke on the outskirts of D.C. In a year thick with impressive games it's an absolute standout. **★★★★**

—Scott Alexander

The playing doesn't end here. See additional reviews of *Dead Space*, *Call of Duty: World at War*, *Spider-Man: Web of Shadows*, *Mortal Kombat vs. DC Universe* and more at playboy.com.



RESISTANCE 2 (PS3) Three games in one: a single-player story, a separate eight-player co-op story and amazing multiplayer. Plus monsters. Lots of them. **★★★★½**

—Chris Hudak



GEARS OF WAR 2 (360) Bigger battlegrounds, new enemies and weapons and improved multiplayer—plus not fixing what wasn't broken—make this a winner. **★★★★½**

—John Gaudiosi



LITTLEBIGPLANET (PS3) Blurring the line between game player and game maker, this innovative puzzle-platformer lets you make your own levels. Wow. **★★★★**

—Marc Saltzman

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R A W D A T A

SIGNIFICA, INSIGNIFICA, STATS AND FACTS

what they're thinking



According to *Fitness* magazine, **39%** of women have bought a piece of clothing too small for them, hoping to lose enough weight to wear it; **15%** have torn or gotten stuck in such a garment while trying it on in the store; **10%** have cried in a dressing room.

The True Cost of Justice

In California, laws are copyrighted, which means a digital copy of the state's Code of Regulations costs **\$1,556** and a paper version costs **\$2,315**. The state generates about **\$880,000** annually by selling its laws.



Poor Things

21% of Americans with salaries of **\$100,000** or more say they are living paycheck to paycheck.

Talk Is Cheap

29% of Americans who are in a committed relationship lie to their partner about their spending habits.

Yours and Arse

British bed company Silentnight is hedging its butt, having insured the "hypersensitive" buttocks of Graham Butterfield, its official mattress tester, for **\$2 million**.



Sweet By and By

A study of candy bars from eight major retailers found the average confection sat for **140 days**, or about **4.5 months**, before reaching the consumer.

Hour of Need

The average person gets only **63 minutes** of peace and quiet a day.



Drug Money

Researchers at the University of Valencia found that U.S. paper currency carries the world's highest level of cocaine traces, with an average of **3 to 30 micrograms** a bill, depending on the year and city. Some 1996 bills registered more than **1,300 micrograms**.

Sex and Cinema

Among the **250** top-grossing domestic films of 2007, the percentage for which a woman was a cinematographer: **2**; director: **6**; writer: **10**; producer: **22**.



price check

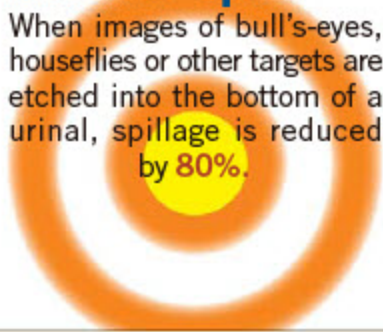


\$910

The amount paid at auction for one bunch of Ruby Roman grapes—a new premium varietal that has been in development in Japan since 1994. That works out to about **\$26** a grape.

Hit the Spot

When images of bull's-eyes, houseflies or other targets are etched into the bottom of a urinal, spillage is reduced by **80%**.



Piece of Mind

The U.S. Army has granted researchers **\$4 million** to develop technology to read a person's thoughts.



Naughty Professor

The National Institutes of Health awarded a psychology professor at Northwestern **\$147,000** to determine whether porn arouses women.



Holding Our Own

According to a survey by Beta Research Group, men masturbate **4.9** times a week on average, compared with **2.8** times for women.

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when you're not listening to music, you can slip into a tranquil haven – where you can relax and enjoy peace and solitude. Clearly, these are no ordinary headphones. It's no exaggeration to say they're one of those things you have to experience to believe.

"It's as if someone behind your back reached out, found the volume control for the world, and turned it way, way, down," reports *TechnologyReview.com*. Bose QC®2 headphones incorporate patented technology that electronically identifies and dramatically reduces noise,

while faithfully preserving the music, movie dialogue or tranquility you desire. We designed these headphones primarily for airplane travelers. But owners soon started telling us how much they enjoy using them in other places to reduce distractions around them. They're excellent for listening to music whether you're on the go, at home or in the office.

"Forget 'concertlike' comparisons; you'll think you're onstage with the band." That's what *Travel + Leisure Golf*



said when these headphones were first introduced. You'll relish the sound of a bass guitar. Or a flute. Or the delicate inflections of a singing voice. The audio is so clear you may find yourself discovering new subtleties in even your favorite music.

"The QuietComfort 2 lives up to its name, enveloping you in blissful sound in the utmost comfort. It's easy to forget they are on your head." That's what respected



columnist Rich Warren reports. To enjoy peace and tranquility, simply turn them on. To add Bose quality sound, attach the included audio cord and connect them to a laptop computer, portable CD/DVD/MP3 player, in-flight audio system or home stereo. They also offer a fold-flat design for easy storage in the slim carrying case.

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A Little English

The U.K.'s sexiest export is poised to conquer America

THESE DAYS IF you have just over six figures to spend, you have a choice of some of the greatest sports cars ever engineered—Porsche's stunning 911 Turbo, BMW's M6 and Audi's R8, for example. Aston Martin is attempting to eclipse the competition with its newly relaunched V8 Vantage (\$120,000). We loved the previous model, so we're thankful designers didn't mess with its impossibly sexy body, muscular hips and glorious roofline. What's new? More power and technology. Ripping into turns on California's snakelike Highway 1 north of Bodega Bay, the Vantage was right at home with its high-revving, front mid-mounted 4.7-liter, 420 bhp V8 (up from last year's 4.3 liters and 380 bhp). It'll blast you to 60 mph in 4.7 seconds (0.6 seconds quicker than its predecessor) and wails on to 7,300 rpm with a thrilling metallic aria. A soul-stirring roar emerges from its oversize quad tailpipes whenever you nail the throttle, and you can hit 180 mph if you've got the stones. The six-speed manual is as smooth as you'd expect, and so is the interior—impeccably finished with aluminum trim and zinc alloy with your choice of mahogany, bamboo, tamo ash or piano-black accents and precisely stitched grain leather. We recommend the upgrade options: the new, improved Sportshift manumatic transmission and the Sports Pack with retuned Bilstein shocks. For more on Aston, go to playboy.com/cars.



Shaving Face

WE FEEL AS if we're going to cut off an ear every time we shave. So we reach for the stuff Van Gogh used to calm down: absinthe. But while Vincent drank the green fairy, Korres's absinthe shave cream (\$22, amazon.com) goes on your face. It blends natural absinthe oils with vitamins E and B₅ to create a rich nonfoaming base for your daily scraping. If the mirror starts talking to you, discontinue use.

About Time

GETTING LOST IN the woods builds character. Too bad future generations will never experience its joys thanks to gadgets like Suunto's X10 (\$550, suunto.com), a "wrist-top computer" that features an altimeter, a barometer, a compass and, incredibly enough, GPS navigation. Load it with waypoints from your PC and it will communicate distance, speed and ETA info as you go. Plus it tracks your actual movements, which you can upload to a computer. If you still crave character, pack some bourbon.





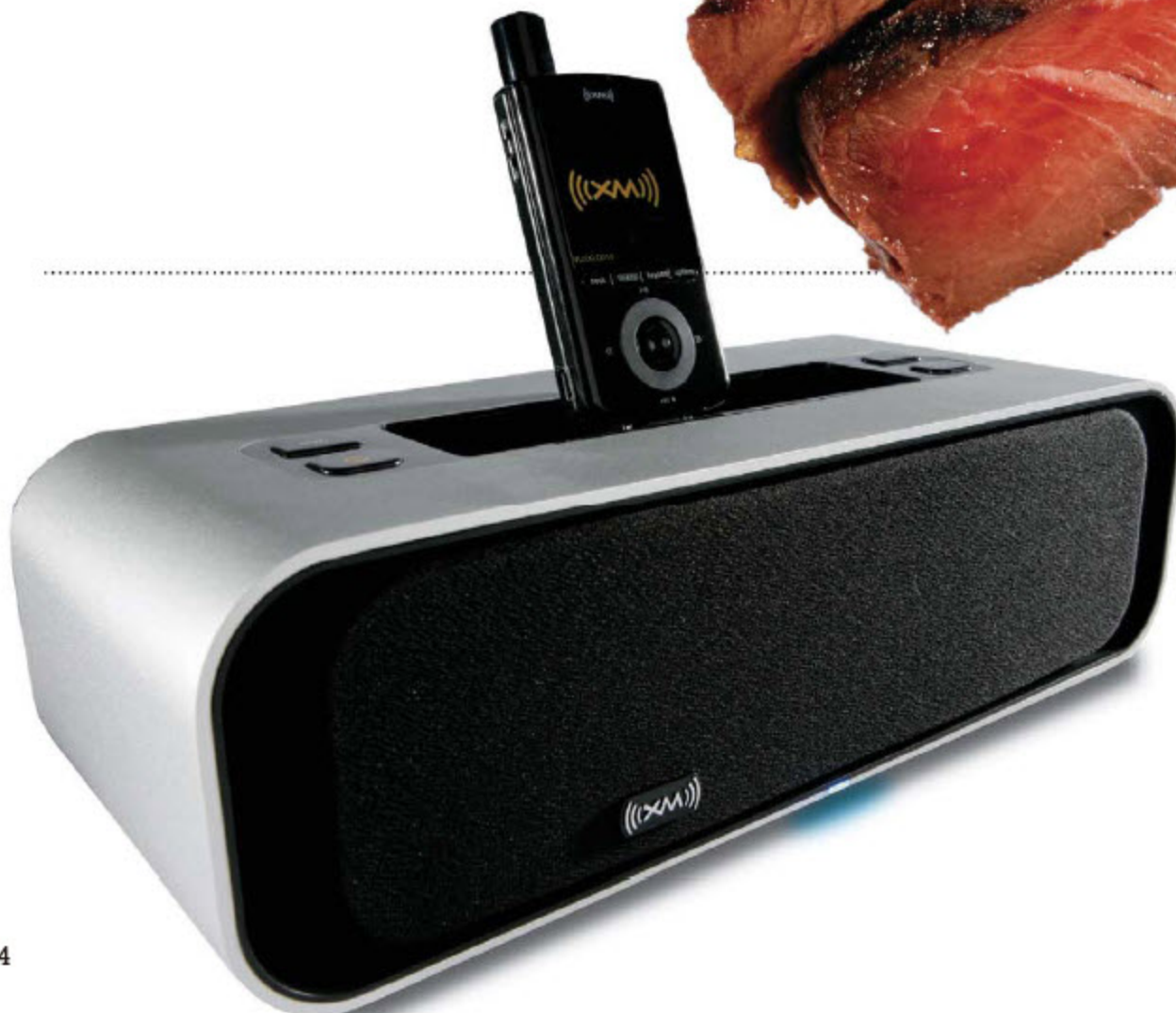
Share the Wealth

PAPER STOCK CERTIFICATES are one of the most splendid artifacts of Gilded Age Wall Street. But their day is over. Indeed, yielding to digital inevitability, 2008 is the last year most companies will issue paper certificates. Which is all the more reason to celebrate them by buying a framed share of your favorite company. Oneshare.com offers actual honest-to-goodness single-share certificates from companies ranging from Playboy (natch) to Anheuser-Busch. Or maybe you would rather own a piece of Martha Stewart. Or Harley-Davidson. Personally, we think those last two make a cute couple.



Next-Day Gourmet

SAL DOWN AT the butcher shop had better watch his back: Our mailman has been trying to take his job with the miracle that is mail-order meat. We like Allen Brothers' never-frozen wet-aged porterhouse steak (two 20-ounce cuts for \$125, allenbrothers.com). Pair it with live Maine lobster from the Trenton Bridge Lobster Pound (four 1.25-pounders for \$130, trentonbridgelobster.com) or, if you're feeling adventurous, some alligator-tail steaks (four pounds for \$51, meatmansteaks.com). They won't bite. You will.



Satellite We Love

AFTER YEARS OF cutthroat competition, satellite-radio giants XM and Sirius kissed and made up earlier this year, merging into a single (and singularly awesome) service. We recommend tuning in the *Playboy Radio Morning Show* (Sirius 198 weekdays from 10 A.M. to one P.M. EST) using the Pioneer XMp3 player (\$280, xmradio.com), which delivers 170 channels to your pocket. What's more, you can record up to five stations at once for later listening and use the onboard storage to hold your own MP3s.



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PALMS



Speed Kills

THE CASIO EX-F1 (\$1,000, casio.com) looks like a normal digital SLR camera. It is not. In fact, this unassuming chassis hides some staggeringly powerful electronic juju.

An ultra-high-speed sensor and a supercharged image processor mean it shoots 60 stills a second and can produce video at 1,200 frames a second. That's fast enough to see balloons collapsing as they pop (or the wild contortions your girlfriend's face makes when she sneezes). Have fun. Don't get slapped.



Romper Room

WHEN YOU CHECK into a hotel, you expect certain things—a bath, a well-stocked minibar, a lack of tigers. What you do not expect is bunk beds, let alone king-size ones. If that detail of the Star Suite in San Diego's Ivy Hotel (\$3,500 a night, ivyhotel.com) makes you think of giggle fits and footie pajamas, please note the room's "performance" pole and the glassed-in shower that becomes transparent at the touch of a button. All of which is to say: Grown-ups have the best sleepovers.

Rain? Sleet? Hail? Ha!

WANT TO KNOW about carrying things? Ask a mailman. The "Original" leather messenger bag (\$795, jcrew.com) is a faithful reproduction of the ones postal workers carried from 1868 until the 1970s, down to the rich hand-oiled leather and hand-set copper rivets. Just keep an eye out for neighborhood dogs—and housewives.



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PLEASE DRINK RESPONSIBLY.

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The Playboy Advisor

My girlfriend read this letter before I sent it to make sure you get both sides of the story. Simply, she wants to give me blow jobs, but I'm not interested. She cannot understand why any guy would decline oral sex. The best explanation I've been able to provide is that I regard blow jobs as a submissive act that's somewhat degrading to women. I'm not turned on by seeing the woman I care about with my penis in her mouth—Jenna Jameson maybe, but not her. She says if she wants to go down on me, that's different from feeling compelled to do it, so I should relax and enjoy myself. I say since I don't enjoy it there are other activities that would be a better use of her time. Because I will go down on her at any opportunity (and stay there until my tongue cramps), she claims I'm all give and no take, which she finds almost as annoying as all take and no give. This isn't tearing us apart, but we've agreed to follow the Advisor's advice: to be or not to be blown?—J.S., Dallas, Texas

We get this question occasionally. We suggest you try the 69 position, which will give you something to take your mind off the demeaning licking and sucking being done to your cock, along with gentle biting, ball tickling and tongue flicking just under the head—a little lower, please—sorry, where were we? You could have a race! Whoever gets off first has to do the dishes. Rather than having your girlfriend on her knees, there are other positions you could try that don't appear so submissive. Lie on your back on the bed, for instance, so she's hovering over you. Take it further and have her tie your hands to the headboard so she can do whatever she damn well pleases. That way it's her desire, not your pleasure—if she wants to suck dick, you'll shut up and take it. (You can tie her down later.) Finally, try an egg timer. She has 10 minutes to suck, so she'll have to hustle before the bell. John O'Hara once offered this explanation of why nearly all men love BJ's: A woman's face is the most intimate part of her body, and she's fucking you with it. That's not demeaning—that's a gift. All this may not change your view of receiving oral sex, but it seems unfair not to let your girlfriend work on her technique.

The vibrator I gave my wife five years ago has provided us with hours of entertainment. Any suggestions for a new one?—J.K., Redlands, California

Doing your holiday shopping? We never thought we would see the day, but vibrators are now "trendy"—and much more expensive than when we browsed the shelves at Jimmy's Smut Shack. We asked Claire Cavanah, co-founder of babeland.com (800-658-9119), for the latest buzz. She seems especially smitten with the \$185 SaSi, which resembles a computer mouse with a soft underbelly and holds a ball that



moves around randomly to simulate a finger or tongue. If a woman finds a sequence she likes, she pushes a button and the rechargeable toy memorizes it. The We Vibe, at \$130, is another Babeland best-seller. One end of the C-shaped, tension-grip vibe cups the clitoris while the other is slipped into the vagina to massage the G-spot. The toy is narrow enough to allow for penetration (that's the "we" part). Elsewhere online you'll find a \$69 vibrator at ohmibod.com that attaches to an MP3 player and buzzes along to the music. Innovative British imports include the Cone (conezone.org), sold for about \$100 at blowfish.com and walgreens.com, and the Toy (thetoy.co.uk), which is £140 (\$250). The latter is an insertable bullet vibe controlled by coded text messages sent to the woman's GSM mobile phone. When she reads the text, she gets a thrill. If you would rather keep it simple, you can't go wrong with a work-horse like the \$50 Hitachi Magic Wand.

I have a shy bladder, meaning I can urinate in a public bathroom only if I am in a stall or alone at the urinals. If anyone is within five feet of me, I can't start a stream (a fact my college roommate thought was hilarious and exploited often). I'm not self-conscious about my penis size and am relatively comfortable being naked in front of people, so I have no idea why my brain interferes with my bladder like this. What can I do to piss normally?—A.V., Austin, Texas

You have a mild case of what is known as paruresis (mild in the sense that you can still pee in a stall or while alone). Believe it or not, there is a group devoted to treating this social phobia, the International Paruresis Association (800-247-3864, shybladder.org). Shy bladder occurs because the fear that others are watching, listening or waiting causes your body to

react as if you were in danger, closing your bladder neck tight so you can escape. Many men trace the problem to childhood incidents when they were teased or told to hurry up, while others experience paruresis for the first time as adults. IPA co-founder Steven Soifer, a professor of social work at the University of Maryland and co-author of a self-help book on the topic, says most men respond to "graduated exposure therapy," in which the patient attempts to pee while a friend stands as far away as necessary; in extreme cases this could be down the street. Over the course of treatment, the friend gradually moves closer until he's at the door, in the room and finally at the next urinal. Antianxiety medication also helps. Shy bladder can be devastating to relationships: A man may find he can't pee when he has a date at his place, or a husband may refuse to take his wife to dinner or go on vacations. It has also caused men to lose their job when they can't urinate for mandatory drug tests.

My girlfriend and I are sophomores in college and have been dating since our freshman year in high school. We have taken breaks to see other people but always get back together. We told each other we love one another and actually meant it for the first time yesterday. I have known I truly love her for quite a while, but she says she doesn't know how long she has felt this way. I have been considering proposing. Should I wait and let this new phase we've entered mature, or should I go for it?—C.S., Indianapolis, Indiana

It's far too early and you're far too young to be contemplating marriage. Enjoy the relationship and see where it goes from here.

I have taken up running and would like to enter a 5K race. What should I eat the night before and on the morning of the race?—M.P., Millersburg, Ohio

The idea behind a prerace meal is to eat foods that are easy to digest and that slowly release energy so you don't fade in the stretch. Nutritionists refer to these foods as low-GI (for glycemic index) because the body stores carbohydrates in a form of glucose found primarily in the muscles and liver. Earlier this year sports scientists in Hong Kong reported the results of a study in which volunteers ate meals two hours before running 21 kilometers on a treadmill. The men ran 2.8 percent faster after eating a low-GI meal (macaroni, apple slices, canned chickpeas, low-fat processed cheese, fruit yogurt and apple juice) than after a high one (baked potato with margarine and tomato sauce, low-fat cheese, Rice Krispies and 7Up). Other low-GI foods include fruit, bagels, pasta and energy bars. Avoid fatty foods such as meat, doughnuts, fries, chips and candy bars, as well as beans, bran, lettuce and broccoli for your own gastrointestinal comfort and the benefit of those running behind you. It's also

important to eat low-GI foods within 15 minutes after you finish to restore the carbs you've burned. Keep in mind that hydration is a separate issue: Your prerace meal is less important prior to a 5K or 10K than a marathon, but making sure you drink enough water is crucial no matter how far you run.

I find myself attracted to a she-male who lives nearby. She has invited me over for drinks, and I am scared and excited at the same time. Should I accept the offer? Does this mean I'm bisexual? I'm confused, to say the least.—A.J., Miami, Florida

Your confusion is understandable, but many straight men tell us they find themselves lusting after male-to-female transsexuals in transition, a.k.a. chicks with dicks (converting the penis to a vagina is among the last, and most expensive, steps of the process). Some are excited by the idea that the woman has a "surprise" in store; others are simply aroused by the taboo of hooking up with someone most people unjustly shun. Your curiosity doesn't necessarily mean you're bisexual, just adventurous. Maybe this is only us, but we would be fascinated to hear about the challenges of her life and the reactions she gets.

Every time my girlfriend and I have intercourse she wants me to get her off afterward by rubbing her clit. It's not that I hate doing it, but it takes 15 to 30 minutes. If I don't rub her clit, she gets mad and starts blabbing about how sex isn't fair. Is this typical of most couples? I had never heard of getting the girl off every time until I started dating her. I think most guys don't do that for their girls. Am I right?—C.H., Las Vegas, Nevada

Ah, youth. Of course a woman should get off every time she has sex, once if not multiple times. Penetration usually doesn't do the trick because your erection isn't directly stimulating her clit, which is why God gave you a tongue and fingers. If you find yourself wanting to hit the pillow after your climax, make sure she comes first. You need to buy her a vibrator—we mentioned the Hitachi Magic Wand earlier—which will not only save time but prevent carpal tunnel syndrome. For most guys, it's an incredible turn-on to watch their partners climax, and with a more generous attitude you may find you get off more often too.

I bought a pair of python-skin cowboy boots on eBay. How do I know if I bought a durable pair? (I don't even know what durable means with cowboy boots.) And how do you care for snakeskin?—C.A., La Jolla, California

Reptile-skin boots generally aren't worn every day, since the leather is much thinner than cowhide or goatskin and therefore more easily scuffed or torn. Snakeskin also yellows with exposure to light, so it should be stored in the dark, such as in a closet. Steve Dyck of TimsBoots.com (800-771-4214), based in El Paso, wears his python-skin boots once or twice a week (he had his bullfrog-skin boots on when we spoke). Dyck suggests wiping your new boots with a damp cloth whenever

you take them off to prevent any dirt or grime from working its way under the scales. Apply a thin coat of Bick 4 leather conditioner every three months. Reptile-skin boots should not be allowed to stand wet; if you get caught in the rain, wipe off all the moisture you can and let the boots dry away from direct sunlight. Properly cared for, a quality cowboy boot can last through at least three or four resolings.

A 28-year-old reader wrote in August asking about the risks of taking Viagra to maintain an erection. I'm surprised you didn't suggest he use a cock ring, which prevents blood from leaving the erection. It can even be placed over a condom.—M.L., Whiteville, North Carolina

That is a good suggestion, though a cock ring should never be worn for more than about 20 minutes (don't fall asleep with it on). The ring, which can be made of rubber or silicone (or for advanced users, metal), fits behind the scrotum and up and around the shaft; this prevents it from slipping off during penetration. Latex and silicone rings must be put on before you are hard, so they are not conveniently paired with a condom. However, a leather ring with snap closures can be placed on an erection and allows for an easy escape (freddyandeddy.com sells one for \$12). Take the ring off immediately if you feel numbness or pain. A ring shouldn't make your erection any larger. If it does, that's called swelling, and it's too tight. Note to C.H. in Vegas: Some silicone rings have tiny vibrators attached to stimulate the woman's clit during penetration.

A reader wrote in September asking if there is a single test to check for the most common STDs. While there isn't one test, you can be tested for gonorrhea, chlamydia, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, syphilis, herpes and HIV by providing a single blood and urine sample through our newly launched website at JustGetTested.com. The fee is \$180. We also offer tests for specific STDs, starting at \$35. After placing your order, you visit a nearby LabCorp or DSI lab to provide the samples; your results are then posted within 48 hours in a password-protected online account. Our service is available in every state except California, New Jersey, New York and Rhode Island.—Andrea Daniels, Fort Myers, Florida

Thanks for letting us know. While JustGetTested.com promises to keep your results confidential (and would certainly suffer financially if it didn't), keep in mind that the information is not protected by federal privacy laws as it would be if stored at a doctor's office or clinic.

Would it be rude for my fiancée and me to ask our wedding guests to help pay for our honeymoon? How would we present this idea?—R.S., St. George, Utah

You can't ask for cash; that's rude. However, you could set up a honeymoon registry through resort chains such as Marriott, Starwood and Sandals or websites such as honeyluna.com, travelersjoy.com and [.com. You'll probably need to buy airline tickets and book your room far in advance of the wedding, so guests essentially contribute money to pay you back. But they can also help upgrade you to first class or treat you to excursions, massages or dinners on the beach, among other gifts. The sites send you a check about a week before the wedding, minus a service charge of about seven percent, while resorts provide gift cards or credits.*](http://distinctivehoneymoons</i></p>
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I love my girlfriend and would never cheat on her. Before we met I used to get erotic massages while traveling on business. I love having naked women rub me down from time to time. I would like to continue this practice but am worried about being arrested during a sting. How can I protect myself?—L.P., Atlanta, Georgia

We believe you're overlooking something.

In September a reader wrote because a woman he is seeing asked him to come up to her apartment for "two minutes" and then after two minutes kicked him out of bed. By suggesting he give her another chance, you went far too easy on her. She's a classic cock tease, using sex as a weapon, and that type of woman never changes. He should move on.—S.L., Seattle, Washington

Perhaps, although there appears to be some method to her madness, since the reader admits he can't stop seeing her.

Women delay sex as a way to get emotional support; his date is trying to ensure he won't bolt as soon as she gives in. Ironically, sometimes the best approach is "We'll wait to have sex until you're ready." This makes her feel secure, and it reflects a confidence women find attractive.—A.V., Lancaster, New York

You may be onto something. By ceding control, you take control. We'll add it to the playbook.

I've seen films in which a man sucks his own cock. Has a woman ever gone down on herself?—R.L., Hudson, New York

We're betting no. Even a contortionist can't bend far enough to reach her clit. Some men can get the job done only because the road rises to meet them. There are a few photos online that purport to show autocunnilingus, but they are grainy or obviously doctored. We suspect if this could be done, you would have seen it on video by now, from multiple angles.

*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. Our greatest-hits collection, *Dear Playboy Advisor*, is available in bookstores and online.*



THE PLAYBOY FORUM

WE CAN'T MAKE IT HERE

WE'VE SHUT DOWN OUR FACTORIES AND ASSUMED A NEW ECONOMIC MODEL. BUT WHY ARE WE SO SURE IT'S THE RIGHT MOVE?

BY KEVIN PHILLIPS

What's not to like about a country lucky enough to have financial services as its biggest industry?" asks the 30-something bank executive in all seriousness. "It's profitable and prestigious, and there's no acid rain or pollution."

The young and naive may agree, but older Americans are dubious. Isn't it dangerous to have an economy that relies on moving money around but doesn't really make anything? This would have been a worthy election debate this year, but it would have been a more fitting discussion back in 2000 or 1996. That's because the domination of the U.S. economy by financial services rather than manufacturing is now a fact. The transition occurred quietly during the 1990s with no trumpets or explanations.

Back in the 1970s we were still a smokestack and production-line nation, and manufacturing represented more than one quarter of the gross national product. Financial services—not an everyday term then—accounted for only 10 percent to 12 percent. These days we use a slightly different yardstick, gross domestic product, within which manufacturing has shrunk to a paltry 12 percent. Financial services is the economy's new Goliath, representing about 21 percent of our GDP. The transformation has been as momentous as the upheaval in the late 19th century when railroads and manufacturing superseded agriculture. In the kerosene-lamp era, though, we had a vociferous national debate that held sway over several presidential elections, in particular the contest of 1896. But not this time. No one bothered to tell the people. Congress never had a vote. Some years back former Federal Reserve Board chairman Alan Greenspan said it was no longer clear the nation needed manufacturing to be prosperous. But uncertainty lingered that a major nation could prosper by shifting to financial services. Indeed, history argues it can't. Such a transformation should have triggered national soul-searching. Shamefully, it was accomplished by stealth.

So let us take stock, however belatedly. When the U.S. was the world's leading producer and exporter of manufac-

tured goods, from the end of World War II until the 1970s, the greatest beneficiaries were the millions of blue-collar workers who rode that preeminence to a middle-class lifestyle unmatched by that of industrial workers in the rest of the world. Bolstered by the U.S.'s position as the world's top energy producer and consumer, that lifestyle expanded to include automobiles and single-family homes that were far beyond the reach of ordinary households in other nations.

The decline of manufacturing and the rise of finance, by contrast, has produced a different set of circumstances. Parts of the old Great Lakes industrial region are now the



rust belt, where once-proud manufacturing towns have become economic ghettos. In the meantime, financial services has created a much more bounteous but also far narrower prosperity sphere: The percentage of American wealth and income in the hands of the top one percent has ballooned while the wages and take-home pay of median households have stagnated. Two

parents now go

to work, whereas one sufficed in the long-ago 1950s. Finance has been a cause as well as an effect. To a considerable extent, elements of U.S. manufacturing would have migrated overseas once technological advances made it possible to open up cheaper production in China, Southeast Asia, India, Mexico and South America. Still, the government's preoccupation with supporting finance also played a role. During the 1980s even as Washington rejected proposals to support technology and promote value-added manufacturing, it intervened to bail out banks, private overseas loans, wastrel savings-and-loan institutions, foreign currencies important to U.S. investors, careless hedge funds and now—once again—arrogant and careless banks and brokerage firms. The Federal Reserve was also on hand to drop interest rates and provide cheap liquidity to misbehaving financial institutions. No other industry benefited from this kind of government assistance and preference.

The second major ingredient in the rise of finance in the 1970s and 1980s was rampant consumerism and the growth

of the debt and credit industries. That doesn't mean just banks, brokers and investment banks; it includes credit-card issuers, auto-loan makers, consumer finance companies, mortgage lenders and other specialized firms. Debt and credit went from being a consumer temptation to a giant industry. As household, corporate and domestic borrowing rose, so did the percentage of our GDP represented by financial services. Finance ate the U.S. economy as the combined public and private outstanding debt grew from \$7.4 trillion in 1984 to \$44.7 trillion in 2006. Only \$4.9 trillion of that was federal government debt—mortgage, consumer and private borrowing blew up the rest of the debt balloon.

Unfortunately, the growth of financial debt and innovation in the 1990s and 2000s produced a degree of toxicity that dwarfs anything ever discharged by the chemical industry. The collapse of the tech-based stock bubble between 2000 and 2002 destroyed \$7 trillion in market value. But by then Washington was already dropping interest rates to fuel a new bubble in housing, with the help of new varieties of exotic and unsafe mortgages now summarized in one expletive: *subprime*. Should U.S. home values during 2008 and 2009 fall 20 percent from their



What killed America's factories?

previous peak, some \$4 trillion will be destroyed. The financial panic that began in August 2007 was sparked by another set of unsafe financial instruments falsely given triple-A ratings. By no means were all these instruments flawed, but sorting out the bad paper wasn't easy. The unprecedented mountain of

U.S. debt was starting to look shakier and shakier.

How were financial institutions allowed to run amok? Partly because of financial innovation that slowly turned banking and brokering into the stuff of casinos, partly because of deregulation voted by a Congress that had been bought by the financial sector and partly because of an overly powerful but near-negligent Federal Reserve Board that was too friendly with the industry it supposedly regulated.

This kind of misbehavior is unacceptable in a sector large enough to dominate the U.S. economy. The sad thing is the warnings of world history were all too clear. Finance is not a so-called sunrise industry ready to usher advanced nations into a world in which money can be moved around in lieu of producing anything real. On the contrary, financialization has been a dangerous deception that beckoned other leading economic powers at their peak—Spain when it was gorging on New World gold and silver in the 16th century, Holland when New York was New Amsterdam, and the British Empire before World War I. Debt and securities grew, but ultimately such weakened economies could no longer bear the debt burden and a new economic power emerged, invariably one that still believed in work and industry. The odds are that the financialization of the U.S. economy will also be a negative milestone, not a brave new world of postindustrial ease and luxury.

Kevin Phillips is author of Bad Money: Reckless Finance, Failed Politics and the Global Crisis of American Capitalism.

BLOWING BUBBLES

OUR CURRENT FINANCIAL CRISIS IS NOT WITHOUT PRECEDENT. HERE'S WHAT CAN BE DONE TO HELP AMERICANS

By Robert J. Shiller

Most people find it difficult to gauge the seriousness of our current financial crisis because they don't see its causes. The crisis really started with three speculative bubbles: in the stock market in the 1990s, closely followed by another in housing and a third in the oil market.

It is a curious fact that the Great Depression was preceded by the same three bubbles. We all know about the 1920s stock-market bubble, the bursting of which we call the crash of 1929. But most people today don't know there was also a real estate bubble that burst in 1926; since its epicenter was in Florida, it was known as the Florida land bubble. Many people don't know there was an oil-market bubble, then sometimes called the fuel folly. In 1929 Pennsylvania-grade crude-oil prices briefly surpassed \$4 a barrel—a record since the immediate aftermath of World War I—only to drop to \$1.30 a barrel by 1933.

This is not to say history will repeat itself with another Great Depression, but it is evidence of the possibility that economic euphoria can wind down, and the winding down, depending on institutions and government policy as well as human psychology, can take place over a span of many years. The euphoria of the Roaring Twenties was only gradually ground down into the pessimistic thinking of the Depression. It takes a long time for popular thinking to change so dramatically.

While the phrase *speculative bubble* is commonly tossed around, we are still ill prepared to predict or even recognize a bubble. Bubbles are caused when people become overly influenced by speculative price changes and start to base their investment decisions on the assumption that price increases will continue.

Price increases in the stock market may incline people to feel wealthy and spend more money on all sorts of products, which drives up the profits of corporations that sell those products. These rising profits are interpreted as evidence of a strong economy, and this seems to justify further stock-price increases. The cycle repeats itself again and again.

Price increases in the housing market encourage people to buy new homes, and this fosters construction booms and the aggregate economy. The rising economy is seen as justifying rising home prices; expecting further price increases, people bid up home prices even more. The cycle repeats.

When oil producers expect price increases (or at least fairly steady prices) in the oil market, it reduces their urgency to develop reserves to meet demand. They won't lobby hard to get the government to ease environmental restrictions on their production. As long as prices are expected to be even higher tomorrow, suppliers would rather defer the sales of their reserves, which they can sell at a higher price later. Thus, oil prices rise, often begetting even more expected oil-price increases. Once more, the cycle repeats itself again and again.

Confidence in all these markets has shown some amazing upward spurts since the 1990s. Many individuals and

financial institutions borrowed to take double or triple advantage of the price increases. Unfortunately, the high rate of price increases was unsustainable. Indeed, they had to break sometime. When price increases break, the extra impetus for a strong economy is removed and may not return for many years. In fact, it won't be back until the enthusiasm returns, and that may be a long time.

The leveraged positions will still be there and may be slow to be resolved. For example, approximately 10 million home owners in the U.S. now owe more on their mortgages than their homes are worth. Some of them will default on their mortgages; others will likely curtail their spending. The government appears unwilling to bail out most of these people. The Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 will help no more than 400,000 home owners facing foreclosure.

Public opinion is slow to adjust. The housing market may be slow for years as some people desperately hold on to the value they thought was theirs and refuse to sell. This holding-pattern behavior and diminished confidence may mean we will be in for years of slower economic growth.

From a long-term perspective, probably the most important thing to do is improve the financial institutions that allowed these bubbles to get so big. Fortunately, we will have a new president and a new Congress that may be willing to make

long-term changes. The impact of the bubbles has been worsened by a general level of ignorance about the risks of leveraging and of the benefits of doing just the opposite: hedging risk. We need to improve the transparency and flow of information to investors and make it easier for them to hedge their risks.

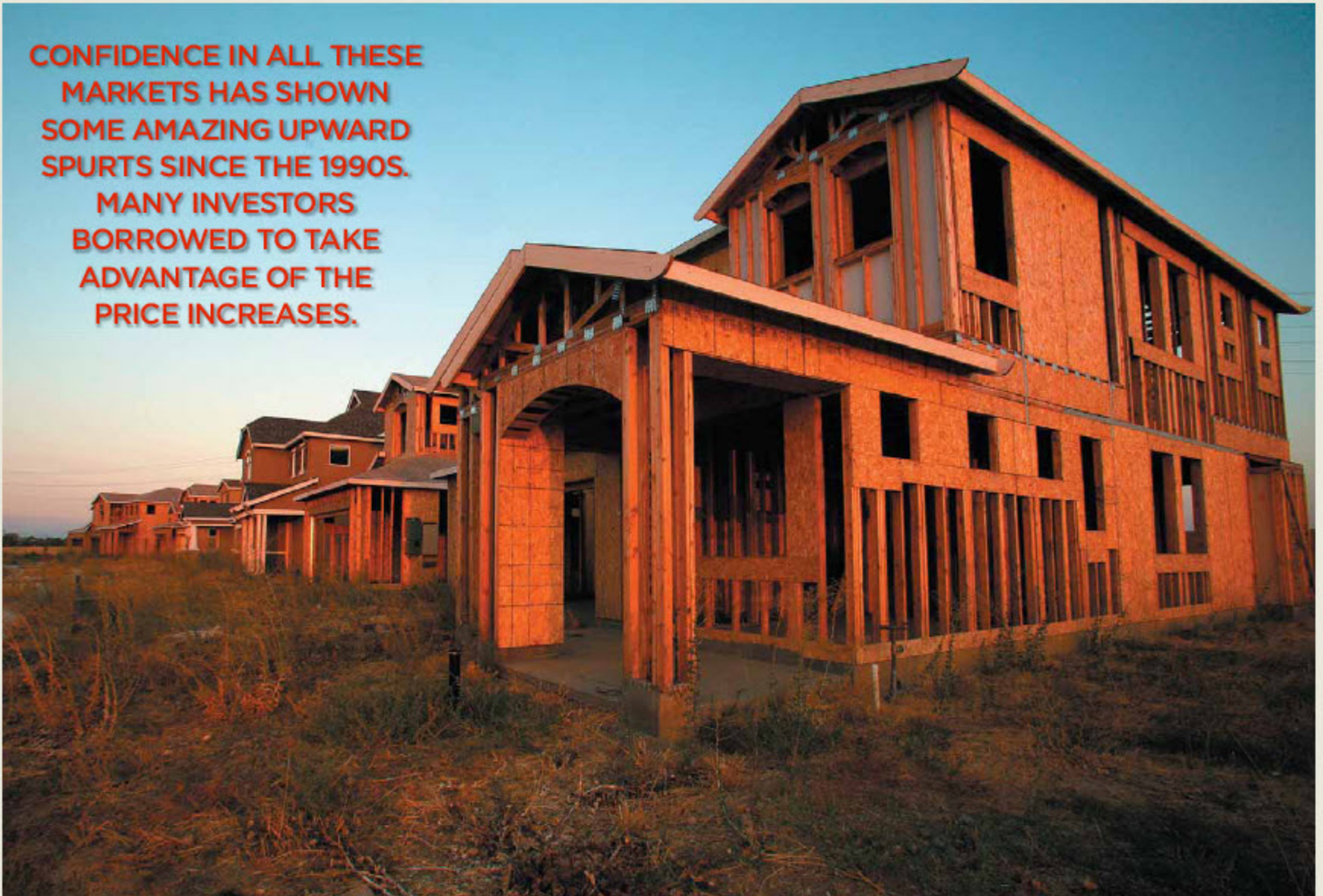
The government today subsidizes medical advice through Medicare, Medicaid and other programs, but its subsidization of financial advice is limited to tax deductions, which help only the wealthy. Honest financial advice is actually just as important as medical advice; without it, people can get drawn into leveraged positions at the time of a bubble. The government needs to launch consumer-protection programs that prevent people from getting taken in by other parties acting in bad faith.

The private sector needs to develop hedging instruments so people can reduce their exposure to risk. Instead of being encouraged into leveraged investments via home mortgages, people should be encouraged to insulate themselves against the effects of speculative bubbles. If people do so en masse, it will discourage those bubbles from developing in the first place.

Robert J. Shiller, professor of economics at Yale, is author of Subprime Solution: How Today's Global Financial Crisis Happened, and What to Do About It.



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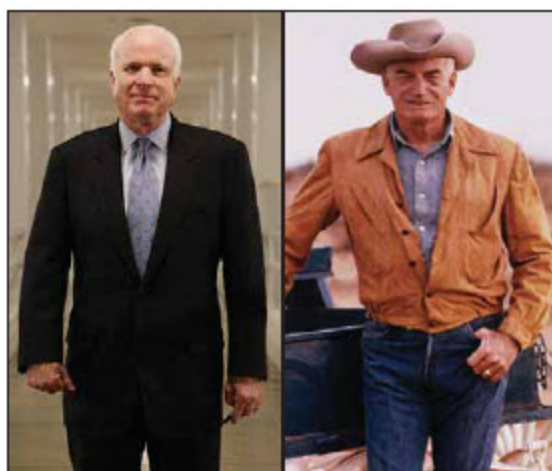
READER RESPONSE

THE REAL MCCAIN

John W. Dean's "The Real McCain" (September) is revealing. So revealing, in fact, I urge *PLAYBOY* and Dean to put it out there on the Internet, in newspapers and anywhere conservatives can read it. Any vote deflected from McCain is a vote for a better America.

Fred Weiss
Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin

Dean takes a shot at McCain for wanting to be president ever since he



John McCain pays lip service to Goldwater.

returned from Vietnam. I do not see the problem with an American hero striving to become the leader of the free world. Wasn't our country founded on the idea that anyone can grow up to be president of the United States? Dean also knocks McCain by saying he "has never worked for any employer other than the federal government." Neither did Eisenhower (except for right after high school), and look at what he accomplished.

James Hazzard
Portage, Indiana

For a man concerned with a candidate's record, Dean includes very little in the way of fact. He says McCain pushes for "chest-pounding" domestic government in Washington, whereas Goldwater favored local autonomy. This ignores McCain's long-standing devotion to the issue of states' rights. As a case in point, in 2004 he broke with Bush and his party and gave a speech on the Senate floor against a federal ban on gay marriage, saying it was an issue for states to decide. His record shows he voted against that and many similar issues on the grounds of limiting Washington.

Chris Beasley
Lansing, Michigan

After reading his essay, I can't help but think the only reason Dean would actually praise Goldwater's conservatism is because McCain is aligning himself with his political philosophies. After all, Goldwater was the most loathed conservative, next to Richard Nixon, during the 1960s. Goldwater was a segregationist throughout that decade and a staunch supporter of bombing North Vietnam back to the Stone Age with nuclear weapons. I would expect to see high marks for Goldwater's legacy in *National Review*, but *PLAYBOY*? I agree with Dean that McCain is no Barry Goldwater but not because of McCain's lack of public service.

Aaron Rogers
Boulder, Colorado

By hiding behind his hagiographic treatment of Goldwater, Dean must think he can deflect attention from his own ethical deficiencies. Nothing is more comically ironic than Dean's characterization of McCain as "an ends-justify-the-means fellow." This from a guy who was referred to as the mastermind of the Watergate cover-up and convicted of multiple felonies, then had his jail time reduced only when he turned star witness.

Al DeSantis-Whitaker
Baltimore, Maryland

CIRCLING THE WAGONS

Our government is allowed to operate solely by the consent of the governed ("Fortress Washington," August). I believe we have forgotten this. When people talk about the travesty the American political system has become, they forget every one of us is responsible



We're intimidated by our own government.

for it. Fortress Washington exists only because we as a nation have allowed it. U.S. citizens can be held indefinitely

without charges, phones are being tapped, and your rights and means to seek redress for any of these ills are gone. No one seems to care. As long as we are "protected" from terrorism and can watch our favorite reality show and bury our head in the sand, people will stand aside and allow the raping of Lady Liberty to continue, leaving it up to our "representatives" to stop it.

Eli Thompson
Phoenix, Arizona

I was frustrated by the truth of Mickey Edwards's words. As a law-abiding taxpayer, I don't think I'm alone when I say I'm fed up. America should be angry.

Christine Gamsky
Tigerton, Wisconsin

LIVE AND LET LIVE

I must offer my congratulations to *PLAYBOY*. You are the only major publication with the wisdom to understand



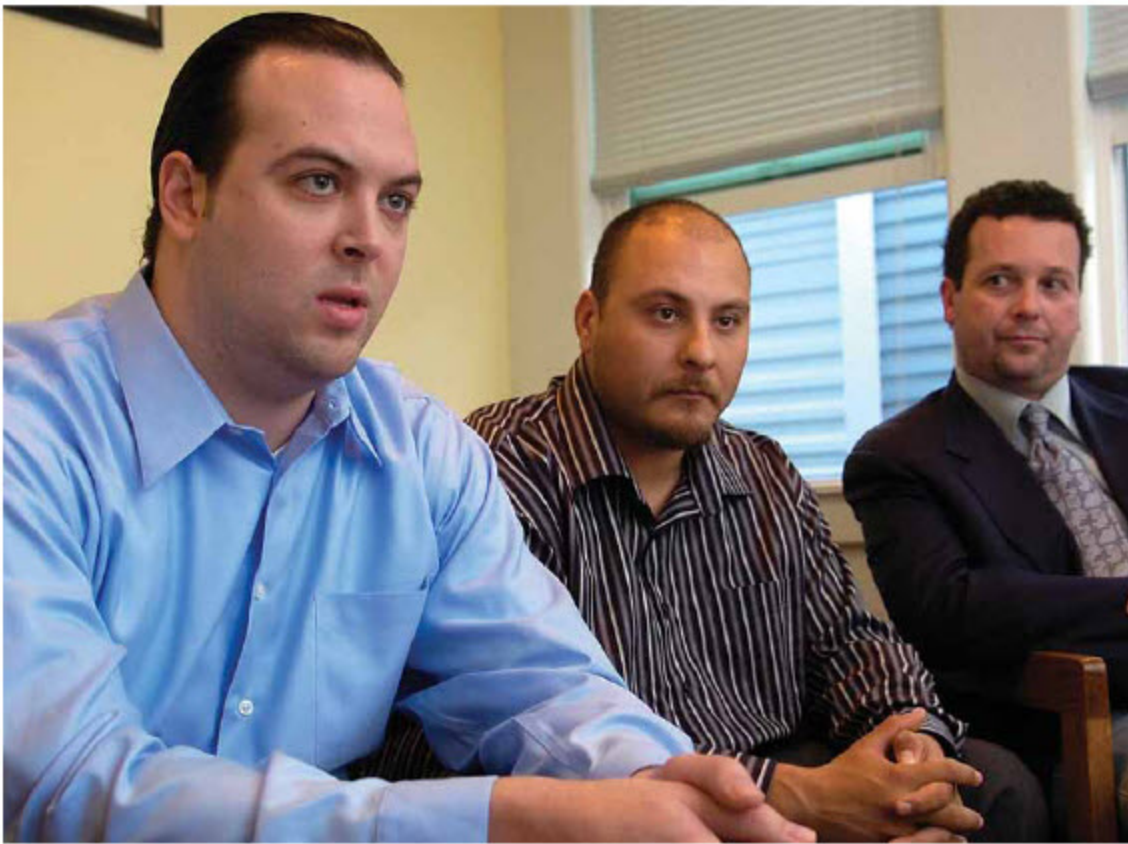
Libertarian candidate Bob Barr on the stump.

that the Libertarian Party remains the last hope of saving our great country ("Libertarian Platform," September). I say this as a nobody who has suffered for more than 35 years from the failed policies of the two major parties. I'm probably on some FBI list of subversives because I subscribe to *PLAYBOY*. I don't own a gun, I'm not gay, I don't use drugs, and I don't make love with anyone except my wife. I realize, however, that just because I do things that way doesn't give me the right to interfere with the right of other responsible adults to make their own choices and enjoy doing these things.

Charles L. Shaw
Liverpool, New York

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

NEWSFRONT

**Low Times**

FRESNO—Republican administrations always talk about states' rights and shrinking the role of the federal government. Then, of course, there is their record. The discrepancy between rhetoric and record was put in sharp contrast this summer when Luke Scarmazzo and Ricardo Montes were convicted on eight counts in a federal trial stemming from the 2006 bust of their Modesto medical-marijuana dispensary—a facility permitted under California state law. Scarmazzo and Montes maintain their California Healthcare Collective complied with state law, paid taxes and verified doctors' recommendations before all marijuana sales. As Jessica Santos, a friend of Scarmazzo's wife who collected signatures on gopetition.com to protest the use of minimum-sentencing guidelines in the case, said, "Why do we even waste time, money and resources voting if, ultimately, it never matters in the end? Luke is going to serve time in prison until he's 55—for running a business that was legal in our state."

Arrested Development

WASHINGTON, D.C.—In mid-September the FBI released its annual Uniform Crime Report, revealing that arrests for marijuana offenses hit a record high in 2007 at 872,721. Amazingly, nearly 90 percent of those arrested—775,138—were charged with possession only. In addition, almost three quarters of those arrested were under the age of 30. "These numbers belie the myth that police do not target and arrest minor cannabis offenders," said NORML executive director Allen St. Pierre. "This effort is a tremendous waste of criminal-justice resources that diverts law enforcement personnel away from focusing on serious and violent crime, including the war on terrorism." The number of marijuana-related arrests in 2007 dwarfed the number of all violent-crime arrests combined in the same year.

Big Apple Is Watching

NEW YORK—Plans to turn downtown New York City into a surveillance state are moving forward. The Lower Manhattan Security Initiative and the related Operation Sentinel are modeled on Lon-



don's Ring of Steel, an intricate network of cameras and traffic modifications designed to allow the monitoring of all cars in the city. The New York version would link 3,000 cameras and use mobile roadblocks. Stephen Graham, a geographer at Durham University, postulated that these measures are paralleled "by military strategies that increasingly treat the 'inside' spaces within the U.S. and the 'foreign' ones in the rest of the world as a single integrated 'battlespace' prone to the rapid movements of 'terrorist' threats into the geographical and urban heartlands of U.S. power at any instant." The New York Civil Liberties Union has filed a lawsuit seeking additional information about the passive surveillance. "A plan of this scope, expense and intrusiveness demands robust public debate and legislative oversight. The public has a right to this information," said NYCLU director Donna Lieberman.

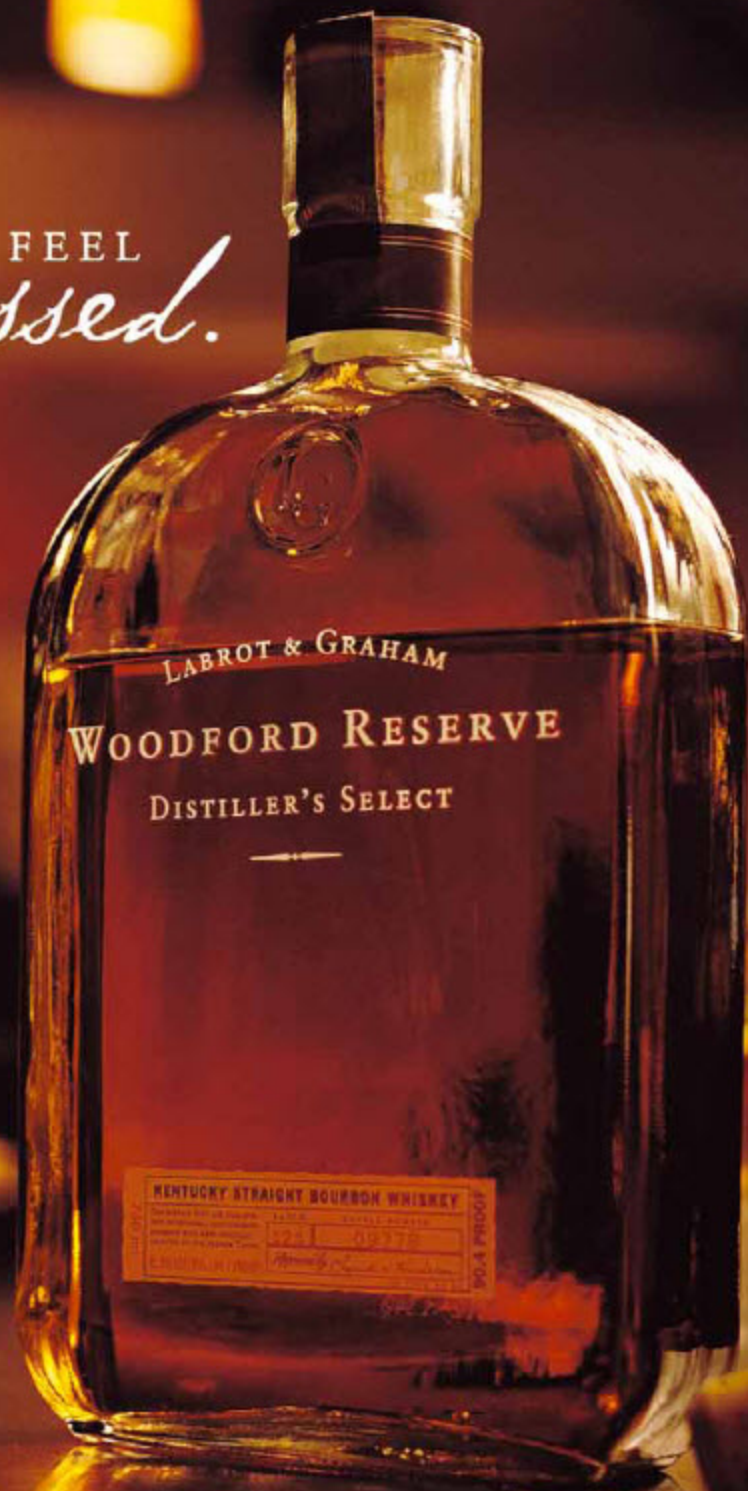
Snoop Dogs

WASHINGTON, D.C.—An overhaul of FBI operating procedure announced in September will allow agents to conduct physical surveillance, solicit informants and in-

terview acquaintances of people they are investigating at a much earlier stage than previously allowed—and without approval from supervisors, without opening an investigation and without any suspicion of a crime having been committed. According to *The Washington Post*, the changes "also would rewrite 1976 guidelines established after Nixon-era abuses that restrict the FBI's authority to intervene in times of civil disorder and to infiltrate opposition groups." Particularly disturbing is the relaxing of requirements needed for FBI agents to use informants inside domestic opposition groups and to monitor large-scale demonstrations. Why does all of this matter? Take the case of the Republican National Convention Welcoming Committee, an anarchist group that had planned to protest at this year's Republican convention in St. Paul. Eight of its members—American citizens all—were arrested and charged with a felony, "conspiracy to commit riot in the second degree in furtherance of terrorism." But the arrests took place *before* the convention, based on what the police theorized might happen. The evidence? Information from paid informants.



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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW:

HUGH JACKMAN

A candid conversation with the Broadway star turned action hero about life down under, Wolverine's dark psyche and why dancers get all the girls

At a time when Hollywood is trying to broaden the list of stars who can open big-budget films, 20th Century Fox is betting heavily on Hugh Jackman. He stars alongside Nicole Kidman in *Australia*, a Baz Luhrmann-directed film that is not only the biggest movie ever shot in Jackman's native country but also the most ambitious period romance since *Titanic*.

Jackman plays a cattle driver pursuing a privileged widow who needs him to move cattle across the wide-open acreage of Australia's north country. At stake is a ranch left to her after the abrupt death of her husband. Though steeped in Aussie history—from the disastrous World War I battles that decimated the country's youth to the forced relocation of half-caste aboriginals to a Japanese attack in World War II—Australia is the type of old-fashioned epic studios rarely produce anymore.

Not that Jackman is any stranger to blockbusters. He returns in May with *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* as the growling, steel-taloned title character in a prequel that will be one of the summer's major releases and, Jackman hopes, the start of a new franchise in which he calls the shots as producer.

Jackman is already the showbiz equivalent of the five-tool baseball player. He plays drama, comedy and action like Will Smith, George Clooney and Leonardo DiCaprio, and he has turned in a Tony Award-winning performance as the singing and dancing gay

Australian showman Peter Allen, in *The Boy From Oz*. Though Jackman failed when he produced CBS's musical TV series *Viva Laughlin*, he's producing a remake of *Carousel* and will likely next star on Broadway in *Houdini*, a high-profile musical written by *Spy* magazine founder Kurt Andersen and scored by Danny Elfman, the *Oingo Boingo* frontman turned composer for Tim Burton films.

"Hugh is a true musical star on Broadway, but what Nicole needed was a real man tall enough to sweep her up in his arms, throw her on the bed and ravish her," said Luhrmann. "I can't think of another actor, ever, as versatile."

The 40-year-old Sydney-born Jackman is the youngest of five children of Chris Jackman and Grace Watson. When Jackman was eight, his mother abruptly returned to England, leaving the children to be raised by their dad, an accountant for Price Waterhouse. A jock who studied journalism in college, Jackman didn't realize his song-and-dance gifts until his 20s. He used \$3,500 left to him in his grandmother's will to enroll in the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts in Perth.

Jackman soon began working in local film and TV roles. Cast as a tough prisoner in the Aussie TV series *Correlli*, Jackman fell for his on-screen love interest, *Deborra-Lee Furness*. They married in 1996 and have adopted two children, Oscar and Ava.

Jackman became a major player at the age of 30 with his first Hollywood role, *Wolverine* in *X-Men*. When *X-Men* became one of the first superhero films to reach blockbuster status, Jackman followed with two sequels and starring roles in *Swordfish*, *Kate & Leopold*, *Van Helsing*, *The Fountain* and *The Prestige*.

PLAYBOY sent Michael Fleming, who most recently interviewed Matthew McConaughey, to catch up with Jackman. Fleming reports, "Over thick steaks in a favorite Jackman haunt that overlooks surfers hanging 10 at Sydney's Bondi Beach, Jackman revealed himself to be a terrific storyteller, as accommodating as people say he is on movie sets. Locals claim Jackman is already the most popular homegrown movie star, but if *Australia* and *Wolverine* score, he's positioned to become something Hollywood finds in short supply: a real leading man."

PLAYBOY: You straddle a line between action hero and Tony-winning star of stage musicals. Why is the hetero male of the species so afraid to dance or sing?

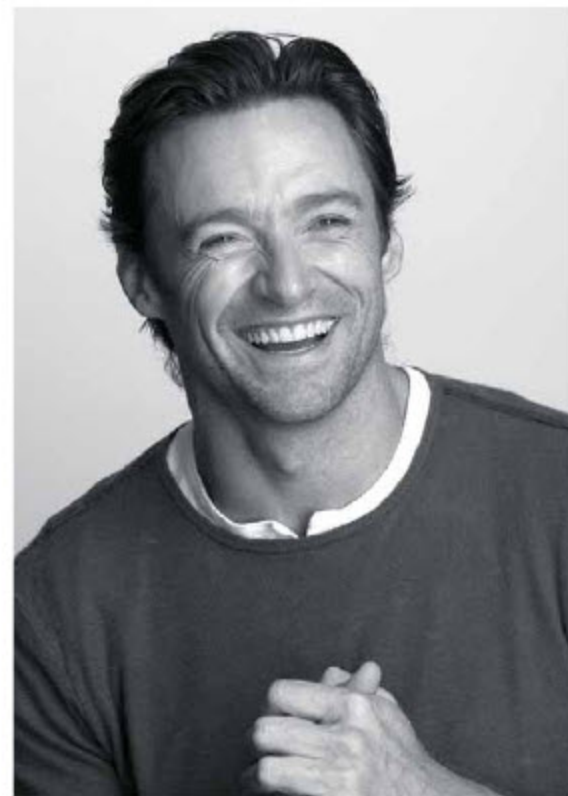
JACKMAN: Nowhere is that more prevalent than in Australia. In England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales it's cool to go to a rugby or soccer match and just sing out. Not in Australia. I remember wondering, Why are we so inhibited? Why, when all the girls are in the middle



"You go to Cuba or Argentina and watch the way the men dance. It's incredibly heterosexual, and everybody does it. You see short, older, fatter guys with the hottest women because they're such great dancers."



"I was singing, thinking, Wow, I'm peeing my pants. I thought, These red tights must be waterproof. I was laughing as if I had gotten away with it. But the audience was looking at me funny. It had seeped through, and the audience could see it."



"Once a woman ran down to the front of the stage while I was doing the show. She said, 'Hugh, I've always wanted to do this,' and lifted her top. She had these massive tits. I just laughed and said, 'I'm glad you got that off your chest.'"

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES FISHER

of the dance floor, are all the blokes standing there, holding their beer and, maybe, rocking a little bit.

PLAYBOY: How much of a ribbing did you take when you began dancing?

JACKMAN: When I was 12, after a school concert a teacher said, "Hugh, you've actually got some dancing ability. You should get some lessons." I came home and told my dad, who said, "Sure, no problem." My brother overheard and said, "Oh, you bloody poof." I never went. He apologized to me later when we went to see a show together. He said, "Oh man, all those years I could have been cleaning up with women." But I was a total chickenshit. I was the jock. It makes me incredibly sad. To this day I don't consider myself a dancer because I missed those vital years. My brother, at the age of 33, gave up being a sports journalist to do musical theater.

PLAYBOY: Have *Dancing With the Stars* and *American Idol* made the world safe for singing and dancing?

JACKMAN: I've seen only a few episodes of *Dancing With the Stars*, but it looks great. Still, I don't see a lot of guys lining up, so it hasn't made a dent. I love watching *American Idol* because I'm an actor who fell into singing, and it terrifies me and puts me totally on the contestants' side. Singing has always had a pull for macho guys because of the rebellious rock-and-roller. But you go to Cuba or Argentina and watch the way men dance. It's incredibly heterosexual, and everybody does it. You see short, older, fatter guys with the hottest women because they're such great dancers. The incredibly stupid part is, guys who dance in clubs pick up more girls. How cool did Christopher Walken look dancing in that Fatboy Slim video? When Lady Di went to America for the first time at the height of her fame and they asked what she wanted to do the most, she said, "I want to dance with John Travolta." If that wasn't a signal for every red-blooded male out there...

PLAYBOY: When did you pick up on the signal and turn your attention to theater?

JACKMAN: I didn't start seriously until I was 23 because I wasn't sure I had the balls to go, "Yeah, I'm an actor." I knew all my mates would have given me shit about it. In Australia you get shit on for everything. I guess it's a sign of affection.

PLAYBOY: When you're singing and dancing onstage, what kinds of things go wrong?

JACKMAN: Something happened in one of the first performances of *The Boy From Oz*. Peter Allen was famous for dancing on top of the piano. He treated it like the

vault in gymnastics—jumped all over it. I'd dive across the top of this long grand piano, finishing in a position where I'd be like lying across it, going *ta-dah!* We'd been doing it for a month, and one night as I slid across, I knew I was going too fast. It was the slipperiest surface ever, and I went straight on the floor, literally front and center. I got up, laughing hysterically. The audience loved it. I stopped the band and said, in character, "Okay, I don't know what they're mixing with the cleaning fluid. Jason, get out here!" Jason was from the stage crew, and he was terrified. I said, "Jason, mate, you're cute, but listen, I almost broke a bone. What did you clean this with?" He said, "I cleaned it with water," and I said,



I've been told by PR people, "Oh man, you're too open. You're never going to be a movie star."

"Bullshit, show me." I made him take off his little tool belt and take a run at it." He went right off the piano, and the audience went nuts. That was the beginning for me, as Peter Allen, of breaking the fourth wall with the audience. I built it into the show and pulled Sarah Jessica Parker, Sean Combs, Eric Clapton and Steven Spielberg up onstage.

PLAYBOY: Are you always able to cover the mistakes?

JACKMAN: No. In London I did *Oklahoma!* It has a dream ballet in which the girl falls asleep dreaming of dancing, and I had a dance number with a ballerina. I was terrified of it. On the first night, Mary Rodgers and all the people from the Rodgers and Hammerstein Organization

were there. This girl was an unbelievable dancer, and I was lifting her all around. At the end of the number is this very complicated lift in which I twist her and she finishes like a swan, up on my shoulder. I was so pumped with adrenaline that I lifted her straight over my back and she landed hard. She was wearing a tutu, and her legs were in the air—not a good look for even the most graceful ballerina. Of course, my mike was on, and I went, "Oh shit, sorry," and that boomed out.

PLAYBOY: Didn't you wet your pants once during a musical number?

JACKMAN: Oh God, yeah. When I was Gaston in *Beauty and the Beast*, I started getting headaches every day. I went to a specialist who said, "Mate, you're dehydrated. Drink two liters of water." I drank three. I'd just gone to the bathroom, but waiting in the wings, I was like, Bloody hell, I need to go again. I thought, I'll be all right. The number featured Belle and me; I chased her around the stage, lifting her up, dragging her, singing the whole time. Then I realized, No way. I was sucking in air, trying to sing and dance. I picked her up, and I realized I peed my pants a little. The very last note is a big-time F-sharp, front and center. You have to release certain muscles to hit it, the same ones that allow you to hold on when you have to go to the bathroom. I thought, Shit, if I sing this note, I'm going to pee my pants; if I don't, I'm going to be humiliated. The actor in me took over.

PLAYBOY: How noticeable was it?

JACKMAN: I was singing, thinking, Wow, I'm peeing my pants. When I finished, I immediately turned upstage, looked down and couldn't see anything. I thought, These red tights must be waterproof. I was laughing as if I had gotten away with it. But the audience was looking at me funny. It had seeped through, and my pants were completely

wet. The audience could see it.

PLAYBOY: Twentieth Century Fox had a rough summer in 2008, and it desperately needs a hit. *Australia* and next summer's *Wolverine* will in large part determine if the studio regains its mojo. Has fellow Aussie and studio head Rupert Murdoch made you feel the pressure?

JACKMAN: Rupert and I see each other a fair bit, and he always asks me how it is. I love that about him. Twentieth Century Fox is one part of his massive business, but he's still that kid who wants the inside skinny. *Australia* is a risky proposition, but it's important to him beyond the numbers.

PLAYBOY: Why?

JACKMAN: Movies like this are not made very often. The last successful one was

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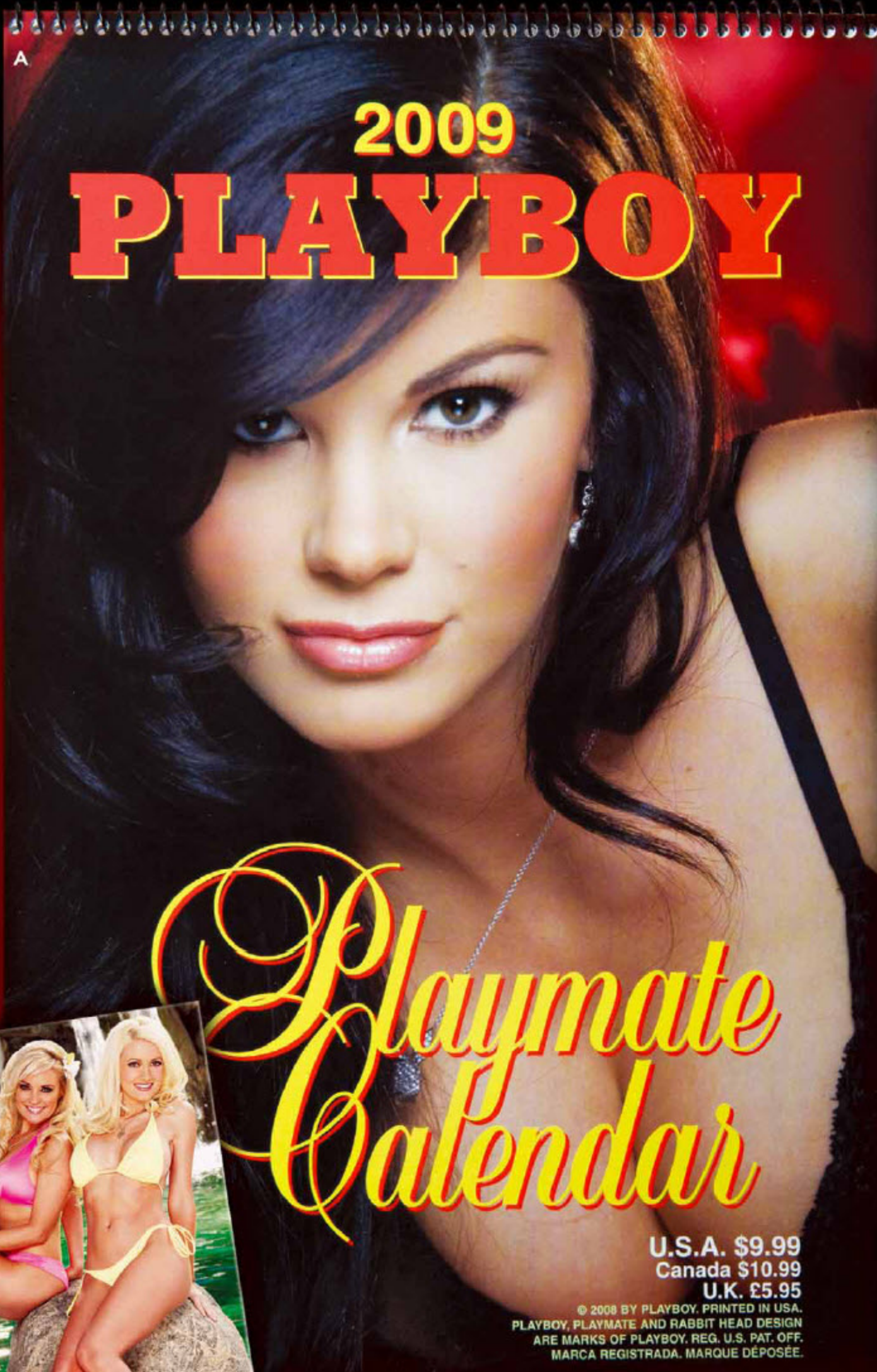
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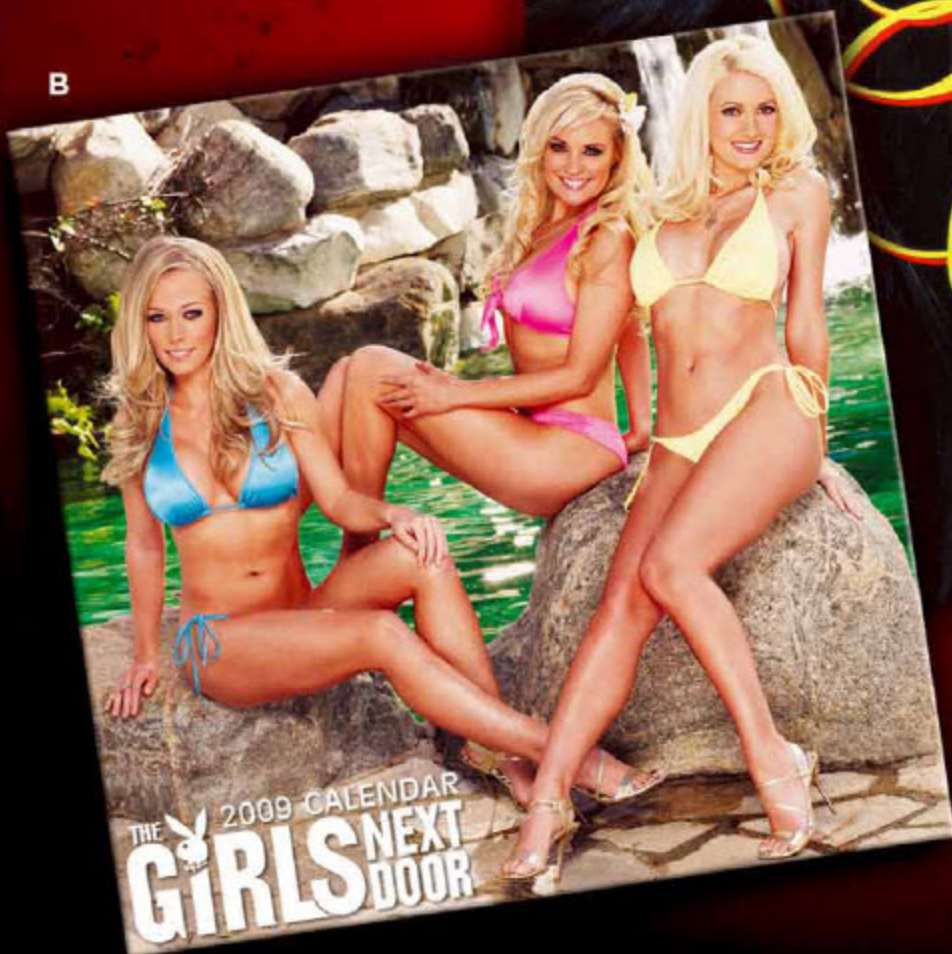
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Titanic. There hasn't been anything as massive in the old-school-epic genre, but for Rupert the stakes are higher. He's a proud Australian who has a movie called *Australia*. He has a cattle farm he goes to all the time.

PLAYBOY: Baz Luhrmann said you were nearly stampeded by a herd of horses during the filming. How dangerous was it?

JACKMAN: It was terrifying. We had 200 brumbies, real wild horses our horse guys had rounded up—crazy horses that had never had a saddle on them. I was on a trained horse, but they have a pack mentality, and even trained ones get drunk with freedom when they run with their mates. So I was absolutely flying during this scene in which the horses stampeded. Some strings were supposed to guide the horses into a corral. Out of the corner of my eye I saw some horses break away. About 100 were coming right at me. You know the theory that horses don't step on people in a stampede? It's not true.

PLAYBOY: Did you get stepped on?

JACKMAN: Almost. The horse was rearing up, scared shitless like me. I thought, We're going over and we're getting trampled. I closed my eyes, hunkered down and pulled him with all my might to face the oncoming horses. Because of that, they went around us. Then I jumped off the horse because I could feel he wanted to go with the crowd, and he did. A few years of my life flashed before my eyes.

PLAYBOY: Is that the closest call you've had on a movie?

JACKMAN: I've been very lucky not to have any major injuries, but I came off the horse a lot on this one. The first time I learned how to rear the horse—

PLAYBOY: That's when you pull him up on his hind legs?

JACKMAN: Uh-huh. It's not that difficult, but they came out with a motorcycle helmet and a full motorcycle jacket. I was in an enclosed yard with soft sand, and I'd been riding a long time. I said, "Guys, this is a little humiliating." They said, "Just wear it. You never know. It's an insurance thing." First time I reared the horse, he snapped his head back so fast and hard that his spine and neck caught me right on the helmet and knocked me clear off. On video it looks as if I'm being yanked off by a cable. I landed on my back; I was seeing stars. If I hadn't had that ridiculous motorbike helmet on, I would've cracked my head open. There's a rule in riding that you have to buy a bottle of whiskey for everyone on the team if you get thrown off your horse, unless you can say "Just taking a piss" before you hit the ground. I was at least five cases of whiskey in before I really got it.

PLAYBOY: Nicole Kidman seems a bit delicate for a rough shoot like *Australia*.

JACKMAN: Oh no, no, no. You're right that Nicole's incredibly glamorous. I've known her for a long time. Even at casual

The Aussie A-List

The road to the top has often started down under

Russell Crowe's parents were movie-set caterers in Australia, but it wasn't until he failed at a pop career with the single "I Want to Be Like Marlon Brando" that he concentrated on acting. He made it to Hollywood by way of *The Quick and the Dead* and then received Oscar nods for *The Insider*, *Gladiator* and *A Beautiful Mind*. Crowe's phone-throwing prowess is genetic: His two cousins are professional cricket bowlers. When **Nicole Kidman** was 16 she starred in an Australian holiday movie, *Bush Christ-*

mas, and instantly received Aussie film and TV roles. She met Tom Cruise on her second U.S. movie, *Days of Thunder*, and by 2006 she was the highest-paid actress in the U.S. The late **Heath Ledger** had range: The Perth-born actor broke through with the romantic comedy *10 Things I Hate About You*, then played a young American in *The Patriot*, a gay cowboy in *Brokeback Mountain* and our favorite Joker in *The Dark Knight*. **Cate Blanchett** was born to a teacher and a

U.S. Navy officer in Melbourne, yet few people play royalty better—in both *Elizabeth* as the title role and in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy as Queen Galadriel (yes, she bronzed her prosthetic elf ears). **Mel Gibson** was born in New York, but his father moved the family to Australia to dodge the Vietnam draft. After studying drama in Sydney he was cast as Mad Max, and the rest—box-office dominance, racist rants, awards, whacked religious beliefs, *Chicken Run*, DUI and philanthropy—followed. —Rocky Rakovic



barbecues she always looks like a million bucks and has a great sense of glamour. But Nicole is also an incredibly tough girl who wants to do every stunt. Her first day out she was wearing a three-piece woolen suit. It was 125 degrees, and we were standing in the sun in the middle of the day for a long time. I rode up, looked over and said, "Are you okay?" and she went, "Yep, fine." I said, "If you weren't okay, would you tell me?" and she said, "Nope." She doesn't play that "Oh, poor me, I'm just a girl."

PLAYBOY: Australia's a hatchery for movie stars. Besides you and Kidman there's Russell Crowe, Mel Gibson, Cate Blanchett and Heath Ledger. Is there a shared quality?

JACKMAN: I'm always amazed at how different we all are. I would add Geoffrey Rush, Toni Collette, Rachel Griffiths, Guy Pearce and Eric Bana to that list. It's hard to put us all in the same basket, but a couple of things may set Australians apart on the whole. We like to take risks. In sports, if you win but play it safe, Australians will go for the other team. Our teams are built on offense because attacking is more exciting than defending. You look at Cate Blanchett taking

on Katharine Hepburn in a Martin Scorsese film or what Nicole and Russell and the others do—it's all about risks. We're also very well trained by the time we hit America. We've had a few films under our belts and made our mistakes. I was 30 before I made my mark. When you start out famous in America, you don't have that luxury.

PLAYBOY: What do you think of Ledger being touted for a posthumous Oscar for *The Dark Knight*?

JACKMAN: I've been working so much I haven't seen it yet, but he was a phenomenal actor who made things look frighteningly easy. At his daughter's first birthday party I had a great conversation with him that I found really inspiring. He hadn't worked in 18 months but said he was playing the Joker and was nervous. I didn't blame him, following Jack Nicholson. When I asked if he was antsy about not working, he said, "It's the opposite for me. I don't want to go to work until I feel I can't wait to wake up and get to do my job." He was totally driven by the creative spirit, a character actor who happened to be unbelievably good-looking and have some leading-man qualities.

PLAYBOY: Why is Hollywood having such

a hard time finding the next Tom Cruise or Harrison Ford?

JACKMAN: Will Smith is as big as Harrison ever was. He's bold and takes on all different things, and then he releases a hip-hop album. People I know who've worked with him say if he has to do a presentation, he works so hard to make the work look invisible. Brad Pitt has done pretty damn well. It is harder now than when studios built stars and protected them. Actors now have freedom and quite often shoot themselves in the foot. The media have a more voracious desire to know everything, and maybe that removes some of the mystery. Even Harrison hardly did anything at the top of his career.

PLAYBOY: You mean press-wise?

JACKMAN: Yes, press-wise. When Will does, he knows what he's doing, knows why he's doing it and is prepared. That's my approach. At the end of the day you're an entertainer. You may divert into politics or whatever your personal conviction is, but you shouldn't stray far from the elemental factor that people want you to entertain them. No matter how much you make, you're still the court jester.

PLAYBOY: Cruise was on top for 20 years until his career suffered from proselytizing about Scientology. Would you censor yourself if honesty meant harming your career?

JACKMAN: Look, I told you before that I pissed my pants. I'm not a particularly private person, probably to my detriment. I've been told by PR people, "Oh man, you're too open. You're never going to be a movie star." I don't want to live my life that way. My job is to pretend to be someone else, but I don't have to do that outside my job.

PLAYBOY: You are often compared to Clint Eastwood. How does he feel about your being the new him?

JACKMAN: I did *Swordfish* for Warner Bros., and Clint's a Warner guy. We went to ShoWest, the Comic-Con for exhibitors, in Vegas. I was not a star at that point. We were lining up backstage, and in front of me was Sylvester Stallone. I was like, Holy shit, Rocky's in front of me. I look behind, and there was Clint Eastwood. My heart really dropped. I thought, What do I say? This is *the* man, Dirty Harry! And he's really tall! So I turned and said, "Hi, Clint, my name's Hugh," and we shook hands. And then I said, "Listen, mate, I'm not sure if you've seen *X-Men*, but people who have say I look a bit like you." Of course, what could he say to that, anyway—some schmuck in front of him saying, "I look like you"? So he said, "You're holding up the line, kid." I turned around: Stallone had already gone onstage, and I was just holding up the line. I was humiliated, but later I thought, Did he deliver a great line or what?

PLAYBOY: Is it fair to say he didn't know who you were?

JACKMAN: [Laughs] Absolutely. Funny enough, since that moment he has made about eight films, and I haven't had one call, either.

PLAYBOY: You surprised the Comic-Con crowd in July by appearing with *Wolverine* footage. What's it like courting a convention of people dressed like Storm Troopers and X-Men?

JACKMAN: It's as close as a film actor will ever come to feeling like a rock star. You walk out on that stage before 7,000 amped people, and the energy's overwhelming. Back in 2000, people high up in the industry told me to book another job before *X-Men* came out and ruined my career. It was my first Hollywood film. I owe my career to that crowd. In July they didn't know I had come, and it was a risk to show footage because we had just wrapped and they dissect everything.

PLAYBOY: There's no Magneto, Professor X or Storm this time. What does the prequel *Wolverine* bring to the table?

JACKMAN: As a producer I'm much more involved, and my mantra is "Exceed expectations." We take the character back to his roots, make him more of a badass.

Comic-Con is as close as a film actor will ever come to feeling like a rock star. You walk out on that stage before 7,000 amped people, and the energy's overwhelming.

I got in better shape than ever. I wanted Wolverine to be lean, not pretty—the way De Niro is in *Cape Fear*. You remember when you saw him in that convertible, smoking cigars and then without his shirt, doing chin-ups, with those tattoos. You were like, Oh shit, I'm scared as hell of this guy. That's what I wanted.

PLAYBOY: How hard did you train for *Wolverine*?

JACKMAN: I beat my record on the bench, which is about 300 pounds. I was eating a lot of protein, thinking, What is this doing to my heart? I added an extra 1,000 calories a day to my diet, a lot of meat. I ate very bland food: beans, chicken, steamed brown rice, steamed vegetables. And then no rice. The food kept coming every two hours, and I felt stuffed and almost depressed from eating. But when I popped, my energy level went through the roof. I'll never have Schwarzenegger's massive chest, but Wolverine's look is lean, veiny.

PLAYBOY: Besides superhero movies becoming cash machines, what about playing Wolverine sparked you to do it a fourth time?

JACKMAN: He's cool. He's his own man in that Clint Eastwood–Mel Gibson way. As dark as it gets this time, he's still fun. I wanted the film to be more violent so you feel the hits, like in *The Bourne Ultimatum*, and think, That actor actually caught one right there. Liev Schreiber plays Wolverine's archenemy, Sabretooth. Liev's a physical guy who could have played pro football. We worked out together and became competitive on everything down to diet. We just punched the shit out of each other.

PLAYBOY: You met your wife when the two of you starred on a TV prison drama and shared steamy scenes. Do you recall when life imitated art?

JACKMAN: Oh yeah. Well, I developed a crush on her. I thought, Oh, this is embarrassing. My first job, she was the leading lady—what a cliché. Deb was a big star, one of those larger-than-life people, and everyone on the set was in love with her. So I avoided her for a week, trying to get past it, and then I invited her and a few cast members to a dinner party. Mick Jagger was in town, and Deb always has a mobile phone right there with her, and it's always on. The phone rang, and it was a friend of ours calling from the back of a limo with Mick. "We're right outside your house, and Mick says let's party." She said, "Hang on a sec," and she told me. I'm a huge Rolling Stones fan, and Mick Jagger's outside *my* house. I said, "You've got to go, now." She said, "Tell Mick I'm having dinner with Hugh Jackman," and she put down the phone. Not long after I confessed my crush, she told me she had a crush on me, and we were making out in my kitchen.

PLAYBOY: What's the most aggressive come-on you've gotten from a woman?

JACKMAN: I've had some pretty full-on ones. Once during *The Boy From Oz* a woman ran down to the front of the stage while I was doing the show. She said, "Hugh, I've always wanted to do this," and lifted her top. She had these massive tits. I just pissed myself laughing and said, "I'm glad you got that off your chest." I've had the usual weird things—underwear, all kinds of stuff.

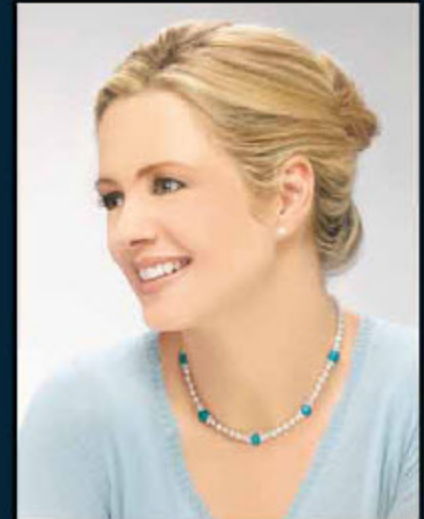
PLAYBOY: How awkward was it to show passion in love scenes with Nicole Kidman, your wife's ex-roommate and one of her best friends?

JACKMAN: Deb's thing is, "I'm fine with it, but don't shove it in my face." Nicole's her mate, so that was no problem. Deb did surprise me by turning up on the set of *Swordfish* as I was filming a scene in which I have a gun to my head, I'm getting a blow job under the table, and I'm trying to crack a code on a computer. This wasn't an easy scene to act, with an actress under the table, pretending to give me a blow job while I've got dialogue. To make it seem real, I said to the girl, "When you're under there, occasionally pinch me on the inner thigh, really pinch me, and that will kind of remind me what's happening while I'm

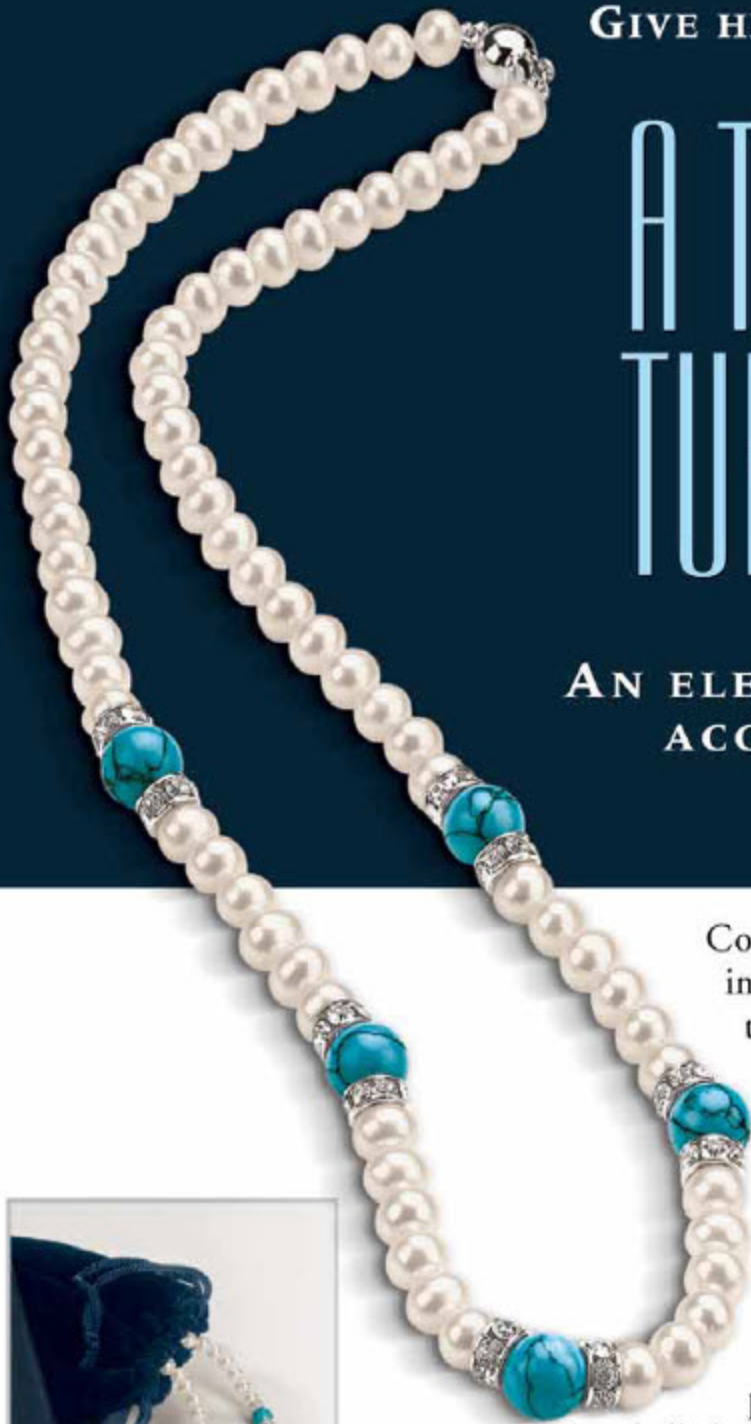
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concentrating on the keyboard." It looked real. Then Deb walked in, unbeknownst to me, during my close-up. She was watching the monitor and the actress underneath pinching my leg. She came straight up on set, and the actress was totally red. She said, "Oh hi, I'm Deborra-Lee, Hugh's wife, and I believe you're giving my husband a blow job." The girl said, "Oh, I'm sorry." Deb went, "Oh, relax. You're getting paid for it. Enjoy it." [laughs] That's Deb.

PLAYBOY: That film is also memorable for Halle Berry's first topless scene. She's your friend, but when your job is basically to stare at the bare breasts of one of the world's most beautiful women, what goes through your mind?

JACKMAN: That I'm acting and I'm there just for Halle. She struggled a bit because it was her first time. The first two days were too cold, but she walked around topless the whole time. Halle is an incredibly beautiful woman, but in Australia the leap from a bikini to topless isn't as huge as it is in America.

PLAYBOY: *Australia* was originally going to star Russell Crowe, *The Fountain* was supposed to have Brad Pitt, and in *X-Men* Wolverine was first promised to Dougray Scott. What's your philosophy on jumping on a script that has someone else's fingerprints on it?

JACKMAN: No problem at all. That's like saying I'll never do *Hamlet* because Gielgud did it 500 times. When people watch the movie, it's your role. Maybe I'm arrogant, but I can't audition unless I feel I'm the right person for the part. I don't compare myself to anyone else. Russell would have been different in *Australia*. Brad would have been different in *The Fountain*. I don't mind coming off the bench to pinch-hit.

PLAYBOY: *X-Men* resonated with audiences for its undercurrent of alienation. When in your own life did you most feel as if you didn't fit in?

JACKMAN: Around the age of 10 or so, after my mom left. My dad was bringing us up, but he had to travel, and we were sent off to different friends' homes. It was very unusual for the mother to leave, and I remember knowing people were looking at me differently. I wished I came from a normal family. I hated feeling that we were the weird ones on the block.

PLAYBOY: The press has seized on your mother's decision to move back to England, leaving your dad to raise five kids. How much did that media attention hurt your relationship with her?

JACKMAN: Mom and I got through that hard time and had resolved things prior to that. I've always been close with her, which some people found hard to understand. I made a couple of mistakes early on, speaking a little too openly. We've made peace with each other.

PLAYBOY: How long did it take for you to come to grips with her exit?

JACKMAN: Less time than any of my sib-

lings. I had my moments, though. On some level I understood she was not in a great way at that time, and I wasn't nearly as angry as you may imagine. But it was still a big tumultuous change. What my father pulled off was unbelievable—raising five kids pretty much on his own.

PLAYBOY: How did this affect your ability to trust women?

JACKMAN: It didn't affect me that way. One way it did was, when you do a film and it comes to the end, some people find it hard to finish and let go. Not me. I move right on to the next thing, and that's probably a defense from when my mum came to visit and dropped in and out of my life. I had to learn to enjoy her when she was there and get used to the fact that it wasn't permanent. It's ultimately not such a bad quality to have, because nothing really is permanent, is it?

PLAYBOY: When were things at their worst?

JACKMAN: No doubt it was at the age of 12 or 13, when my dad and mum tried to reconcile. This thing I hoped would happen was here. It lasted about three weeks, and then it was finished. I remember my dis-

The first two days were too cold, but Halle Berry walked around topless the whole time. In Australia the leap from a bikini to topless isn't as huge as it is in America.

illusionment with that moment—being a teenager and pissed off at the world. That was a really tough time for me, and I got in some trouble at school.

PLAYBOY: How did this incident factor into the way you handle your marriage, your children and film shoots?

JACKMAN: My family's always with me. Deb and I are never apart for more than two weeks. It was her idea, from being in the business and seeing enough relationships go under. You get used to living apart, which is fine when things are going well. But there's struggle in every marriage, and that's when you need to be together, forced to work it out. Otherwise cracks develop. Absence doesn't make the heart grow fonder. It makes it wander.

PLAYBOY: Especially when you're on a movie set?

JACKMAN: You're incredibly and unusually close with people there. But my desire is to be around my kids as much as I can and to be as regular as I can within our industry. Maybe that's a result of what I went through. I also remember the resolve I felt when I got married. It was never, Oh, let's see how this marriage

goes. We were a lot more steely-eyed about things than most. I'd seen and experienced the alternative firsthand, and it's not fun. I'm not an advocate of loveless marriages, of hanging in for the sake of the kids. But I am very blessed in my relationship with Deb, being madly in love and feeling it get better. We work to keep it that way.

PLAYBOY: You've adopted two children, and your wife has become active in eliminating the red tape that comes with adopting kids in Australia. How did all this happen?

JACKMAN: We always wanted to adopt, but first we wanted to have two kids biologically. We tried for a long time, and it didn't happen. That was difficult, unexpected. I got married at 26, and before that it had been all about not getting pregnant. My wife is very headstrong; she'd gotten pretty much everything she wanted in life—except this. I remember going to our doctor, who gave us the figures about childbirth through in vitro fertilization. It was 14 percent each time you have a go. I hope Deb doesn't mind my saying, but that was a tough, tough time. Physically, you go through a lot with IVF. I was giving Deb injections every day, and hormonally she was all over the place. There's anxiety. Your mind centers on when you're going to do it. You become obsessive. Then we had two miscarriages. That was very hard. Deb was determined to do another round of IVF, but I just said, "Enough. Let's take a break and investigate adoption." The moment the adoption process became real, all the hurt and desires about giving birth began to fade and were gone the moment Oscar was born. Ava was adopted too.

PLAYBOY: What did you think of the critical reaction to Angelina Jolie and Madonna when they adopted children from third-world countries?

JACKMAN: It's totally unreasonable. Anyone who has kids knows it's a hell of a lot of work and no publicity stunt. No doubt it comes from a desire that should be praised, not criticized. These were places and situations that seemed hopeless for the children, and here was an opportunity. I say, good for them.

PLAYBOY: What is your opinion of celebrities selling baby pictures to the highest-bidding magazine? Would you?

JACKMAN: I don't have that kind of heat on me, so luckily I've never had to entertain the idea. As a parent you try to protect your kid, but obviously you either let them take photos or there will be a constant scrum around the kid. If money's going to be made off your kid, giving it to a good cause seems the least of all evils.

PLAYBOY: Do you understand the public fixation with reading about turbulence in celebrities' private lives or with paparazzi shots of them in unglamorous moments?

JACKMAN: I've heard people complain

(concluded on page 165)

A GIFT YOU CAN OPEN,
AGAIN AND AGAIN.



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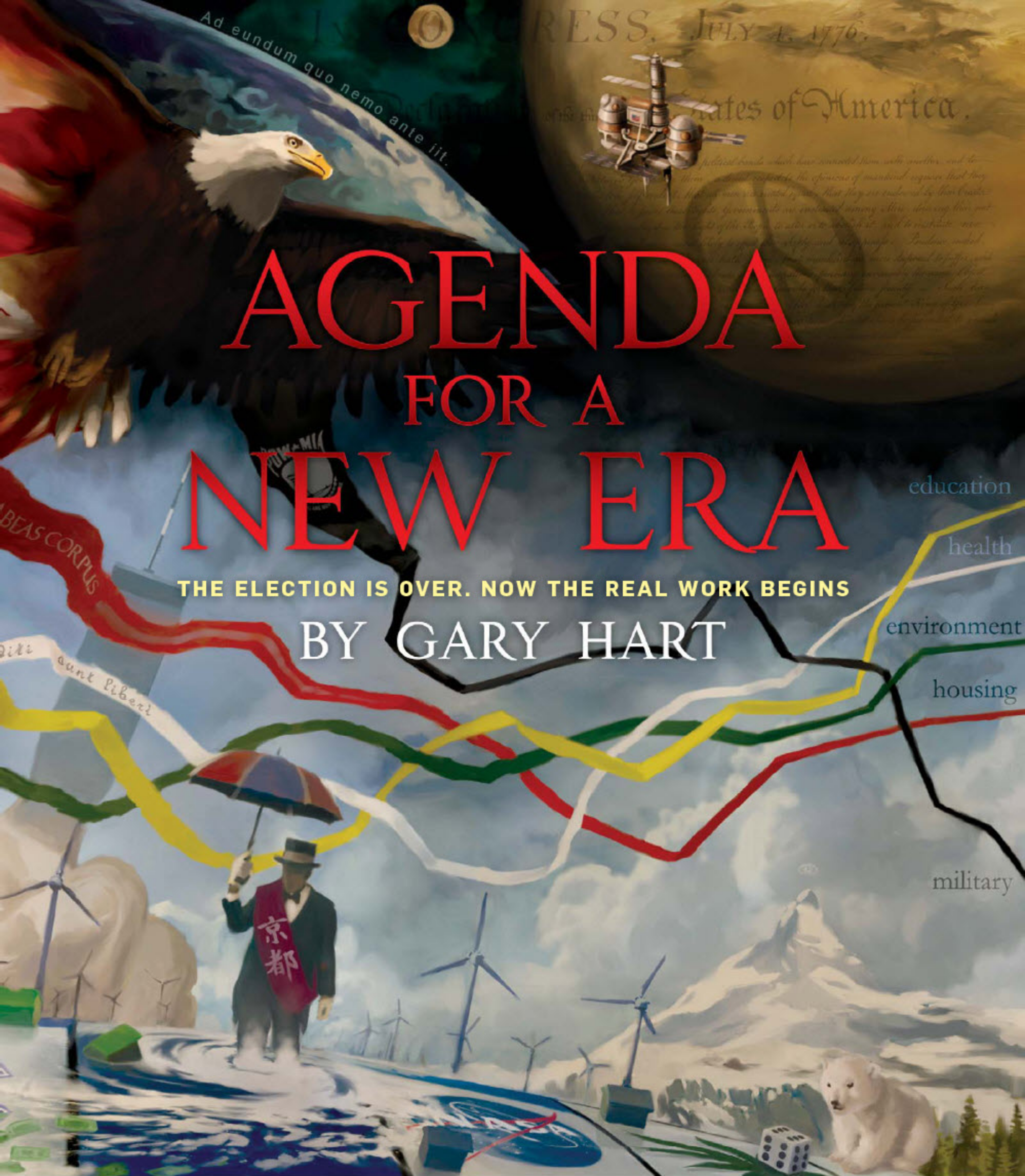


To: The President-Elect **From:** Gary Hart **Date:** November 5, 2008 **Subject:** The Next Chapter

Now the hard work begins. You have asked my advice regarding the new national agenda, and I have these thoughts.

Summary: Soon you must choose between being a good

president and a great president. Being good means cleaning up an unfinished and neglected agenda of problems at home and abroad and restoring our principles and the best of our traditions. Being great involves understanding



AGENDA FOR A NEW ERA

THE ELECTION IS OVER. NOW THE REAL WORK BEGINS
BY GARY HART

education
health
environment
housing
military

the revolutionary times in which we live and using these revolutions to transform our economy, our foreign policy and our national security to address the realities of a new century.
The good president's agenda: restoring progressive government. Our nation requires you to deal quickly with a

large array of problems left unfinished or untouched. These include:
First, winding down the United States military presence in Iraq. Nearly two thirds of the American people and a majority of their elected representatives in Congress want us out of Iraq, at least militarily. You have committed

to do this as swiftly as possible within the bounds of current political realities, sound military advice and long-term U.S. interests in the region. We have reached a point at which U.S. forces have reduced the level of violence as much as they can, security is manageable by Iraqi forces and our continued military presence has become counterproductive. You must cease this operation as professionally and expeditiously as possible and restore a more constructive foreign policy based on serious diplomacy in the Middle East.

Second, intensifying U.S. and NATO operations in Afghanistan against the Taliban and Al Qaeda. Given the huge strategic error in undercutting this effort in the fall of 2002, we must now pick up where we left off. This means substantially increasing Special Forces operations along the northeast Afghanistan-Pakistan border, convincing the Pakistani government to seal its border from Taliban incursions, with U.S. air support if necessary, and persuading our NATO allies to provide more combat and combat-support units to track down Taliban and Al Qaeda insurgents. Success in Afghanistan will depend less on massive forces and more on the intelligent use of available allied forces.

Third, stepping up homeland-security preparations. Appoint a secretary of homeland security whose hair is on fire. Intensify measures to tighten our borders, prevent terrorist incursions and beef up damage-limitation responses if prevention fails. Call unexpected national, state and local drills to measure and improve reaction times. Dramatically strengthen preparations for biological attack and increase port security, particularly the inspection of the huge number of shipping containers that pass through our ports. Recall the National Guard from Iraq and assign its units to their constitutional duty of homeland protection. We will be attacked again, and we are not prepared to prevent it or respond to it.

Fourth, reducing energy waste immediately. Challenge Congress to increase the energy-efficiency standards of cars, buildings and appliances in the next 90 days. Order hybrids for the White House fleet. Call on all major cities to enforce no-drive zones in their centers. Reward government employees who carpool, bicycle or use mass transit. Call on corporate America and the media to promote and undertake their own efficiency programs. Even while implementing a long-term plan to move the nation to the postcarbon age, we must take immediate steps to reduce the wasteful use of carbon fuels.

Fifth, taking the lead on climate change. Announce to the UN that the U.S. is prepared to lead in controlling and reversing climate change. Propose a Kyoto II treaty that takes into account the needs of developing nations. Also propose a new international environmental protection agency to administer the treaty. Create an international competition for the best new energy-efficient technologies in transportation and construction. Propose a graduated tax on carbon to be implemented by all nations. Use the UN forum to announce



THE FIRST
STEP IN
BECOMING
A GREAT
PRESIDENT
IS TO KEEP
YOUR EYES
ON THE
TIMES.

a new American foreign-policy era of international goodwill and enlightened cooperation with dedication to protect the global climate as its centerpiece.

Sixth, introducing a universal health-care plan. Submit a proposal for universal coverage for all children, preventive care for all citizens and catastrophic protection for all adults that gradually expands over time. Make this the first step toward genuine universal coverage. Bring political pressure to bear on the health-insurance industry and on health providers to improve on your proposal instead of opposing it. Education and health are social goods in and of themselves, but they are now the keys required for our nation to be fully competitive in the international marketplace.

We cannot have a productive economy if our workforce is not in good physical and mental condition.

Seventh, financing all military operations on budget. Your predecessor kept much of the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan off budget and funded them with supplemental appropriations. That is a magician's trick to divert attention and accountability, the fiscal equivalent of censoring pictures of returning war dead. The already excessive budget deficit will soar when you do this, but taxpayers will finally know what these wars are costing financially. Likewise, insist that the Department of Defense report all casualties—killed and wounded, including post-traumatic stress syndrome. The American people must know the total cost of the wars they authorize, both in human lives and in the depletion of our national treasury.

These are just the first moves; much additionally needs to be addressed among our domestic priorities and our role in the world. You have inherited an aggressive legacy abroad and a neglected legacy at home. Your administration must not try to do everything at once, but a number of high-value policy initiatives dispatched quickly from the station will clear the tracks for others that must follow. The national train will not get back on track overnight; additional initiatives can be added as we go along.

Clearing up abandoned tracks and inherited train wrecks will be a huge job, but I urge you to keep your eyes on the times in which we live. To do so is the first step in becoming a great president, a very large step above being a good one.

The great president's agenda: transforming America. You have attained national leadership at a time when our nation is required to transform itself. Transformation means the adoption of dramatic new directions at home and abroad. We are in the midst of multiple revolutions: globalization, information technology, eroding nation-state sovereignty and the transformation of war. We have yet to respond fully and intelligently to these enormous changes.

Should you pursue the transformative role adopted by great presidents of the past, bold action will be needed over and above the agenda already *(continued on page 178)*

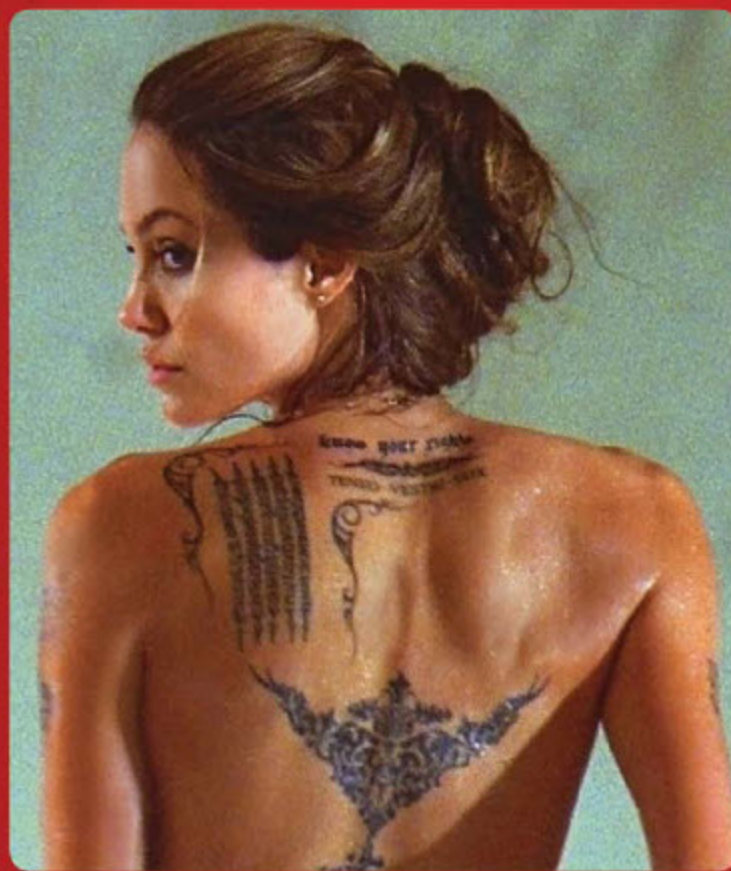


"Are you here to spread Joy or one of the other girls?"

SEX *in* CINEMA

◆◆ 2008 ◆◆

IN A HOT TUB, DURING A CATTLE DRIVE OR AFTER FLEEING
GUANTÁNAMO BAY, IT WAS A SEXY YEAR AT THE MOVIES



Regardless of politics, most of us completely support the surge. No, not the one in Iraq—we're talking about the surge in eroticism and nudity that swept back into entertainment this year. A brigade of comedies led the way, among them *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*, featuring the hilarious hotel gymnastics of Kristen Bell and Russell Brand; *The House Bunny*, with the innocently sexy Anna Faris; *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*'s hot international triangle of Scarlett Johansson, Penélope Cruz and Javier Bardem; and on cable TV the sharp satires of modern L.A. *Entourage* and *Californication*.

BY STEPHEN REBELLO

Dramas certainly kept pace. Viewers won't soon forget the sight of Keira Knightley emerging from a fountain in a clingy slip in *Atonement*, Angelina Jolie's tough, tattooed assassin in *Wanted* (above), Nicole Kidman losing her upper-class cool with cattle driver Hugh Jackman in *Australia* or Tom Hanks—no kidding!—nakedly filibustering some constituents in a hot tub in *Charlie Wilson's War*. This year film imitated life in showing that the hottest sparks can be generated between the least likely partners and in the least expected places.

Just see for yourself in this review of Sex in Cinema 2008.



Space Girls Are Easy

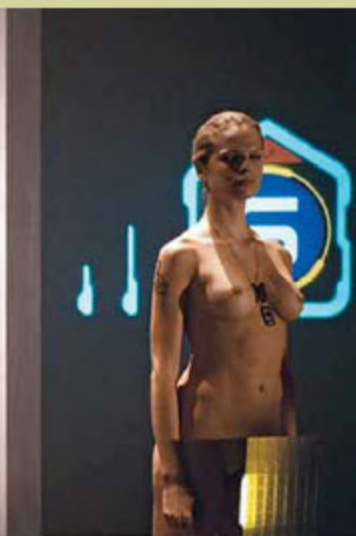
No, there's no Denise Richards, but *Starship Troopers 3: Marauder* (below) shows off enough intergalactic skin to suggest that casually sensuous earthlings of the future will find our insistence on clothing inexplicably bizarre.

Arresting Development

Vicky Cristina Barcelona (above), Woody Allen's sun-drenched, made-in-Spain comedy-drama, turns *muy caliente* when fiery Penélope Cruz persuades American tourist Scarlett Johansson to tongue wrestle in a darkroom.

Sex and Politics Do Mix

In *Charlie Wilson's War* (below) Tom Hanks's rascally congressman interrupts a personal hearing with some strippers to launch into his study of the Soviet Union's occupation of Afghanistan. Only in the movies.





The Healing Touch

In *Borderline* everyone wants to lay hands on Isabelle Blais as she comes to terms with her turbulent past.

Grind to a Halt

In *The Heartbreak Kid* Ben Stiller manages to interrupt his honeymoon with his pursuit of another woman.



Overbite

In the disturbingly funny horror comedy *Teeth* (below), a chastity-minded student learns that her vagina can literally put the bite on her attackers. Should the DVD's special features include a demonstration of flossing?

Platinum Bond

In *Quantum of Solace* (above), Daniel Craig's 007 pauses in a program of fights and chases long enough to plant some kisses on fellow agent Gemma Arterton's back. Fear not: It's just a quantum of romance.

Cough It Up

In an adaptation of Chuck Palahniuk's novel *Choke* (below) con man Sam Rockwell hooks up with a woman he meets in sex-addiction recovery and later hangs at a strip club where he meets deadpan beauty Gillian Jacobs.





Terminal Bliss

In the thriller *Boarding Gate* Asia Argento is up to her neck in tattoos, trouble and, fortunately, lovers.

Bad News, Good News

Sadly, Marisa Tomei is underused in *Before the Devil Knows You're Dead*. Happily, she is also underdressed.



Boil Before Using

Talk about having your priorities out of whack. In *Serbis* (left), set in a family-owned porn theater in the Philippines, Coco Martin ignores the charms of his girlfriend Mercedes Cabral so he can attend to the boil on his hip.

Feast for Some, Famine for Others

In *Feast of Love* (above), a romance about the erotic affairs of couples in a college town, Alexa Davalos plays a dimpled coffeehouse waitress who almost effortlessly whips men into a froth that would do any barista proud.

Hot to the Touch

In *Things We Lost in the Fire* Halle Berry lights a spark in her soon-to-be-late husband David Duchovny (near left) before igniting powerful feelings in his pal Benicio Del Toro.

Secret Policeman's Ball

In *Eastern Promises* (far left, top) investigator Viggo Mortensen is forced to push himself deeply undercover in order to remain disguised as a henchman for a crew of ruthless Russian restaurateurs.

Paris When She Sizzles

In the comedy *The Hottie & the Nottie* (far left, bottom) Paris Hilton slips into lingerie and strikes a number of fetching poses. Surely, it was the feel-good movie of the year.





Rub a Dub Dub

In *Doomsday* Lily Anderson plays "Bathtub Blonde," and we defy anyone to criticize her performance.

South of the Border

In *Harold & Kumar Escape From Guantanamo Bay* we see why escaping a tropical prison is such a good idea.



Special Dishes

In the visually sumptuous *I Served the King of England* (left) Ivan Barnev's ambitious waiter struggles to keep his mind on his work. The upside: Sometimes he gets to eat the leftovers.

Slippery When Wet

When heiress Keira Knightley emerges from a dip in a fountain in *Atonement* (below left), she demonstrates the chief irony of the class system: The richer the dame, the skimpier the underwear.

Saddle Up

Forget *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*? We couldn't. The Judd Apatow production was one of the year's signature hits, with the gymnastic couplings of supple Kristen Bell and limber Russell Brand (below right) among the film's most memorable moments.





A Breath of Fresh Air

How sexy and funny does Anna Faris think she is in *The House Bunny*? When an actress invites the world to compare her to Marilyn Monroe (above), you know she's confident she's got game.

Prime Rump

It's hot work driving thousands of cows across the outback, but things get a lot hotter when Hugh Jackman and Nicole Kidman pause for some serious snogging in Baz Luhrmann's beefy epic *Australia* (right).

It Doesn't Take a Mind Reader

In *Passengers* (below right) Anne Hathaway plays an acutely sensitive grief counselor, and Patrick Wilson plays a man with paranormal abilities, but a wheel of cheddar would know what these two are thinking about.

Feeling No Pain

In *I Now Pronounce You Chuck & Larry* (below) gorgeous attorney Jessica Biel graciously lets her pretending-to-be-gay client Adam Sandler sample what he has convinced her he has been missing. Talk about attorney-client privilege.



CLASSIC CARTOONS OF CHRISTMAS PAST



WE'VE ALWAYS KNOWN HOW
TO SPREAD A BIT OF MERRIMENT
AT THE HOLIDAYS



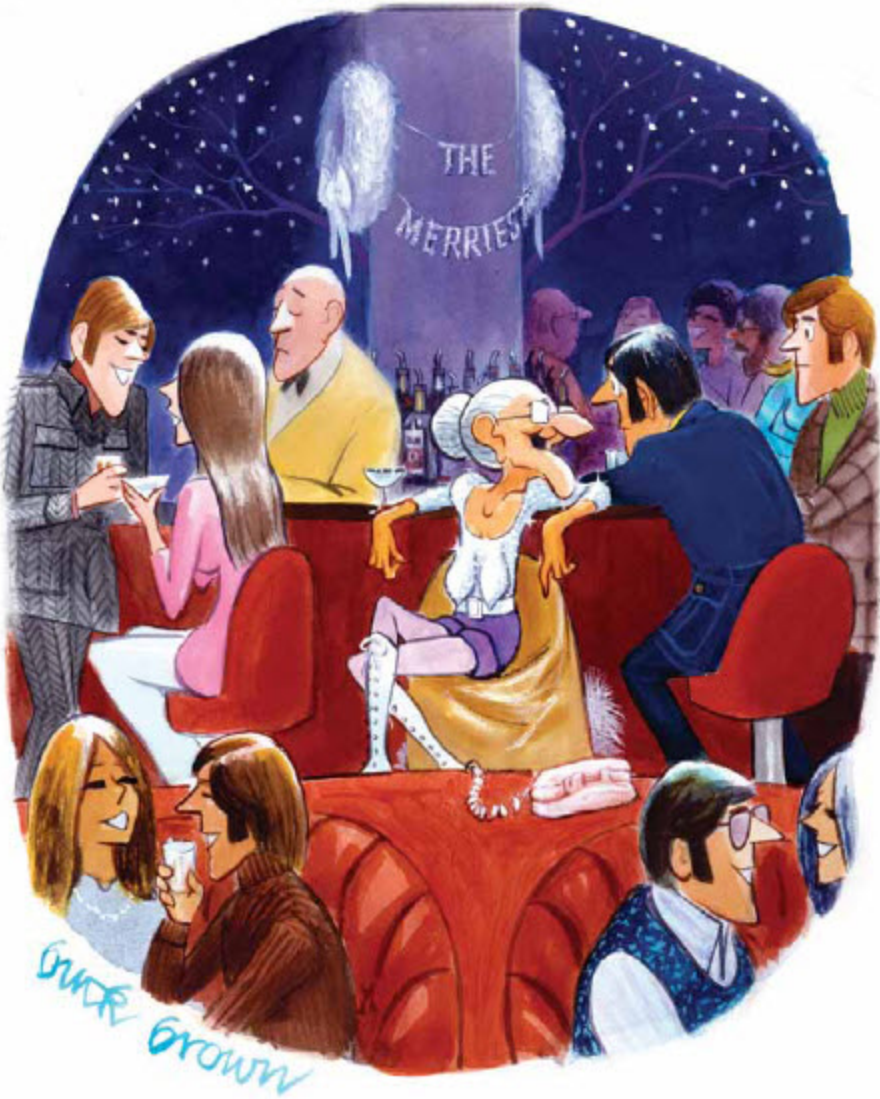
"Who's that guy?"



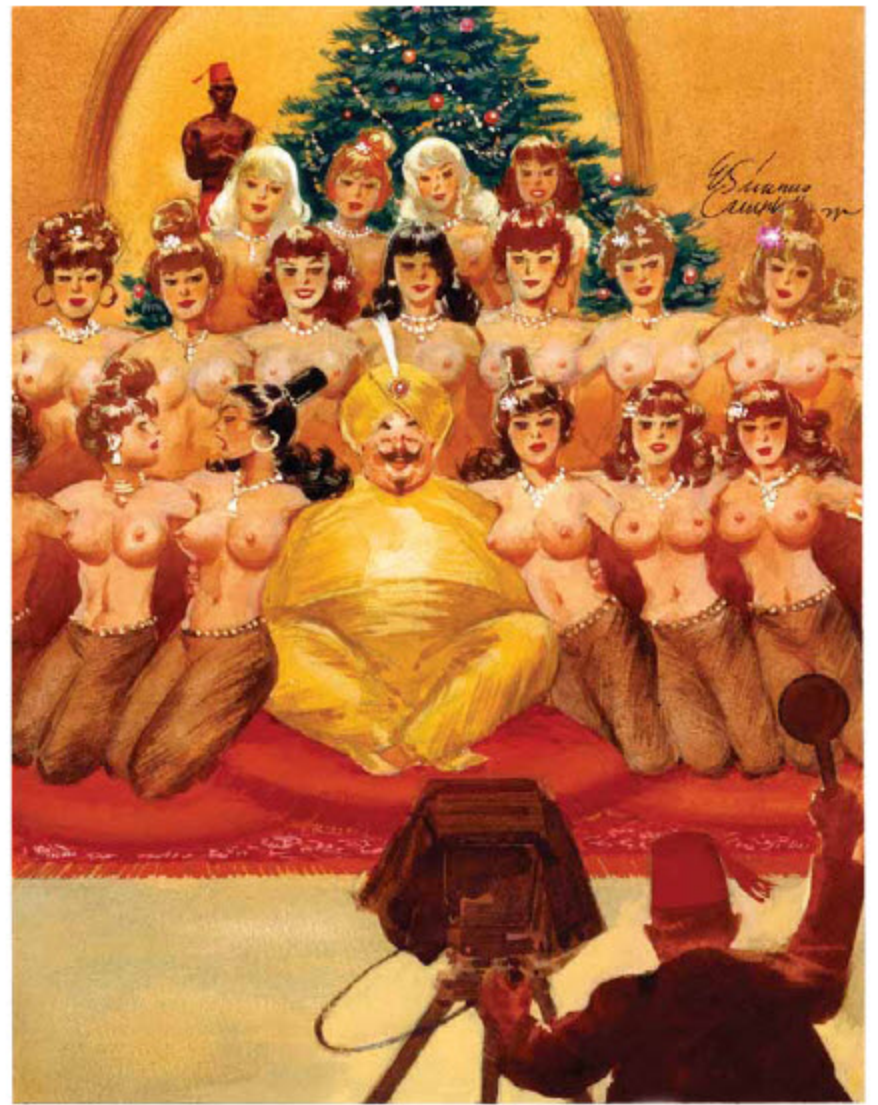
"What's going on here?!"



"Ho, Ho...oh, oh!"



"How'd you like to spend an old-fashioned Christmas at Grandma's?"



"Why can't he just go out and buy some Christmas cards like everyone else?"

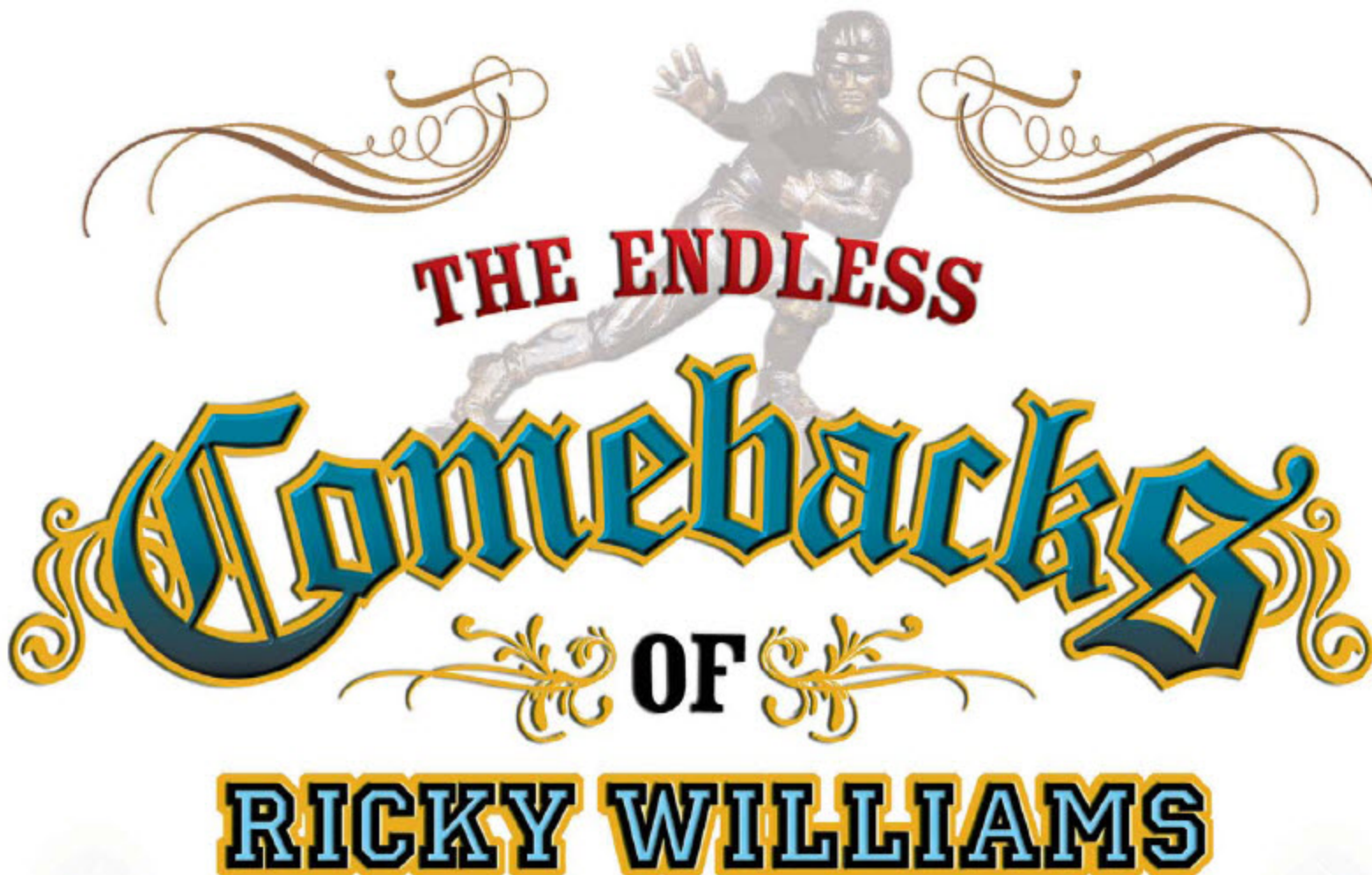


"Now, don't be hasty. I've got something for you, too."



"Go find your own corner!"





THE ENDLESS
Comebacks
OF
RICKY WILLIAMS

WHY HAS THE MIAMI DOLPHIN FAILED MORE DRUG TESTS, SUFFERED SO MANY INJURIES AND BEEN SUSPENDED MORE OFTEN THAN ANY OTHER NFL PLAYER?

THE GOLDEN BOY HIMSELF EXPLAINS IT ALL

Errick Lynne "Ricky" Williams Jr. was a beautiful bride. He posed for a wedding photograph in a white satin wedding gown and a lace illusion veil. The wedding gown was a size 20 that had to be taken in at the waist. The white of the satin and lace contrasted beautifully with Ricky's chocolate-colored skin, his assorted tattoos and his cascading black dreadlocks. The bridegroom, posed beside him, was more conservatively dressed, in a classic black tuxedo. His name was Mike Ditka, the coach of the New Orleans Saints, the football team that had just signed Ricky to a \$68 million contract in 1999. At the time, Ricky said, "I feel like I married the Saints."

The "marriage" didn't last long, not much longer than the honeymoon, actually, when the recriminations began, the accusations of betrayal, the almost immediate dying of a once passionate love. But

like most failed marriages, this one didn't expire traumatically with a gunshot, a bloody corpse on the marriage bed, a long trial and an even longer prison term. It just withered away over the years, three to be exact, as if it had been afflicted with a terminal disease even before the marriage, a disease that neither party wanted to acknowledge in the throes of passion but that existed all the same and doomed their marriage from the start.

Ricky is a romantic, a serial matrimonialist. He falls in love quickly, completely, and then just as quickly falls out of love. It's the process of courtship that appeals to him, the seduction, the wooing, the undying protestations, the accruing of love, which is why he has had so many quickie marriages over the past 10 years—to women, teams, cities, coaches, players, agents, journalists—and just as

many quickie divorces. The drudgery of a long-term relationship has always bored him, in part because it would preclude him from collecting more conquests (which is why he has rarely lived with, much less actually married, any of the three women who have borne his four children) and, even more important, would preclude so many others, as yet unknown, from having the privilege, the joy, the bliss even, of knowing and then loving Ricky Williams. Ricky himself once said, "If you don't like me, then you don't know me." When I ask him if it is possible people don't like him because they do know him, he says, "No. If you know me, you've got to like me."

When Ricky was a senior at Patrick Henry Prep in San Diego, in 1995, he was considered one of the best high school running backs in the country and a baseball player of such talent and potential that the



"I GOT INTO YOGA TO GET BACK THAT PART OF MYSELF THAT WANTS TO APPROACH GOD," EXPLAINS WILLIAMS.

Philadelphia Phillies gave him a \$129,000 bonus. Ricky loved both baseball and football, and over the years he played one off the other. When one sport disappointed him, he made overtures to the other. Ricky loved women in the same way. One of his classmates says of him, "He was a good-hearted guy, the kind every woman was looking for. He dated four or five girls at once." Ricky says of women, "The first week they think I'm a gentleman, and by the third week they start thinking I might not like them. Women think too much."

When it came time for Ricky to choose from an abundance of college football scholarships, he flew first to Austin, home of the University of Texas Longhorns. Ricky immediately "fell in love" with Austin, a counterculture city in the conservative heart of Texas. It was the perfect city for Ricky, with his tattoos, piercings, dreadlocks and penchant for long philosophical raps on the meaning of life, the meaning of Ricky. "People who understand me," he says, "look at me in a more spiritual way."

Ricky's marriage to the Longhorns would be his only really successful one for the next 12 years. Possibly that is because neither party had enough time to grow disenchanted with the other, and besides, Ricky's success with the Longhorns was so total that it precluded anything from coming between them. In four years with the Longhorns

Ricky set an all-time NCAA career rushing record (6,279 yards) and a career rushing touchdown record (72). He was the first player ever voted the best college running back two years in a row, and in 1998 he was awarded the Heisman Trophy as the best college football player in the country. A newspaper reporter wrote of Ricky, "He is no doubt college football's best player, and he also just might be its best human being."



"I WANTED TO GO BACK TO THE NFL AND FIX THINGS, MY LEGACY," HE SAYS.

Ricky was beloved in Austin not only for his football successes but because of the kind of young man he was. He was polite, respectful and personable to everyone.

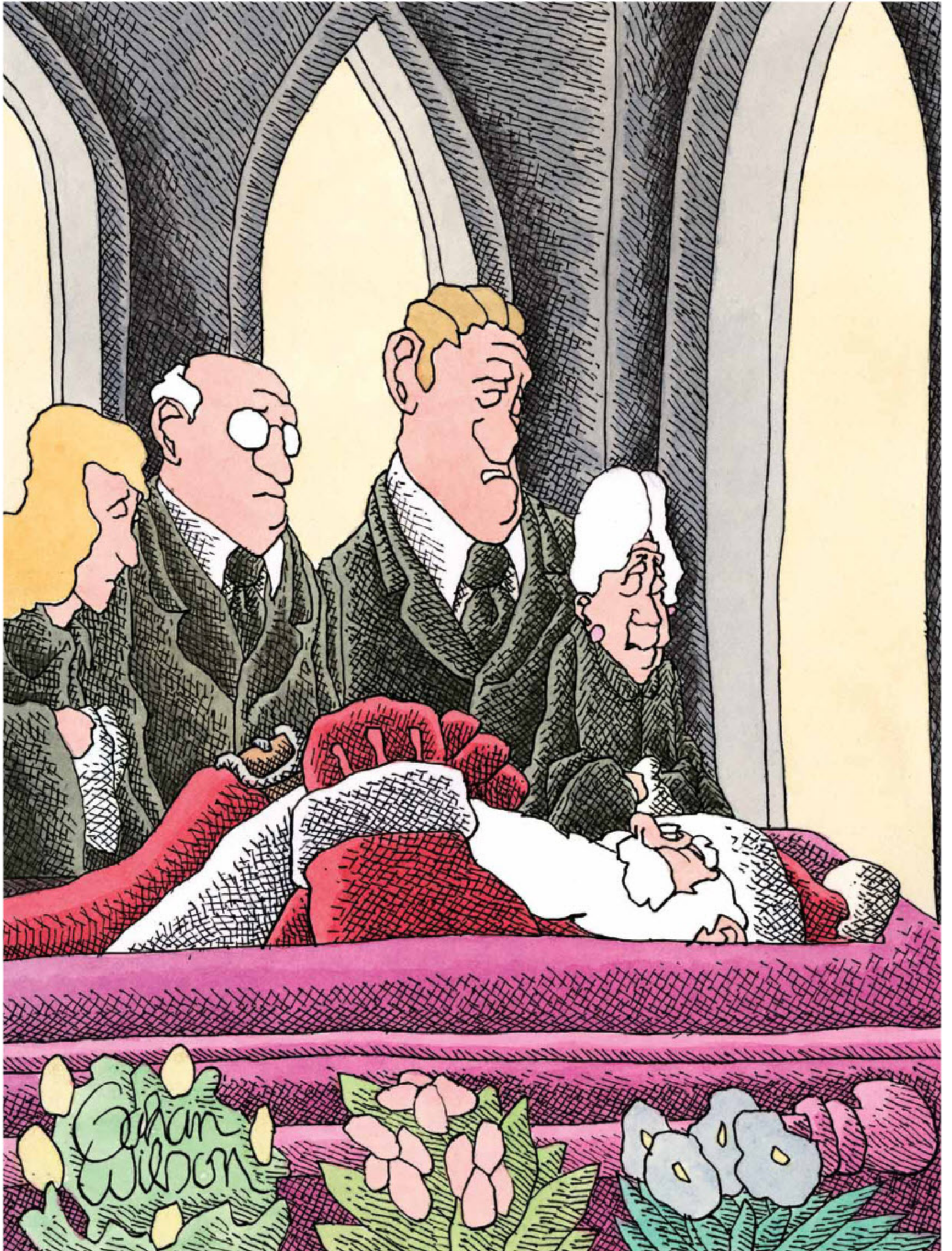
That was the last time Ricky would be so loved. From the day he was drafted by the Saints, in 1999, until the present when he has rekindled a love affair with the Miami Dolphins (sort of like divorced spouses dat-

ing again), Ricky Williams has been arguably one of the most criticized, reviled and analyzed athletes in America. He has been called selfish, eccentric, moody, contrary, a malcontent, spoiled, a quitter, a cancer, a coach killer, a drug addict and a self-destructive underachiever who has systematically and willfully destroyed what should have been a Hall of Fame career.

The Saints began to fall out of love with Ricky even before he arrived at his first training camp. "The New Orleans media didn't like me," says Ricky, "and my teammates didn't like me much." Three years later the Saints "divorced" Ricky, trading him to the Miami Dolphins. The Dolphins and Ricky had a brief honeymoon in 2002 and then began to fall out of love the following year. They have been estranged, separated, reconciled, separated again and reconciled one more time in good part because of Ricky's willfully self-destructive behavior.

From 2002 to the present Williams has been fined and/or suspended by the NFL five times for failing drug tests. His drug of choice is marijuana. In fact, Ricky was the most famous pothead in America, which should surprise no one who knows that his body is adorned with a tattoo of Bob Marley, the ganja-smoking reggae singer. In south Florida, Ricky was known as Stoney.

When Ricky failed his fourth drug test, in December 2005, he was suspended from the NFL for the (continued on page 168)



"This is definitely not going to be good for the economy!"

THE PLAYBOY

Holiday Gift Guide

NAUGHTY? NICE?
SAME THING. HERE'S
WHAT TO GET WHEN
THE GETTING'S GOOD

With this handcrafted Dunhill travel poker set in your luggage and a six-shooter in your sock, you're ready for any game anywhere. (\$475, dunhill.com)

Sometimes the word *laptop* just doesn't cut it—try *portable theater*. Sony's new 2.8-pound Vaio TT packs a Blu-ray player that can show high-def flicks on your giant TV. (from \$2,000, sonystyle.com)

The Thos. Moser Chaise plus an issue of PLAYBOY plus two cocktails equals an evening well spent. The chaise is made of cherrywood and full-grain leather. (\$3,675, thosmoser.com)

Swinger's Holiday

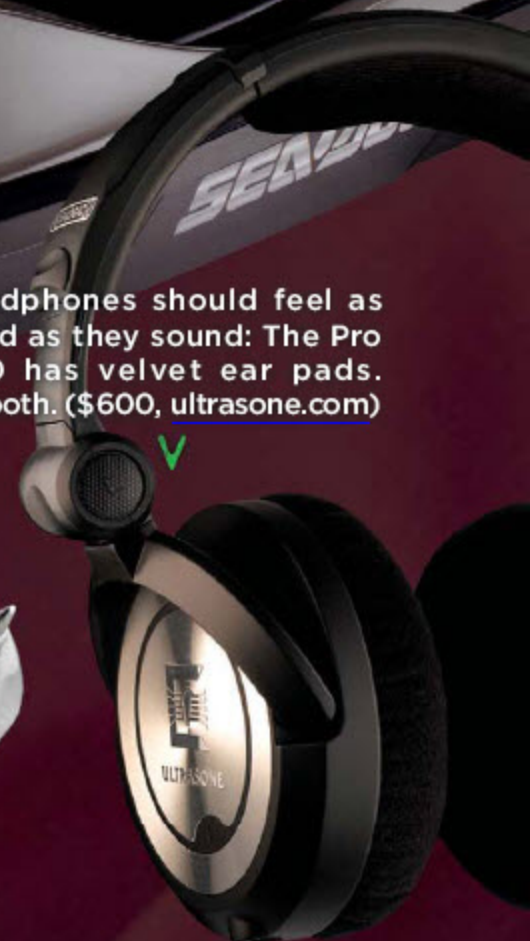
See the word *foursome* in this mag and you think of three babes, yourself and a hot tub. But get a load of this: Our Ultimate Golf Scramble Getaway is a once-in-a-lifetime trip to play in Playboy's Golf Scramble Finals from March 26 to 29. The package includes a slot for your foursome in the tourney—which is hosted by 30 Playmates—along with four deluxe hotel rooms, invites to the Tee Party and the VIP Players' Lingerie & PJ Party at the Mansion and lots more. Cost: \$20,000 a foursome. For info, e-mail finals@playboygolf.com or call 973-287-6288.

Callaway's new FT-iQ boosts speed, stability and distance thanks to its hyperbolic face. (\$500, callawaygolf.com)

Sea-Doo's latest, the GTX Limited iS 255, is the first personal watercraft with a suspension system and brakes. That's right, brakes. And the thing hauls serious ass. (\$16,500, seadoo.com)



Headphones should feel as good as they sound: The Pro 900 has velvet ear pads. Smooth. (\$600, ultrasone.com)



Wear your head on your sleeve—these cuff links can be made from photos of your mug. (\$488 to \$17,400, elevenforty.com)



Macanudo turns 40 this year. How to celebrate? By blazing a special-edition Macanudo 1968 robusto. (\$8.50 a cigar, macanudo1968.com)




Miles Davis changed the world with five songs in 1959. *Kind of Blue: 50th Anniversary Collector's Edition* has the original tunes plus an outtake CD, a documentary DVD, a blue vinyl LP, a book, photos and a poster. (\$76, miles-davis.com)




Somewhere between touch-sensitive toy and 21st century techno musical instrument lies the Tenori-on. (\$1,200, tenori-onusa.com)





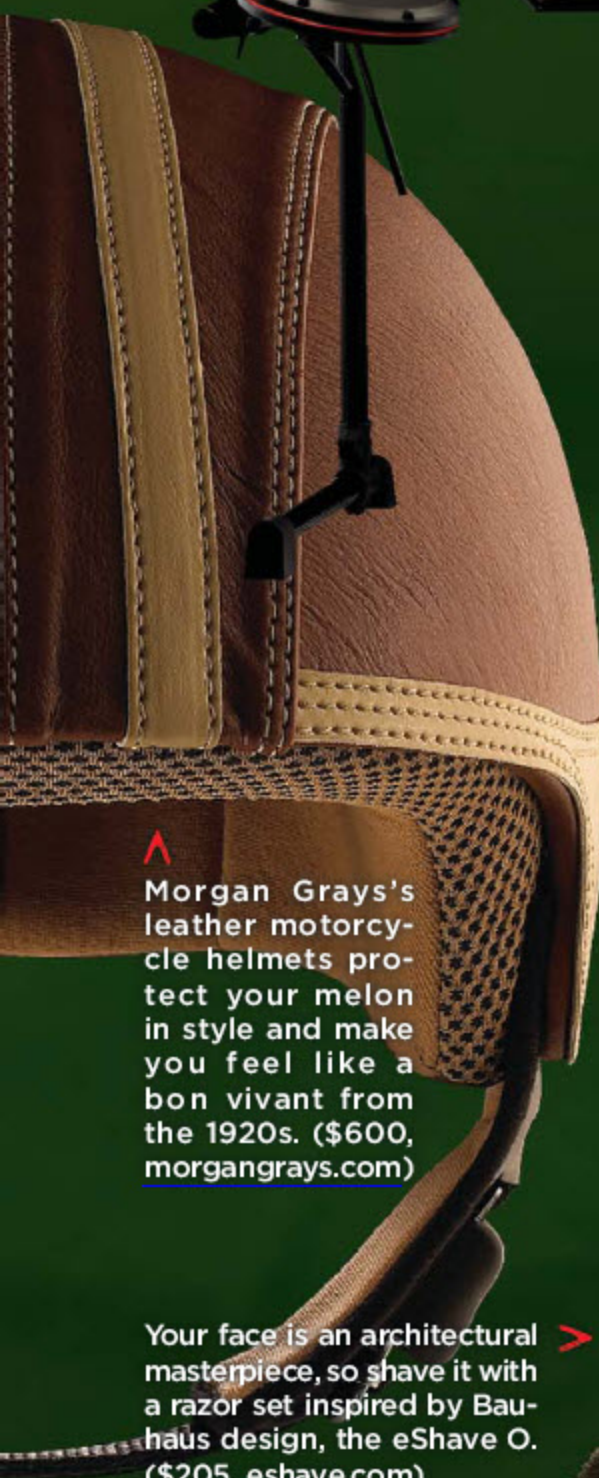
Fake instruments take you only so far. These real drums also work with *Rock Band*. (\$400, drumrocker.com)



The Archos 5 offers portable HD video on its five-inch touch screen. Plus it has built-in Wi-Fi for streaming video. (\$350 to \$450, archos.com)




With top-grain leather and a crush-proof cedar interior, this Xikar cigar case will save your stogies from getting bent out of shape. (\$50, xikar.com)




Morgan Grays's leather motorcycle helmets protect your melon in style and make you feel like a bon vivant from the 1920s. (\$600, morgangrays.com)




Renowned architect Jeffrey Beers designed these handblown, hand-cut crystal tequila snifters for Don Julio. (\$350, onthefly.com)




Your face is an architectural masterpiece, so shave it with a razor set inspired by Bauhaus design, the eShave O. (\$205, eshave.com)



Different day, different scent: Tommy Bahama's sampler is the company's signature cologne plus Set Sail and Very Cool. (\$45, tommybahama.com)



Tough day? Here's a flask with a built-in date for the evening. She won't put out, but she won't bug you, either. The stainless-steel Classic Pinup Girl flask comes with a funnel. (\$30, flaskshop.com)





With a focal range of 24 mm to 60 mm, an oversize image sensor and the company's legendary lens work, Leica's D-Lux 4 will help you shoot happy. (\$980, leica.com)



Coffee-table books speak volumes about your taste. From bottom, *A Lovecraft Retrospective* (\$400), *Clint Eastwood: A Life in Pictures* (\$40), *Patti Smith: Dream of Life* (\$50), *The Complete Quincy Jones* (\$45) and *Playboy: The Complete Centerfolds* (\$50).



If any automobile were to fit under your Christmas tree, it would be this zippy little ride. The Smart Fortwo Passion Cabriolet sports a one-liter three-cylinder engine. Speedy? No. But it won't run you dry on gas money. (\$16,600, smartusa.com)

Hohner is making only 25 Bob Dylan Collection harmonica sets. Dylan has signed and played each one, leaving real Dylan DNA. You'll never wash your harmonicas again. (\$25,000, samashmusic.com/dylan)

Wyler's new GMT features a shock-absorbent case. Great for NFL players and the terminally clumsy. (\$20,600, wylergeneve.com)



THE LIFE OF THE PARTY

AT THIS YEAR'S HOLIDAY BASH, ONE BOLD PIECE WILL CATCH HER EYE AND SEND A SPIRITED SIGNAL

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
SERGIO KURHAJEC

FASHION BY
JOSEPH DE ACETIS

PRODUCED BY
JENNIFER RYAN JONES



DRESS IS BABY PHAT.

JACKET (\$745) AND PANTS (\$245) ARE
L.B.M. 1911. VEST (\$165) IS LENIE R.
BY LENOR ROMANO. SHIRT (\$225) IS
C.P. COMPANY.

IRIAM CHAIR AND KLEMM CONSOLE
TABLE AVAILABLE AT DDC.

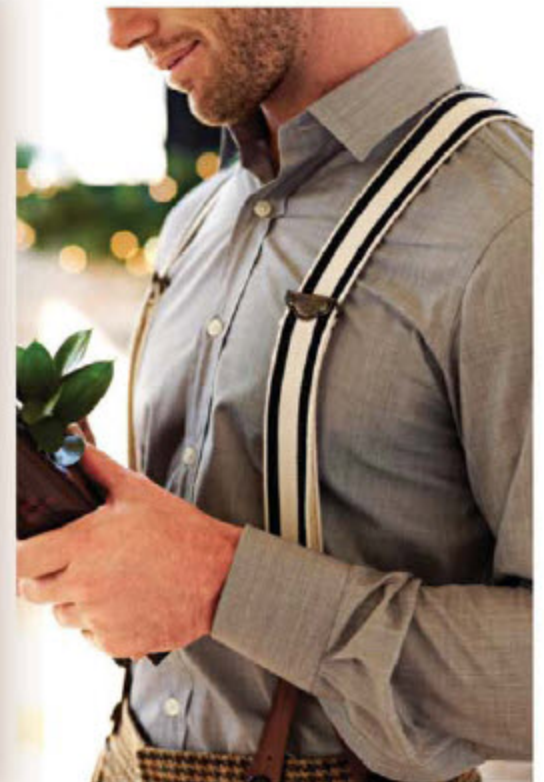
JACKET (\$295), SWEATER (\$70), SHIRT (\$40) AND PANTS (\$70) ARE NAUTICA.



VEST (\$698 FOR SUIT), SHIRT (\$148) AND TIE (\$65) ARE TOMMY HILFIGER.



SHIRT (\$225), PANTS (\$395) AND SUSPENDERS (\$135) ARE BENJAMIN BIXBY.



It's not every workday that the boss encourages you to have another drink or that the secretary wears antlers. So when the office holiday party rolls around, don't reach for your typical Tuesday suit. This strange mixture of co-workers, cubicles and cocktails calls for a festive fashion upgrade, but there are ways to catch her eye without resorting to a blinking Santa Claus tie. A smart choice is a standout piece that demands attention. A green vest or red polka-dot tie are over-the-top any other day, but when the eggnog is flowing, exceptions can be made. Suspenders or brightly colored trousers can be just the item needed to steer people away from monotonous shoptalk. These pieces are icebreakers that will have her approaching you to talk about your rhodium-plated stainless-steel cuff links or navy-trimmed jacket. One or two minutes of banter about where you bought them and next thing you know you're taking her drink order and phone number. Happy holidays, indeed.



JACKET (\$698 FOR SUIT) IS TOMMY HILFIGER. SHIRT (\$60) IS EAGLE SHIRTMAKERS. CUFF LINKS (\$300) ARE MILUS.



SWEATER (\$148), SHIRT (\$98) AND PANTS (\$128) ARE REPORT COLLECTION.



SHIRT (\$60) IS EAGLE SHIRTMAKERS. PANTS (\$130) ARE BONOBOS. SHOES (\$365) ARE PAUL SMITH PS. SOCKS (\$35) ARE PAUL SMITH ACCESSORIES.

VIRTUALLY PERFECT

Most video games move with blinding speed and keep you more focused on staying alive than appreciating the scenery. Which is a shame when so much of it is so damn pretty. In fact, every year video games look better, as do their leading ladies. So every December we pause the action for a moment to pay tribute to a unique early 21st century phenomenon: the virtual vixen. Just be careful—several of these have been known to bite.

OUR FIFTH ANNUAL LOOK AT THE SEXIEST BABES FROM THE SEASON'S HOTTEST GAMES



The Polecats • Afro Samurai (360, PS3)

One dragon, four bodies, one hell of a tattoo. But these sisters share more than just ink: They also share the Daimyo—as his personal assassins and playthings. Not a bad gig for a girl with a black belt in ninjutsu and a bloodlust that won't quit. The real question is whether Afro Samurai can handle the quadruple play.

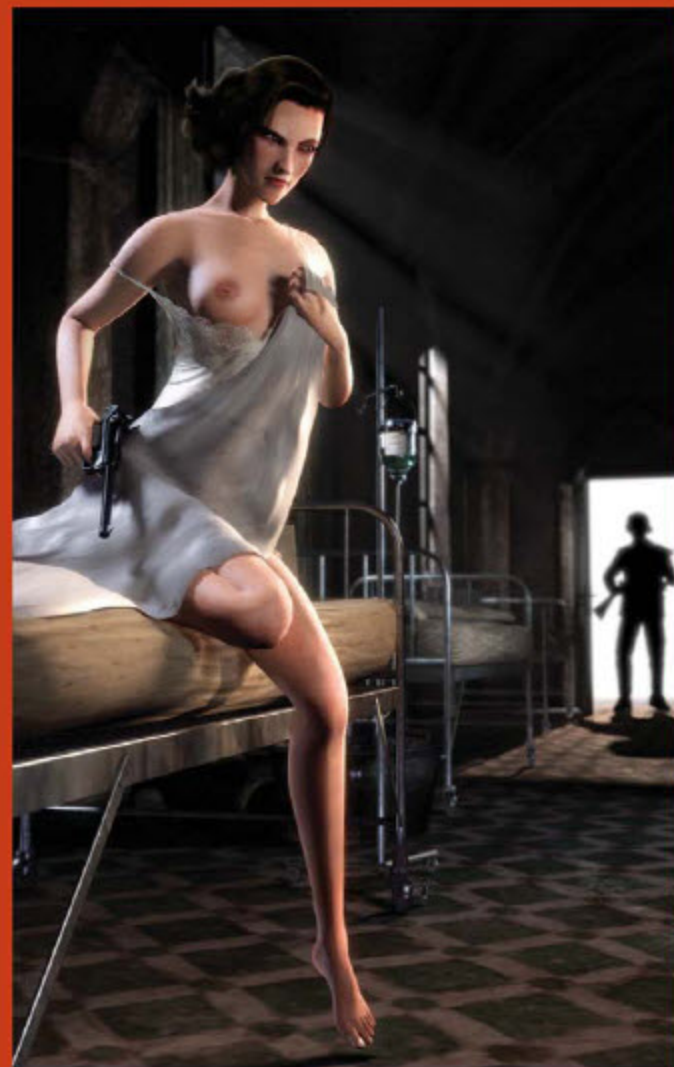
Candy • Ride to Hell (360, PC, PS3)

Riding motorcycles is all about freedom—just like being naked. So it's no surprise that in 1969 Candy (born Marcelene Deforest) likes nothing better in this world than an 80 mph clothing-optional romp down the freeway. If you know any secluded spots along Route 66, Ray up in front is open to suggestions.



Violette Summer • Velvet Assassin (360, PC)

As an undercover operative, Violette knows better than to check into a hospital in occupied France—unfortunately, coma victims don't get much in the way of choice. We're just happy she came to before the Nazis found her. And that she managed to hold on to her Luger. *Achtung, Fritz*—you're out of luck this time.



Shaundi • Saints Row 2 (360, PS3)

She may be your gang's best lieutenant, but just because she knows her way around an AK-47 doesn't mean she doesn't like to mess up the sheets. Don't get any big ideas, though: Her only true love is the Third Street Saints. Remember that—as well as her affinity for Loa Dust—and you'll have the time of your life.

DOOMTOWN BATHHOUSE



Jack and Yakecan • *Damnation* (360, PC, PS3)

If either of these two knew who the other was, things wouldn't be so chummy. Ex-healers turned insurgents don't typically soap up the backs of the PSI's top scientists. And if Jack knew Yakecan was a Peacemaker, those knives wouldn't stay sheathed for long. Sometimes ignorance really is bliss.

Atalanta • *Rise of the Argonauts* (360, PC, PS3)


Surviving alone as a young girl with two dead parents in the jungles of Saria will teach you one of two things: to fight or to die. Ask the island's native satyrs which option Atalanta chose. Let's just say they were relieved when Jason showed up and she hitched a ride on the *Argo*—despite her obvious visual appeal.



TIP-OFF

2009

WILL ANYONE BEAT THE TAR HEELS? THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP IS NORTH CAROLINA'S TO LOSE



BY DAVID KAPLAN Long before we hear the first screech of rubber on a gym floor this college hoops season, every media outlet in America and every pontificator will have agreed that the best team is North Carolina. The sports talk shows may as well broadcast dead air. There's nothing to argue about. The Tar Heels are so favored that anything but a national championship will be a letdown for coach Roy Williams and his squad of lanky superstars. UNC won 36 games against three losses last

season, and the team returns all five starters and its top six scorers. Ty Lawson is the quickest point guard in America. Forward Tyler Hansbrough is the best big man in the college game since Tim Duncan. We sports fans love powerhouses. They make for brilliant story lines. They don't just win; they humiliate. They are feared. Or they flop with a sonorous thud, like the Pats in Super Bowl XLII. One way or another, this college basketball season will be riveting. Enjoy our primer.



1. North Carolina

2. Louisville

3. Connecticut

4. Texas

5. Michigan State

6. UCLA

7. Notre Dame

8. Duke

9. Pittsburgh

10. Gonzaga

11. Marquette

12. Memphis

13. Purdue

14. Tennessee

15. Villanova

16. Florida

17. Arizona State

18. Davidson

19. Virginia Tech

20. Wisconsin

21. Miami (Florida)

22. Kentucky

23. Syracuse

24. Kansas

25. Baylor

OUR TOP 25

Girlie Action

Finally, it's halftime!

Here's our final four of NCAA cheerleading hotness: **University of Florida, USC, Arizona State University** and **UCLA**. The Gator girls are master pom-pom shakers, exhibiting extraordinary subtlety and nuance. The Trojan mamas can hurl one another across the arena like WWE Divas. The Sun Devillettes? Ouch, that's hot! But there's nothing like the Bruin babes in action. Judges? Ten! Ten! Ten!



The Long and Short of It

Good things come in all sizes

The tallest player in NCAA Division I hoops is **Kenny George**, at seven feet seven inches and 370 pounds. A center at UNC Asheville, he is believed to have the biggest feet of any basketball player in the world, with a size 28. He can dunk the ball without leaving the ground. The shortest player in Division I ball is **Eric Bell**, at five feet three inches and 150 pounds. A guard at Stephen F. Austin State University, this little guy can handle the rock. If you play his jump shot—bam—he's by you in a flash. If you try to defend against his dribble drive—boom—he drops a jumper in your face.



House of Pain

The five toughest places to play

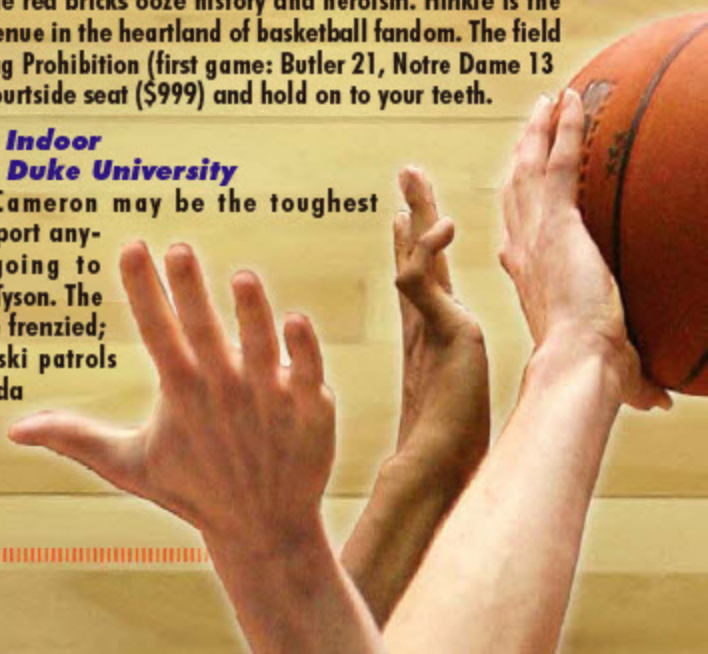
"Phog" Allen Fieldhouse, University of Kansas
Take a sniff: You can smell Wilt Chamberlain's sweat in here—and Danny Manning's and Paul Pierce's. Kansas was undefeated (19–0) at home last year and has gone 35–2 over the past two seasons. Between 1994 and 1998 the Jayhawks won 62 consecutive games in Allen Fieldhouse. The banner on the north wall says it all: PAY HEED, ALL WHO ENTER: BEWARE OF "THE PHOG."

McArthur Court, University of Oregon
McArthur is one of those old-school gyms (built in 1926) that are loaded with character and tradition. When the Pit Crew (as the Ducks' ravenous courtside student section is called) gets rowdy, the maple floor literally shakes under the players' feet.

Kohl Center, University of Wisconsin
The student section of this arena, spanning three decks and 2,100 seats, is called the Grateful Red. It's named for the rock band, but these fans are louder than the Dead ever was. At the end of the 2007–2008 season, the Badgers had a 143–19 record at the Kohl Center, with only five losses in the past five seasons.

Hinkle Fieldhouse, Butler University
There are reasons *Hoosiers* was filmed in Indiana's basketball cathedral. The red bricks ooze history and heroism. Hinkle is the most famous hoops venue in the heartland of basketball fandom. The field house was built during Prohibition (first game: Butler 21, Notre Dame 13 in overtime). Get a courtside seat (\$999) and hold on to your teeth.

Cameron Indoor Stadium, Duke University
A trip to Cameron may be the toughest road game in any sport anywhere. It's like going to Brownsville to fight Tyson. The Cameron crazies are frenzied; coach Mike Krzyzewski patrols the sideline like Yoda in a tie. Opposing teams leave as roadkill.



Blood Sport

Eight must-see matchups



Three future NBA stars: from left, Darren Collison, Stephen Curry and Chase Budinger.

Clash of the titans: We'll start with arguably the greatest rivalry in all of sports. North Carolina travels eight miles to Duke on February 11, and Duke hits Chapel Hill on March 8. **Tall boys:** UConn's seven-foot-three, 263-pound center Hasheem Thabeet goes mano a mano with Pitt's six-foot-seven, 265-pound bruiser DeJuan Blair at UConn on February 16 and at Pittsburgh on March 7. **Close encounters:** Xavier and Cincinnati (December 13 at Cincinnati) are three miles apart. Fights have followed games, and coaches have refused to shake hands. Cincinnati leads the series 47-28, but Xavier has won six of the past nine. **Hot curry:** The star of last year's NCAA tourney was Davidson's Stephen Curry. The Cameron Crazies will be, well, crazy when Curry takes on Duke on January 7. **Conference rival:** Memphis hasn't lost a conference

game since 2006, when the team succumbed to the University of Alabama at Birmingham on the road. The team travels back to Birmingham on February 26 to face possibly the best UAB team ever. **David vs. Goliath:** Out-of-nowhere star Lester Hudson of little University of Tennessee at Martin had the first quadruple double in men's NCAA Division I history last season. He faces his only ranked opponent, Tennessee, on the road on November 18. **Freddy vs. Jason:** Slashers James Harden of Arizona State and Chase Budinger of Arizona battle for Zona bragging rights in Tucson on January 21 and in Tempe a month later. **Poultry, anyone?** Kansas State students toss live chickens onto the court at the Fred Bramlage Coliseum when the team plays archrival Kansas (whose mascot is, of course, the Jayhawk). The birds land on February 14. PETA on line two!

Izzo Facto

A few words with Michigan State's Tom Izzo, *Playboy's* preseason Coach of the Year

Q: What advice would you give to talented kids hoping to play Division I?

A: Work on your game. So many kids play games instead of *working* on their game. Parents get upset because kids travel all over the country to play. Michael Jordan didn't do that; Magic Johnson didn't. They worked on their game. Too many kids worry about the frills and forget to bear down and get the grunt work done.

Q: Can a kid play big-time basketball and enjoy the collegiate experience?

A: Sometimes I run into a police officer or a professor and they tell me what some kid did. I say, "What did you do when you were that age?" Sometimes I feel sorry for these kids. They don't get to be kids. I'm not talking about getting into trouble; I just mean the chance to be regular human beings. There are pluses, but in all honesty there are a lot of negatives. The scrutiny is a little heavier than it should be on a college kid.

Q: It's the same thing for you, being a celebrity coach. If you go to dinner and have one beer, the story goes out: Izzo was drinking last night!

A: That's true. It's funny how that has changed. It's a sacrifice you make. At 53 I don't mind making it. But at 19 or 20 it's hard not to be a regular kid. Coaches get paid to make the sacrifice; kids get opportunities in return. It's more difficult than the average person thinks.

Q: Does Tom Izzo have an iPod, and if so, what's on it?

A: I do have one. I buy CDs with hits from the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and today. I need to stay in touch with myself and my players, and my kids are eight and 14 years old. I have a lot on my iPod.

Q: What's the best place to play?

A: I've been to Kentucky, Texas, Duke, Carolina, UConn and Illinois. Kansas is awesome. I will say this, though: The craziest have to be the Big Ten schools. Duke is great, but...

THE PLAYBOY 2008-2009 PRESEASON COLLEGE ALL-AMERICA TEAM

GUARDS

★ **JAMES HARDEN**—Arizona State, Sophomore, 6'4", 218 Pounds

Harden made an immediate impact for the Sun Devils as a freshman, averaging 17.8 points with 110 assists. He earned first-team all-Pac 10 honors despite being the youngest player in the conference.

★ **DARREN COLLISON**—UCLA, Senior, 6'1", 165 Pounds

Collison was a deadly .525 shooter from the three-point line a year ago. He averaged 14.5 points and 3.8 assists a game.

★ **TY LAWSON**—North Carolina, Junior, 5'11", 195 Pounds

Lawson's an explosive point guard who runs the floor extremely well and makes everyone around him better, as demonstrated by his 5.2 assists a game last year.

★ **STEPHEN CURRY**—Davidson, Junior, 6'2", 185 Pounds

An amazing point producer, Curry averaged 25.9 last year while shooting .483 from the floor and .894 from the free-throw line. His father, Dell, was a two-time Playboy All America (1984-1985, 1985-1986) from Virginia Tech.

FORWARDS

★ **BLAKE GRIFFIN**—Oklahoma, Sophomore, 6'10", 251 Pounds

He averaged 14.7 points and 9.1 rebounds a game in his debut season, the best of any Oklahoma true freshman since Wayman Tisdale.

★ **TYLER HANSBROUGH**—North Carolina, Senior, 6'9", 250 Pounds

The leading candidate for national player of the year honors, he's on pace to become North Carolina's all-time leading scorer. His number, 50, will be retired when he graduates.

★ **CHASE BUDINGER**—Arizona, Junior, 6'7", 218 Pounds

Budinger chose to return to school after initially declaring for the NBA draft. He averaged 17.1 points and 5.4 rebounds last season.

★ **TYLER SMITH**—Tennessee, Junior, 6'7", 215 Pounds

Smith hit game-deciding baskets in the final seconds three times last year for the Vols. He also led the team in rebounding and assists.

CENTERS

★ **HASHEEM THABEET**—Connecticut, Junior, 7'3", 263 Pounds

From Dar es Salaam, Tanzania by way of Cypress Christian School in Houston, Thabeet was the Big East Defensive Player of the Year last season. He averaged 7.9 rebounds and 4.5 blocks a game.

★ **A.J. OGILVY**—Vanderbilt, Sophomore, 6'11", 250 Pounds

Ogilvy, an Australian, played in several international competitions before attending Vandy. He averaged 17 points and 6.7 rebounds in his initial season with the Commodores.

**** GRANDE VENTI MOCHA OPRAH CHAI ****

THE MOST IRREVERENT MAN IN
AMERICA HAS THE HOTS FOR
MS. WINFREY.

WHAT THE HELL IS HE DRINKING?

--- BY DENIS LEARY ---

1 GR TAZO CHAI	3.65
1 VT PWC MOCHA	4.35
1 MUFFIN CRANBERRY	1.75
SUBTOTAL	

NO, THIS IS NOT AN ANTI-STARBUCKS RANT.

I did that already.

I could update that bit this very second with my thesis on how Starbucks may be responsible for the pussification of America—I reresearch the subject once or twice a week when I stand in line there and listen as some limp-wristed, yellow-Lance-Armstrong-bracelet-wearing, metrosexual-hair-goo-sporting, Hillary-Clinton's-tired-old-ass-worshipping puke spends 12 minutes trying to decide between the Orange Cranberry Vagina Muffin or the Pumpkin Cream Tampon Cake while fingering a Save The Rain Forest Compilation CD featuring Sting, Sheryl Crow, Joni Mitchell, Sting's Abs, That Hot 19-Year-Old Blonde White English Chick Who Sounds

Like Janis Joplin and Sting's Penis—who apparently pops out of his master's yoga pants to sing his new single "How I Have Tantric Sex With Trudie Styler For Seven Straight Hours."

After a decade or so of trying to set an example to the others by storming out of Starbucks with nothing in hand and the echoes of my brilliantly abusive tirades ringing in everyone's ears—I have come to realize the one weapon we all have just waiting in the wings:

Oprah.

Because Oprah can shame anyone into admitting the truth.

There was an author named James Frey who wrote a book called *A Million Little Pieces*. No one was going to buy the book, besides Frey and the various people in it he blamed for making him a giant, alcohol- and drug-

ingesting mess and—of course—the chosen special few who had helped him climb out of that very very dark hole.

Then he appeared on *Oprah* and voilà—the book became an international best-seller.

After many sales and almost as many months, it became known that most of what Frey claimed to be true in the book was, in fact—lies. Blatant, madeup, totally untrue and fiction-dressed-up-as-factual crap.

So Oprah invited him back onto the show and asked a million little questions about *A Million Little Pieces* and the next thing you know, Frey had crawled away cringing and crying and spewing I'm sorries.

Oprah had used her secret weapon: shame.

Shame shame shame, shame on you.

I wanna drag a Starbucks barista onto Oprah and have

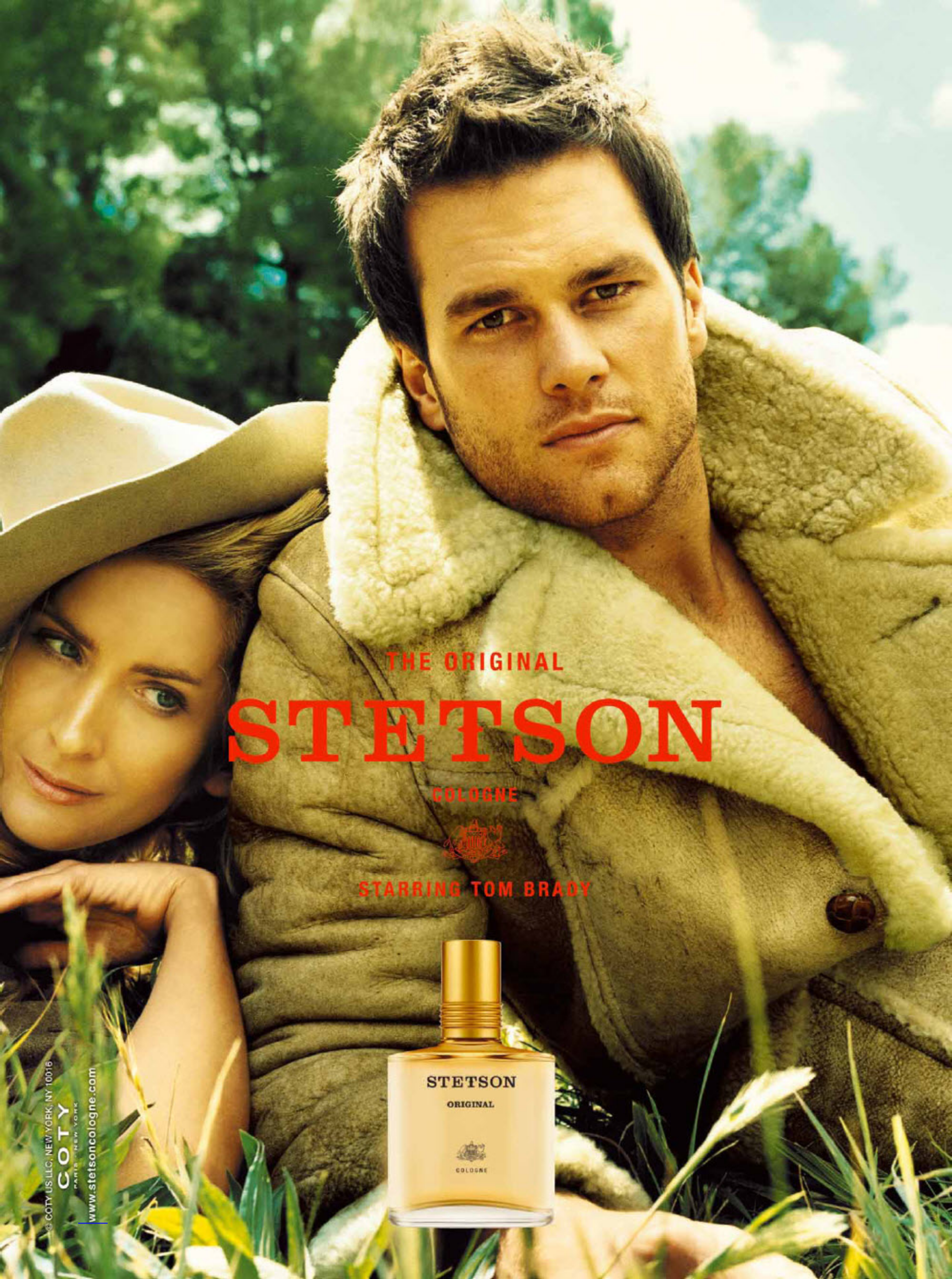


Into the Night

Crystal Collection

WITTNAUER

W
SWISS



THE ORIGINAL

STETSON

COLOGNE



STARRING TOM BRADY



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COTY
PARIS - NEW YORK
www.stetsoncologne.com



If Webster's dictionary had an entry for "super supermodel," **Carol Alt** would be on the very short list of women pictured. The 48-year-old actress, author and businesswoman remains a stunner thanks, she says, to the raw-food diet she began following about 14 years ago. Now, with the help of photographer **Timothy White**, Carol sheds the clothes she has spent her career presenting and shows off her natural assets in her first nude pictorial. We asked the ravishing raw-food enthusiast what it took to be a successful model during the 1980s, when she was referred to as the Face and appeared on hundreds of magazine covers. "What worked for me was loving what I did and breaking the tension by being funny," says Alt. "I'm a clown—a clown in a high-fashion model's body. If you can't laugh at yourself, it's pretty hopeless."



In *Agenda for a New Era*, **Gary Hart**, the former senator, examines the challenges a great president must face, from setting domestic priorities and establishing America's role in a changing world to reforming our military to meet new challenges. "I certainly hope the next president is capable of repairing the considerable damage that has been created, or we'll all be in trouble," says Hart, who has been doing his part to improve the world by helping run two climate-change programs and working on security issues.




Best-selling author **Jodi Picoult** has written 15 novels, including *Nineteen Minutes* and *Change of Heart*. She has also moonlighted as a comic-book writer, taking on five issues of DC Comics' *Wonder Woman*. In *Comic Heroes*, Picoult explains how she wanted to bring a woman's perspective to an iconic female character that for more than 60 years had been written almost exclusively by men. For inspiration for all her stories, Picoult mines her own life experiences. "Let's just say I am the world's worst friend," she says. "Tell me something and it's likely to end up in a character's mouth. I usually draw a plot out of thin air but pepper the book with real-life conversations I've had in different contexts."



In his new book, *Why We Suck*, award-winning actor and comedian **Denis Leary** uses his acerbic wit to attack the politically correct, the hypocritical and basically anyone who takes himself too seriously. You might think he would have some harsh criticism for national treasure Oprah Winfrey in the chapter titled *Grande Venti Mocha Oprah Chai*, excerpted here. Surprisingly, Dr. Denis finds Oprah to be the remedy for all our sicknesses. And yes, a doctorate was bestowed on Leary by his alma mater, Emerson College. "They only gave it to me because I'm famous," he says. "But it's legal, and it means I get to say I'm a doctor—just like Dr. Phil."



"*Blood's a Rover* is the book you write when your world burns down and the women cut you loose," says the Demon Dog of American Literature, **James Ellroy**. The riveting labyrinthine novel—the final installment of the *L.A. Confidential* author's Underworld USA Trilogy—will be the talk of the publishing world in late 2009, but Ellroy decided to give PLAYBOY an exclusive early look: "I tried to rewrite 1968 to 1972 to my own specifications and drop you in the middle of the party."



her cross examine him or her and I know that within minutes she will have an open admittance that Chai and Venti and Breve and all that shiny sugary Starbucks smack is just an excuse to charge mo money mo money for what is—in the end—just another good cup of joe.

Oprah, my friends, is the cure for what ails America.

When I saw the headlines and a front-page picture on the *New York Post* about a woman who became a man but retained his/her womb just in case and then got pregnant I had many many many questions—a million little questions—but the one that bubbled up to the front of my head every time I read about it was "Does this guy have a dick or what?" As expected, no newspaper—not even the *Post*—addressed the issue. And if the *Post* ain't gonna do it—you know it just ain't gonna happen.

But God Bless Oprah.

If the story ran the first time on a Tuesday? Oprah had the guy and his wife on her show that Friday—she found them and flew them and sat them down and you bet your Oprah-loving fan site she said—about four minutes into the interview—"Let's get to the penis question." Turns out the guy has enough of a clitoris going on that it actually forms a small penis and him and his gal pal can have intercourse. I don't think it's any kind of Sting and Trudie marathon event but it qualifies and obviously satisfies them both. But that's not the point.

The point is Oprah.

Asking anybody about anything.

And always getting an answer.

Jerry Springer and Maury Povich and Montel Williams and Sally Jessy Raphael and all the other dig-up-the-dreggers who pulverized us with drunks and junkies and whiter than white trash

trailer trash in their tighty whiteys and cheap lace panties and thong-cracked asses have all died by the wayside—victims of Oprah's ultimate faith in just how smart you can be—no matter how dumb you already are.

Before I started writing this piece all I knew of Oprah was The Occasional Guy Click-In—that's where men dial up Oprah on the TV because of The Wife or The Girlfriend—usually in the middle of an argument about a towel that turns into a sudden tornado involving:

A. Sex

B. This relationship is going nowhere

C. You never talk about your feelings

D. All of the above but not in alphabetical order

And then in the midst of the teardrops and the angst and the stony sidelong looks she finally deigns to mention that Oprah just yesterday said blah blah Find A Better Soul Mate blah or Oprah said a couple days ago blib glib Is He Really The One For You? glub Oprahdey glub.

They talk about Oprah like they spoke to her on the phone on Sunday or she was just here having tea this afternoon.

In the past I blamed Oprah for all the damage Dr. Phil has done. He was nothing before her. Just another balding blowhard with endless axes to grind, but she made him into a star and produced The Dr. Full Show which unleashed him onto all of America, where he can say such thick and exasperating things as "Everyone has their own personal Ground Zero."

Oh really?

Does that mean someday two large speeding planes will crash into the side of your insipid, hairless head?

Let's hope so.

I was ready to steamroll right over Oprah—she was

the reason so many wives and girlfriends were disappointed and unamused. She was a one-note wonder, fooling feckless women with her Makeovers and Makeunders and a seemingly relentless river of Hope:

Men Can Change!

Children Will Study!

You Can Be A Better You!

What a crock.

Then I sat down and watched a few Oprahs.

I'm not kidding, guys—I got worried.

One day she was angry as she mourned her recently departed cocker spaniel Sophie with a special piece entitled "Lisa Ling Investigates the Hidden World of Puppy Mills."

The next day she was cackling in apparent Full-On Crush Mode as Gorgeous George Clooney detailed a practical joke he had played on his good buddy Brad Pitt.

The next day her brow became creased with intense concern about Security Clutter Foods—admitting how, just like the rest of us, she gorges on snacks she keeps around the house for the sole sake of gorging on them.

Security Clutter Foods? Holy shit.

She turned a harmless box of macaroni and "orange-powdered cheese" into something akin to a terrorist attack on her ass and—unlike Dr. Full when he invoked September 11—I did not wish her ill.

Instead—I threw out bags of Cheetos.

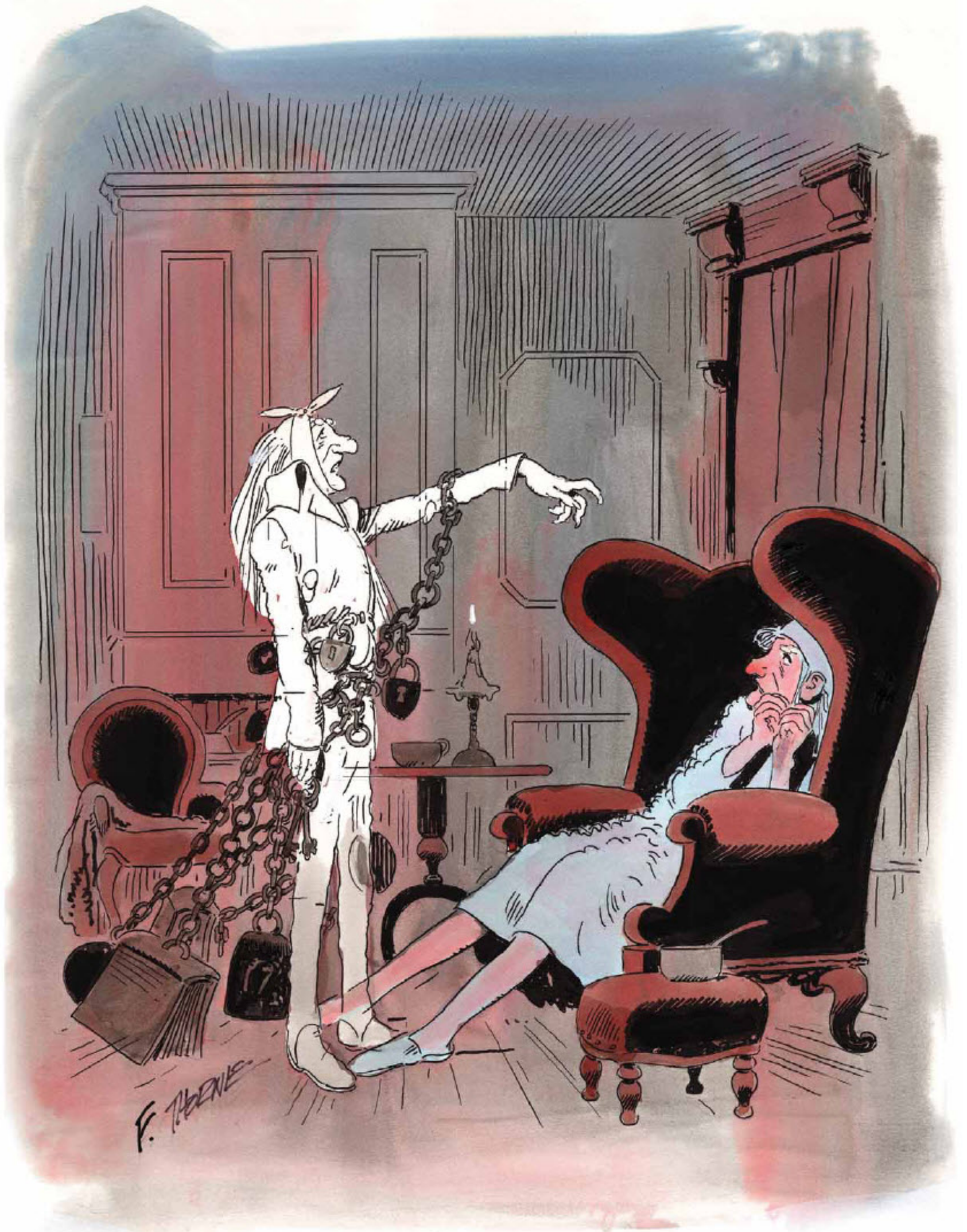
One show she was heavy. The next show she was thin. Or thinn-ER.

One show she was happy. The next show? Sad.

The show after that she was five different emotions in between those two before being both of those two—sometimes at almost the exact same time.

I was fascinated. Jay Leno is always Jay Leno. Jon Stewart is always Jon

(continued on page 162)



"Ebenezer, you will be visited by only two spirits this Christmas. The third one thinks he might get laid tonight."

D



DOUBLE

TROUBLE

Celebrating sisterly love
with two Misses December



How's this for a holiday gift? Twins who unwrap themselves. Meet the winning pair of Jennifer and Natalie Campbell, 22-year-old identical twins from Colorado who delight in their differences despite their obvious similarities. Both played volleyball in high school, both attended the University of Northern Colorado, both have dogs, and they all live together. Jennifer, the older twin (left, on the opposite page...we think), feels she is more of a girlie-girl and more studious, notwithstanding her racy tattoo—a butterfly on her lower stomach. Natalie describes herself as more of an athletic tomboy who enjoys boating, camping and fishing. “Our parents were really good about letting us be individuals,” says Jennifer. “We each definitely have our own personality.”

The two Misses December were discovered by a Playboy scout when Natalie entered a swimsuit contest at a Hooters. The twins moved to southern California last May to pursue the opportunity. “We miss home, but we love it here,” says Natalie. The sisters plan on returning to Colorado to spend Christmas with their parents and older brother, all of whom support their decision to pose for PLAYBOY.

Natalie and Jennifer say they've never gone for the same guy at the same time, but they both have a thing for men in uniform. “Whether it be policemen, firemen or military men—it's all so sexy,” says Natalie. Jennifer, who has been in only two serious relationships, adds, “I've always been the type of person who, if I'm going to be intimate, has to be in love.”

The Campbell twins want to continue modeling before returning to finish school. Jennifer desires a degree in psychology and wants to work with kids; Natalie loves animals and is eyeing a career in the veterinary field. Though they've enjoyed their party days, they both say they've settled down a bit. “Our close friends would say we're double the trouble,” says Jennifer. “I think we're double the fun.”



Top: The Coors Twins have nothing on these Rocky Mountain sisters. Jennifer (left) and Natalie know how to have a good time indoors and out. Bottom: Jennifer in the driver's seat at full throttle.









See more of Misses December at cyber.playboy.com.



MISSES DECEMBER PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATES OF THE MONTH



Jennifer Campbell

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET



NAME: Jennifer and Natalie Campbell

HEIGHT: 5'8" WEIGHT: 115 lbs.

BUST: 34 WAIST: 25 HIPS: 35

BIRTH DATE: 8/8/84 BIRTHPLACE: Greeley, Colorado

AMBITIONS: To further our careers in modeling and finish our degrees.

TURN-ONS: Men in uniform, honesty, a good sense of humor, a nice smile and men who are tall, dark and handsome.

TURNOFFS: Liars, bad hygiene, egotistical guys, laziness and men with a bad sense of style.

FAVORITE THINGS TO DO TOGETHER: Modeling, shopping, traveling, playing volleyball and watching TV.

JOBS WE HAD BEFORE PLAYBOY: Hooters Girl, Jewelry Salesperson and full-time student.

PLANS FOR FURTHERING OUR EDUCATION: Jennifer - finishing my degree in child psychology. Natalie - finishing my degree in biomedical sciences.

THE WILDER SISTER: Natalie ☺



Jennifer, age 14, school picture.



Jennifer and Natalie, age 11.



Natalie, age 14, school picture.





Natalie Campbell

MISSSES DECEMBER PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATES OF THE MONTH



PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

A fed-up wife asked her persnickety car-loving husband what he wanted for Christmas. "Something that goes from zero to 250 in three seconds flat," he said.

On Christmas Day he unwrapped a bathroom scale.

Three stages of life:

1. You believe in Santa Claus.
2. You don't believe in Santa Claus.
3. You are Santa Claus.

Why did the snowman have a smile on his face?

Because he heard the snowblower was coming down the block.



A gentleman walked into a jewelry store one Friday evening with a beautiful young woman at his side. He told the jeweler he was looking for a special Christmas present for his new girlfriend. The jeweler looked through his stock and brought out a beautiful \$40,000 diamond ring.

The young lady's eyes sparkled, and her whole body trembled with excitement. Seeing this, the gentleman said, "I'll write you a check right now, and when it clears on Monday I'll be back to pick it up."

On Monday the jeweler called the man and said, "Your check bounced!"

"I know," the man said, "but let me tell you about my weekend!"

What's the difference between a Christmas tree and a wife?

A Christmas tree looks good with the lights on.

Three men died in a car accident on Christmas Eve. They all found themselves at the pearly gates, waiting to enter heaven. Before the men could enter they had to present something that embodied the spirit of Christmas. The first man searched his pocket and found some mistletoe, so he was allowed in. The second man presented a cookie, so he was allowed in. The third man pulled out a pair of panties.

Confused by this last gesture, Saint Peter asked, "How do these represent Christmas?"

The man answered, "They were Carol's."

Why is Santa Claus always so happy?

Because he knows where all the naughty girls live.

Do you know what would have happened if there had been Three Wise Women instead of Three Wise Men?

They would have asked for directions, arrived on time, helped deliver the baby and brought practical gifts.

Our *Unabashed Dictionary* defines *elves* as subordinate Clauses.

A man was boarding a plane on his way back from visiting family over the holidays when he heard another passenger shout to a man in the crowd waiting to see him off, "Good-bye. Your wife was a great lay!"

After the plane was in flight, the first man walked over to the one who had done the shouting and asked, "Did I hear you correctly? Did you actually have the audacity to tell that man his wife was a great lay?"

The other man shrugged his shoulders. "It isn't really true," he said, "but I didn't want to hurt his feelings."



The hospital's HR director remarked to the floor manager of the busy ICU that there seemed to be a lot of pregnant nurses in their unit. As they walked down the hall, he became concerned about a possible staff shortage and asked the manager when each nurse was due. At every room the manager would say, "She's due some time in late September."

After passing the fifth room, the manager looked perplexed. He said, "I have no idea about this one; she wasn't at the Christmas party."

What do female reindeer do after Christmas?

They go out and blow a few bucks.

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.



"Is that all you want for Christmas?"



"Is that all you want for Christmas?"



COMIC HEROES

CELEBRATED WRITERS PAY TRIBUTE TO THE BEST OF THE STRIPS: SPIDER-MAN, WONDER WOMAN, BATMAN, LI'L ABNER, AND INTRODUCING THE EPIPHANY



SPIDER-MAN: THE QUINTESSENTIAL BLACK MALE HERO BY WALTER MOSLEY!

When I was a young boy—nine, 10 and almost 11 years old—I was crazy for comic books. *Batman*, *Justice League of America*, *Superman* and *Legion of Super-Heroes* were among my favorites. I loved the DC superheroes for their powers and bright costumes, their selfless, clean-cut heroism and popularity among their peers and elders. These heroes, and their friends and loved ones, lived happy middle-class lives that were interrupted from time to time, in exciting fashion, by the occasional supervillain bent on crime or world domination. This villain was always defeated after a very satisfying battle. The bad guys were often more powerful than the heroes, but the handsome young do-gooders used their honesty, goodness and superior thinking abilities to overcome the evil that drove their foes.

Every story concluded with a tiny box at the lower-right-hand corner of the final frame that read **END**. The villain was behind bars or banished from our lawful plane of existence, and the hero was walking down a shady lane hand in hand with his best girl.

It goes without saying that all these heroes were white; most of them were male. There were no Greenbergs, Jamals, Garcias or Lings among these wish fulfillments of American white supremacy.

I didn't care about any of that. When I was reading *Adventure Comics*, I was Lightning Lad. I wore his dark-blue costume and cape and used my powers to overcome the bullies

who roamed the playground of my elementary school. As a young black kid, I learned to appropriate the privilege white America wished to hoard.

I was happy with my perfect heroes and unaffected by their race, gender or ethnicity.

That happiness would dissipate with the appearance of one rebel comic book.

In August of 1962 the fledgling publisher Marvel Comics came out with a story in *Amazing Fantasy* about a new hero it planned to launch in his own comic: the Amazing Spider-Man. After reading that story I was never to go back to the safe and sane heroes of DC Comics.

On the surface Peter Parker was like any other superhero—white and male with a Christian surname. But that was the least of him. The real hero underneath was nothing like the two-dimensional characters of Superman's ilk.

As Spider-Man, Peter Parker was powerful, brilliant, unusually funny and heroic, but differing from his DC counterparts, he was seen by the population in general as a threat, a menace and a criminal. He was vilified in the press and hounded by the police, feared by everyday citizens and always on the verge of poverty. His day job, photographer for *The Daily Bugle*, was to present images of his alter ego that were used to further indict him as a threat to the people of New York.

He was an orphan being raised by an elderly aunt and uncle, but in the first story, through an act of unforgivable



Ours was the comics generation. In the late 1940s, before the advent of mass television, comics reading was what we did on Saturday afternoons if the movies were out of the question. We'd sprawl on the floor, feet in the air, reading and rereading our ample stash. Friends would bring other comics of greater or lesser value, and intricate negotiations would take place.

We didn't know we were participating in a venerable art form. Narratives told through a series of consecutive images go back to the ancient Egyptians and recur in—for instance—medieval frescoes of saints' lives, and the Bayeux Tapestry, depicting the 1066 Norman invasion of England, and in 18th and 19th century political cartooning. These older forms of the "comic" art were not light-hearted and jolly: They involved bloodshed and violence, and among the political satirists, they were frequently scatological and even pornographic.

Some of the comics we read verged on those things too, which was why our parents objected to them. *Mickey Mouse* and *Donald Duck* and *Little Lulu* were good clean fun, but they were only the sparkling tip of an otherwise grubby iceberg. "Lurid" and "trashy" were among the milder adult descriptions of the crime and horror comics that fetched high prices during our Saturday-afternoon trading sessions. Many a drooling zombie made off with curvaceous blondes through the swamps of Louisiana, many a hood and thug sprouted bullet holes like Swiss cheese or were stuck with a knife as big as a leg. And many a hapless, tearful girl was roped to a chair or strung up by her wrists, procedures that caused her large bosom to erupt out of her inadequately buttoned dress. (These bosoms did not erupt fully, or not in those comics that were legitimately for sale:

Nipples were verboten, in comics as in the vaudeville of those days. But it was the thought that counted.)

Similar girls were everywhere on the paperback fiction that was on full-frontal view in drugstores. They were drawn and painted, not photographed; they were wearing red or black satin negligees and were draped in post-strangling position on beds, heads down, tits up, or shown flinching away from the leather-clad hands reaching for their long white throats; or, in a gesture that was surely an invitation to murder, they were posed flashing some leg, with provocative smiles. Pocketbook versions of Hemingway had them,



"IF HE WEREN'T SO RICH, HE'D BE A COMMON IDIOT."

and Faulkner, and F. Scott Fitzgerald: It was amazing what kind of high-class fiction you could be lured into reading, deceived by these slutty decoys. (I didn't see the same effect again until the iron curtain fell and porn flooded Eastern Europe, and some of my publishers there—desperate to retain a sliver of market share—put versions of these girls on the covers of my books: black satin, enormous cone-shaped breasts. I expect there were a lot of disappointed Slavic men in raincoats around that time.)

They got into so much trouble in the comics, those negligee-wearing girls! They might have stepped right out of the pages of the Marquis de Sade, not that we knew a thing about him. Many of these girls were gun molls: To qualify, you had (over)

hubris, he indirectly caused the death of his uncle.

In other words, Spider-Man's problems were much like the issues that faced most young black men in America. He was shunned and feared despite his abilities and contributions to society. He was misrepresented in the media to such a degree that no one knew or understood or even cared about him. He was an unrecognized soldier in the war against the enemies of our society. The continual harangue against his character and worth made him angry and so even other heroes found him hard to identify with.

Spider-Man sometimes lost battles and had no end of troubles with girls. As a high school student, he was beset by bullies whom he couldn't fight if he didn't want to be found out. His aunt had heart disease. The villains he fought sometimes won. And in Spider-Man's world, people died, good people died—with regularity. Sometimes the villains he fought had good sides to them or at least relatives who were good.

A knockout punch in Spider-Man's world didn't always make him a winner, and more and more often the end in the last frame was replaced by TO BE CONTINUED.

Spider-Man was, and is, the quintessential black male hero. He perseveres in a world that demonizes and fears him; he contributes to the survival of a nation that would rather forget he ever showed up on these shores. He is the unconscious engine that runs America's culture, as America, in turn, runs from the implications of his existence.

In number 91 of *The Amazing Spider-Man* (published in 1970) our hero must again endure the wrath of the public and the media alike when he is wrongly accused of the murder of Captain George Stacy, his mentor and the father of his girlfriend Gwen. Stacy was killed by building debris that Doctor Octopus loosened during a rooftop battle with Spidey.



to brush your hair over one eye, and you had to smoke, with the cigarette held in a corner of your mouth, never in the middle. But despite being a gun moll, you hardly ever got to shoot a gun, and when you did you'd miss because some guy in leather gloves would grab your wrists. Then your eyes would pop out and you'd scream, and it could very well be the rope treatment and the tits-up curtains for you.

These were the truly objectionable comics. There was, however, a middle ground—comics that made themselves presentable to grown-ups by concealing their agendas just enough to

themselves, but what on earth were they thinking? *Li'l Abner* purported to be about a group of lovable hillbillies—Pappy Yokum, baby-eyed and diminutive; tough, shrewd, two-fisted Mammy Yokum; their son, strapping, good-natured, sexually dormant Li'l Abner; and the other inhabitants of Dogpatch, their muddy, pig-infested village. Through them, Capp took aim at so many features of American life and character that it's hard to count them, and his strip was astonishingly popular. But the ongoing plot driver was the love of beautiful Daisy Mae for Li'l Abner, who didn't notice. This is why Daisy Mae was always shedding a single pearl-dropped tear.



Left: Indulging his passion for the female form, Al Capp illustrates the bid to find a woman lovely enough to arouse Dumpington Van Lump. Above: Superman in fine form.

sneak by. Superheroes, for instance: In superhero comics, or most of them, you could show people virtually without their clothes on by simply drawing naked people and then coloring parts of them and adding a cape. Superman set the trend: skintight long johns, then a pair of bathing trunks over that, still pretty skintight. And all this before spandex.

But Superman, despite his rippling muscles and his aerodynamics with Lois Lane, wasn't very sexy: His heart was too pure, and he was too invulnerable. Captain Marvel and the Marvel family weren't very sexy either (Mary Marvel, decorously clad in a pleated skirt—who was she anyway? A sister? A girlfriend? I never figured it out), though the *Shazam!* method of transformation from weedy human to Charles Atlas ultrahunk was preferable to the phone-booth method.

Batman, however, was another story. Batman, though peaches and cream then, compared with his recent film appearances, was already noir. There were a lot of cellars and overhead single-bulb lighting in *Batman*. The Bat himself straddled the gap between trashy and lurid on the one hand and acceptable child entertainment on the other, and this surely stemmed from the Bat's own moral ambivalence: The man was messed up. Also, he was fully human: It was the Batmobile and other pre-Bond techno-gizmos for him, not magic words or other-planet origins. This raised the level of suspense. Also, Batman had Catwoman, with the skintight outfit that looked like black rubber, the vampy manner, the whip and the claws. These two were made for each other—creatures of the night, both—and it was just a matter of time before some screechy, adrenalin-fueled love-you-hate-you action would take place. Not that it ever did, the comics being the delayed-gratification never-ending story form par excellence.

Batman was subversive in its way—fight crime while drawing kinky stuff—but the most subversive comic of all was Al Capp's *Li'l Abner*. Adults approved of it for kids because they enjoyed it them-

Daisy Mae was preternaturally luscious and barely clothed. Her outfit was a spotted blouse that was always falling off and a minute scrap of skirt held together with a safety pin. Capp festooned his strip with other such lovelies—Moonbeam McSwine, a dirty girl who bathed with pigs; Wolf Gal, who had furry eyebrows and hung out with wolves; Stupefyin' Jones, who caused men's tongues to loll out of their mouths like melting toffee; and the riskily named Appassionata Von Climax (in a family paper? for kids?). So, though adult readers could purport to be engaged by the wit and the clever satire, the men at any rate could ogle Capp's parade of barely clothed pinup girls. In this direction, Capp pushed the envelope as far as he could push it.

How far was too far in the family-oriented newspaper funnies? A lot farther than it is now. In one sequence, Capp had two elderly rich ladies searching the globe for women stunning enough to arouse the torpid ardor of the wealthy Van Lump heir, Dumpington, with a view to perpetuating the Van Lump line. This allowed Capp to parade in front of his readers a barely dressed harem of hour-glass-figured pleasers, but none of them caused Dumpington to say anything but "Urp" until Daisy Mae got scooped from Dogpatch and dragged in front of him. To our more aware and suspicious present-day minds, the old ladies would be pegged as depraved procuresses, Dumpington would be evil rather than funny, Daisy Mae would be a victim kidnapped by sexual predators, and the strip would be yanked from child view. But we read on, oblivious. In those days I thought a child molester was some kid who had an after-school job collecting moles, and in this I was not alone.

How warped did we really get from reading all those edgy comics, we children of the comics generation? Probably a lot less warped than we'd get now from surfing hard-core porn on the Net. In retrospect, those gun molls, those catwomen and those voluptuous Al Capp seminudes are haloed in the sweet light cast by nostalgia. What we didn't know did not hurt us. Or not yet.



When DC Comics approached me in 2006 to write several issues of the *Wonder Woman* comic-book series, my first order of business was to get that poor girl a functional outfit. After all, any woman who is even marginally as well-endowed as Wonder Woman knows you can't fight crime—much less go about more mundane daily activities—while you're worried about your top falling down. I had visions of her off-panel, tugging up that glittery spandex corset. *Could we just add some straps to her bustier?* I asked, and I was politely told that the costume had been around for 60-odd years for good reason.

It begged the question, though: Why *has* Wonder Woman had such staying power? And for that matter, who's reading her? She has long been upheld as a role model for young girls—the epitome of a strong female icon—but her sheer bodaciousness (and that costume) suggests that it's her body, not her mind, that attracts male readers. The paradox began back in 1941, when she was created by William Moulton Marston, the psychologist who had invented the polygraph. He believed women were more honest than men and were better workers, and he had a vision of the future in which women ruled over men. As if this weren't revolutionary enough for the 1940s, he and his wife, Elizabeth, lived with another woman, Olive Byrne, in a polyamorous relationship. His Wonder Woman was an amalgamation of the women in his life—free-spirited, unconventional and strong. Known as Princess Diana to the Amazons with whom she grew up, Wonder Woman sported indestructible bracelets—made from Zeus's shield—and a lasso of truth—an Olympian deity's equivalent of Marston's polygraph. She was six feet tall, stunning, packed a mean punch—and slipped neatly into the Golden Age of comic books, when DC was powered by a testosterone triumvirate: Batman, Green Lantern and Superman.

Believe it or not, girls used to read more comics than boys. In the early 1940s the *Archie* comics and others like them offered three female role models: career girls who became nurses or secretaries; swooning heroines who got married and had happily-ever-afters; and bubblegum teens, like Betty and Veronica, who had catfights over Archie. Wonder Woman blew these stereotypes away. She was strong enough to kick Superman's ass, didn't need a guy to be happy and had a job

track that, in one of Marston's stories, took her right into the Oval Office as president of the United States. And yet, even as Wonder Woman battled the Nazis and crime, there were episodes of bondage that were at best cringe-worthy and at worst the stuff of Marston's sexual fantasies. She became the first female member of the Justice Society of America—but she was relegated to the role of secretary.

And that, really, is the paradox of Wonder Woman. As she has evolved, it's always been one step forward, two steps back.

Why? Well, I have a theory. For 60 years, the adventures of the world's most recognizable superheroine were written by men. With the exception of Mindy Newell, who wrote a three-issue run in the 1980s, I was the first woman approached to write the *Wonder Woman* comic-book series. Granted, some of the story lines created by the men were fantastic,

but they also involved stripping Wonder Woman of her powers, dumbing her down to run a boutique, leaving her blind and bound. What's the point of having the world's strongest female superhero if you're always trying to break her? It may have less to do with Wonder Woman herself than her male readers. When confronted by a strong, smart, beautiful woman, most guys are entranced...and a little bit terrified. It's one thing to say women are equal to men; it's another to suggest women are *superior*. This is why Wonder Woman can't catch a break, even though she technically qualifies for a senior-citizen ticket at the movies. She's allowed to be strong. She just can't be too strong, because then she alienates female readers, who find her too tough to identify with, and male readers, who find her too threatening to lust after.

Because she walks such a fine line, Wonder Woman has attracted a less traditional audience than other comic-book icons. Not surprisingly, she has a huge gay and lesbian following. Like her buddies Batman and Superman, whose male readers want to be them, Wonder Woman has always had female fans who admire her strength and her intelligence. But she has male readers, too, who admire—well—her breasts. As a writer, was there a way for me to keep both groups satisfied? I thought the answer, ironically, involved making Wonder Woman a little more like the rest of us. She'd still have all her superhuman powers—and her curves. But I didn't want to humiliate her, the least I could do as a fellow female. In my story line Wonder Woman was smarter than everyone else.



An empowered Wonder Woman (above) in a panel from Jodi Picoult's 2007 run as writer of the series. Below, from 1943, number 21, an entirely different view of the heroine.





THE EPIPHANY BY JONATHAN LETHEM!

She was the one who rescued the dude in distress. And I played up elements of her life that allowed female readers to relate to her in a visceral way they never had. Unlike Superman, who has a human persona in the real world (Clark Kent), Diana has always been an outsider. She loves humans, but she's never going to be one of them. Just like today's "wonder women," she has to do it all—balance work, family and self—while secretly wondering every now and then, *Am I doing a good enough job?* In other words, Wonder Woman was vulnerable—not physically, as portrayed in those earlier scenes of bondage, but mentally, with doubts that seemed real,



honest and awfully human. Suddenly, Wonder Woman had enough of a chink in her armor to make a male reader feel as if he was on equal terms. And for female readers, Wonder Woman's crisis of faith made her more than a sex symbol populating the fantasies of men. She was a *sister*, she was struggling, she was one of us.

I'm happy to say I think Wonder Woman is headed in the right direction. In her current incarnation she remains strong enough to go mano

a mano with Superman, and she has incredible stamina. She's got experience fighting crime, political oppression and sheer sorcery. She can communicate with all sorts of animals and has staggering wisdom. She's a flawless diplomat, leader and warrior. And of course she still has that lasso of truth, to keep the rest of us honest. In fact, she sounds so much like real women I know that it's tempting to wonder whether life's imitating art or vice versa. And while having a Wonder Woman in the White House temporarily remains the stuff of legend, I'm delighted that for the first time ever, DC Comics has assigned a female writer to the series for the long term—the incredibly talented Gail Simone. Given that Simone was the impetus behind a website called *Women in Refrigerators*—a list of the gratuitous deaths of female characters in comic books, usually as a plot device for the male characters—I think Wonder Woman is in very good hands.

As long as little girls dress up in those red boots and that tiara for Halloween, as long as we all hope for good to triumph over evil, there will always be a place for Wonder Woman. Whether you admire her because she can kick through a brick wall without messing up her hair, or because she can (literally) fly circles around the guys, she represents what we all know: Absolutely nothing can stand in the way of a strong woman.

In the last issue I wrote for DC Comics, I wrote myself into the script, instructing the illustrator to make an Amazon warrior look like a certain red-haired novelist moonlighting as a comic-book writer. And sure enough, when the issue hit the stands, there was my alter ego...systematically beating the crap out of Batman.

Just for the record: The breastplate of *my* armor had straps.

The Epiphany, Earth's subtlest, secretest, most selfless superhero, may perish at any instant. That every waking second is a matter of life and death is, for **The Epiphany**, a way of life, mortality his middle name. In fact, he's roused himself from ordinary sleep to find he's been strapped to **The Chair of Death** by his nemesis, the snide, jaded and callous French Supervillain **Le Petit Mort!**

Yet, as always seems to be the case, there is plenty of time, while he is secured to **The Chair of Death**, for **The Epiphany's** life to flash before his eyes. For **The Epiphany**, this happens in reverse:

His "golden" years, semiretirement, laurel-resting, award-accepting, fan-mail-answering, reenactments of his greatest adventures in television docudramas, clasped to the First Lady's bosom during visits to the White House of a president whose policies he finds bankrupt and manner he regards as repugnant, always feeling the charlatan, the ersatz hero, dolled up in his **Epiphany** suit yet not actually detecting any throb of his powers, forever playing the part of himself, chasing ghosts of defeated enemies

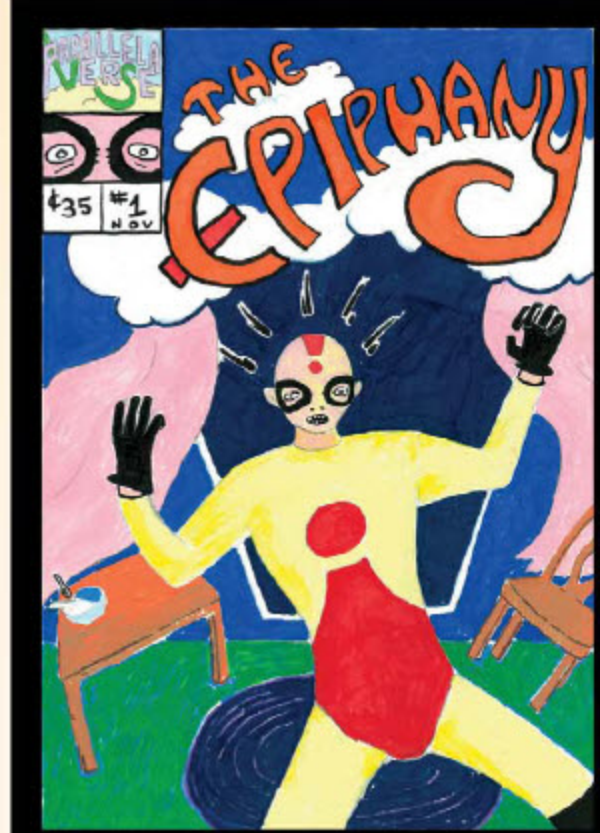
he now misses as if they were friends, though God knows he hated them heartily enough at the time.

Those years of meandering exile in the transparent invisible timeless extradimensional **Precinct of Snoredom**, in the hapless company of **The Boneless Men**, from where it seemed he'd never return.

His triumphant rescue of **The Polymorphs** from their captivity in the nefarious tendrils of **Stockholm Syndrome** and **Capitulator**, really the last fine moment he could call his own.

That momentous final battle with his mocking mid-career nemesis **Déjà Vu**, in **The Forest of Trees Falling**, which no one actually ever heard about but **The Epiphany** vows he will never permit himself to forget.

Those long disillusioned years attempting to hold together a Supergroup with his fellow heroes **Eureka!**, **Tour De Force** and **Non Sequitur**, in order to do mortal combat with the repulsive and unsettling group of Supervillains **Le Petit Mort** had for a time assembled around him in the cause of World Conquest—**Freudian Slip**, **Wandering Eye** and **Senior Moment**—and the terrible lonely realization that he and the others could never hope to coordinate their schedules, that like him they mostly failed to control or even predict the marvelous onset of their powers—that sudden eclipsing of their civilian identities by their heroic ones—and therefore that the life of **The Epiphany** was to be a solitary and lonely one, at last and forever, and that his covert feelings of attraction to **Non Sequitur** could never hope to find an appropriate moment to be confessed. *(concluded on page 166)*



Jonathan Lethem's superhero is based on the above painting, *The Epiphany* #1 by Scott Alden, featured in Alden's forthcoming book, *Parallelverse*.



"Who said housewives were desperate?"

THE HUNT FOR THE 55TH

A little tease for what's in store in next month's historic issue

For 54 years and 11 months we've used the pages of this magazine to celebrate women. Beautiful women, intelligent women, feisty and fascinating women. From Marilyn Monroe in issue number one to the beauties you see here, every photo has been a dream come true as well as an affirmation of the sexual revolution, which began decades ago and, many



Above: The man himself at the Mansion with 20 beauties, one of whom could be next month's 55th Anniversary Playmate. Right: You'd better be polite to Mary Piemonte. The 21-year-old's father is a retired cop. The Chicago hottie is a big Sinatra fan and calls herself an Italian angel. She says she'd be honored to wear the Bunny ears. Below: a casting shoot in New York. Left: "It has always been my dream to model for PLAYBOY!" says Katie Anderson. Looks like this is her lucky day. Katie, 20, hails from Scottsdale, Arizona. The gorgeous brunette is an outdoorsy girl who loves Stephen King novels and Britney Spears.



ANNIVERSARY PLAYMATE

would argue, is still picking up steam. As Hugh Hefner recently wrote, "The lesson to be learned from these Centerfolds remains the same now as it was back in 1954: Good girls like sex, and there's nothing wrong with that." We scoured the globe in search of our 55th Anniversary Playmate. Our scouts and photo crews marched across Europe and the States in search of this special woman. So far we've managed to narrow down a rather impressive short list. Think of these six pages as a pre-party for the big bash next month, when our winner will be revealed in all her glory.



Left: It doesn't get much more exotic than this. Jessica Burciaga, 25, is Mexican, French and Irish. What turns her on? "A man who knows how to kiss not only my mouth but my whole body." Above: Jenna Michelle is our kind of girl. The 21-year-old Californian loves Marilyn Monroe, shooting guns and playing *Guitar Hero*. Below: casting in the Big Apple. Holly Madison looks on.

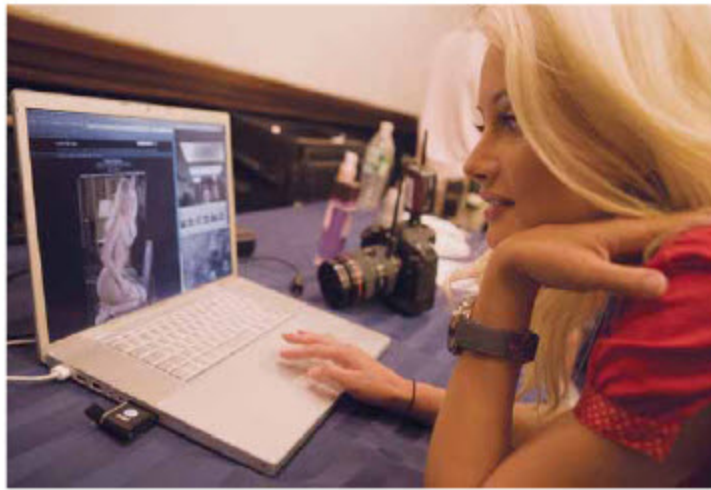




Clockwise from top left: Chelsea Co is big in Japan—maybe not famous (yet), but the Japanese beauty, who attends college in the U.S., boasts, “Nobody in Japan has a body like mine. Usually Asian girls are skinny, but I have a supercurvy body.” Meet Crystal McCahill. This Chicagoan’s perfect date includes an afternoon at Wrigley Field. She’ll have to wear more than a string of beads. The Dallas Cowboys look good this year but not as good as they did a few years ago when Tavia Chatham was a cheerleader for the Big D. Dariia Astafieva was first spotted by our international brethren: She was named PMOY 2007 of PLAYBOY Ukraine. When we asked where she sees herself in five years, she answered, “In Hollywood.” We didn’t have to go far to find Jennifer Lewis: She is the national events manager for Playboy Golf. Inset: New York casting shoot. Nineteen-year-old Rebecca Lynn walks out her door every morning “looking for an adventure”—she certainly found one. Hundreds of beautiful women showed us their stuff, and one will receive the title of the 55th Anniversary Playmate; unfortunately for the rest, it will be “I tried out for PLAYBOY, and all I got is this T-shirt.”







Clockwise from top left: Linsey Rene's goals are to start a charity for underprivileged children and to "make men smile across the globe." She can check off the latter. Above: Holly Madison eyes photos during a casting. LaToya Jordan decided to try out when she saw Holly's YouTube video promoting the 55th Hunt. Jennifer Pershing moved to Los Angeles six years ago to fulfill her dream of becoming a Playmate. Has she finally arrived? Kelley Thompson had to wash the mud out of her hair for this shoot (she loves four-wheeling). Mandy Calloway was one of our Girls of Conference USA. Having graduated, she is ready for bigger things.





Clockwise from above: You may have seen Autumn Adele on Food Network's *Ultimate Recipe Showdown*. Here she steams up our camera. When we asked the inseparable Shannon twins to describe a perfect date, Karissa and Kristina said in unison, "Our romantic evening would be...." So don't try to come between them. Or do. Is this the class picture for Hugh M. Hefner University? Nope. It's a casting-call waiting room. Stephanie Strong says, "Everything about a woman is sexy." We agree. So there you have it. We have our work cut out for us picking just one of these girls as the winner. It's truly a tough gig.



SUITABLE PUNISHMENT

ACTOR RAY STEVENSON JUMPED FROM ROME TO THE BIG SCREEN. BUT THE PUNISHER STAR STILL LOVES ITALY

FASHION BY JENNIFER RYAN JONES
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ARNY FREYTAG

Ray Stevenson was brilliant as the brave and often brutal Titus Pullo in HBO's recent series *Rome*. Now the British-born ex-rugby player is back at his heroic, violent best as ex-marine turned morally conflicted vigilante Frank Castle in *Punisher: War Zone*, a reenergized adaptation of the Marvel comic book, hitting multiplexes this month. Best of all, between his new jet-setting lifestyle and his Italian girlfriend, he's keeping in close touch with Rome—present-day Rome. "Italy, especially Rome, still feels like the center of the cultural wheel," he says. "My girlfriend's family lives in Novi Ligure, near the home of Gavi di Gavi, the most beautiful dry white wine. It goes great with hors d'oeuvres and fish." The Punisher is into the passion of the place as well. "Italians have a different attitude. The wonderful thing about the cuisine is that it's so simple. A great carbonara has basically five ingredients, but the passion somebody brings to preparing the food is what makes the taste." The same might be said of making comic-book movies. Who better to bring passion to *Punisher* than Stevenson? —AshleyJude Collie

His suit (\$695) and shirt (\$110) are TED BAKER LONDON.
His shoes (\$695) are SALVATORE FERRAGAMO.

→ FOR MORE FROM RAY STEVENSON VISIT PLAYBOY.COM/STYLE.
→ WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 160.

"BECAUSE I CURRENTLY HAVE NO FIXED ADDRESS, THE KEY TO STYLE FOR ME IS ADAPTABILITY."





With "I Kissed a Girl," a track off Katy Perry's debut album, *One of the Boys*, the 24-year-old erstwhile rocker chick grabbed hold of the pop charts and refused to let go. The instantly catchy tune earned the singer a number one spot in more than 20 countries. She's the daughter of pastors; her singing career has now taken her from churches to the Warped Tour.

PLAYBOY: How were you first exposed to secular music?

PERRY: I remember bringing home my first CD, Incubus's *Make Yourself*, and walking into my room and stuffing the comforter in the crack of my door so no one could hear anything. I pulled out the CD, and it broke in two. I was like, "Oh my God. This is a sign." It didn't stop me from wanting to be informed about pop culture and hear what was going on, though.

PLAYBOY: Are your lyrics about you?

PERRY: All the songs are specifically about me. It is my life. The relationship songs were inspired by certain males. I don't know how to tell them what I want to say—I'm just scared of being rejected, so I write it in a song.

PLAYBOY: Are you concerned about your life being too much on display?

PERRY: I've always lived my life as an open book. I'm not afraid to be flawed, have zits and not be the most perfect person. Girls can relate to that. Females in the pop industry always want to come off as composed, but I'm not going to try to live a perfect life.

PLAYBOY: This seems to resonate with fans. We just saw a picture on MySpace of a guy with your signature tattooed on his wrist.

PERRY: He got it? I remember him from when I did signings on the Warped Tour. He said, "I'm gonna get your name tattooed on my wrist." I was like, "No you're not."

PLAYBOY'S

MUSIC 2008 POLL

FOR THIS YEAR'S BREAKTHROUGH ARTISTS—KATY PERRY, FOR EXAMPLE, OR DUFFY OR SANTOGOLD—GRIT IS A DEFINING CHARACTERISTIC. OTHER ACTS PROVED THEIR METTLE TOO: METALLICA STORMED BACK, LIL WAYNE AND NAS BEAT THE ODDS TO FOLLOW SUCCESS WITH SUCCESS, PORTISHEAD REEMERGED SPECTACULARLY AFTER 10 YEARS. IT'S TRUE NOW MORE THAN EVER: DON'T STOP BELIEVIN'.

VOTE + HEAR CLIPS
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PLAYBOY'S

MUSIC 2008 POLL



HERE'S THE BALLOT. CAST YOUR VOTE. PULL THIS OUT. MAIL IT IN.

YOU CAN TICK OFF BOXES OR, IF YOUR FAVORITE ARTISTS AREN'T AMONG OUR NOMINEES, WRITE IN YOUR OWN. SOUND LIKE A HASSLE? YOU CAN ALSO VOTE ONLINE AT PLAYBOYMUSICPOLL.COM.

↓ FOLD HERE ↓

→ CHECK BOXES FOR YOUR FAVORITE IN EACH CATEGORY

↓ FOLD HERE ↓

BEST ROCK ALBUM

- FALL OUT BOY, *FOLIE À DEUX*
- THE HOLD STEADY, *STAY POSITIVE*
- THE KILLERS, *DAY & AGE*
- KINGS OF LEON, *ONLY BY THE NIGHT*
- METALLICA, *DEATH MAGNETIC*
- WRITE-IN VOTE:

BEST HIP-HOP ALBUM

- COMMON, *INVINCIBLE SUMMER*
- LIL WAYNE, *THA CARTER III*
- NAS, *UNTITLED*
- KANYE WEST, *808S & HEARTBREAK*
- YOUNG JEEZY, *THE RECESSION*
- WRITE-IN VOTE:

BEST ELECTRONIC ALBUM

- CRYSTAL CASTLES, *CRYSTAL CASTLES*
- LUOMO, *CONVIVAL*
- M83, *SATURDAYS=YOUTH*
- PORTISHEAD, *3*
- THIEVERY CORPORATION, *RADIO RETALIATION*
- WRITE-IN VOTE:

BEST COUNTRY ALBUM

- ALAN JACKSON, *GOOD TIME*
- PATTY LOVELESS, *SLEEPLESS NIGHTS*
- BRAD PAISLEY, *PLAY*
- RANDY ROGERS BAND, *RANDY ROGERS BAND*
- SUGARLAND, *LOVE ON THE INSIDE*
- WRITE-IN VOTE:



THE HOLD STEADY



LIL WAYNE



M.I.A.



SUGARLAND

BEST JAZZ ALBUM

- DAVE HOLLAND QUINTET, *PASS IT ON*
- WILLIE NELSON & WYNTON MARSALIS, *TWO MEN WITH THE BLUES*
- GREG OSBY, *9 LEVELS*
- BOBO STENSON TRIO, *CANTANDO*
- MIGUEL ZENÓN, *AWAKE*
- WRITE-IN VOTE:

BEST SOUNDTRACK

- 21
- AMERICAN TEEN
- FORGETTING SARAH MARSHALL
- MY BLUEBERRY NIGHTS
- NICK AND NORA'S INFINITE PLAYLIST
- WRITE-IN VOTE:

BEST SONG

- LEONA LEWIS, "BLEEDING LOVE"
- LIL WAYNE, "LOLLIPOP"
- M.I.A., "PAPER PLANES"
- KATY PERRY, "I KISSED A GIRL"
- FLO RIDA, "LOW"
- WRITE-IN VOTE:

BEST WORLD MUSIC ALBUM

- CARLA BRUNI, *COMME SI DE RIEN N'ÉTAIT*
- KASAI ALLSTARS, *CONGOTRONICS*
- MILTON NASCIMENTO/JOBIM TRIO, *NOVAS BOSSAS*
- ROOTZ UNDERGROUND, *MOVEMENT*
- ROKIA TRAORÉ, *TCHAMANTCHÉ*
- WRITE-IN VOTE:

TO VOTE BY MAIL, FOLD, PUT IN ENVELOPE AND SEND TO:
PLAYBOY MUSIC POLL → 730 FIFTH AVENUE → NEW YORK, NY 10019
→ MAIL IN YOUR ENTRY NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 15, 2008

→ CHECK BOXES FOR YOUR FAVORITE IN EACH CATEGORY

BEST LIVE ACT

- BECK
- KID ROCK
- MOTLEY CRUE
- RADIOHEAD
- STONE TEMPLE PILOTS
- WRITE-IN VOTE:

BEST BREAKOUT ARTIST

- DUFFY
- MGMT
- PARAMORE
- SANTOGOLD
- VAMPIRE WEEKEND
- WRITE-IN VOTE:

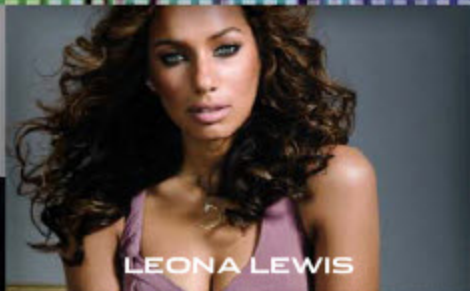
BEST REISSUE ALBUM

- DENNIS BROWN, *THE NINEY YEARS*
- BOB DYLAN, *TELL TALE SIGNS*
- POLK MILLER AND HIS OLD SOUTH QUARTETTE
- JOHN PHILLIPS, *PUSSYCAT*
- DENNIS WILSON, *PACIFIC OCEAN BLUE*
- WRITE-IN VOTE:

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RADIOHEAD



LEONA LEWIS



PARAMORE



DUFFY

HALL OF FAME

NEIL DIAMOND Having "Sweet Caroline" as the seventh-inning-stretch sing-along at Fenway Park is enough to justify his entry into any Hall of Fame. But Diamond's career highlights also include writing the 1967 song of the year ("I'm a Believer" for the Monkees), having his works wonderfully covered by everyone from UB40 to Urge Overkill and, this year, making a breathtakingly beautiful, largely acoustic album with Rick Rubin.

BILLY IDOL With a new greatest-hits album on the shelves and a massive nationwide tour under his belt, Idol's rebel yell is once again ringing out loud and clear. *Spirit of '76* punks,

classic rockers and fans of 1980s glittering pop can all get behind the man whose MTV-ready sneer made him a global icon.

N.W.A *Straight Outta Compton* dropped 20 years ago and changed not only hip-hop but the entire music industry. Brutal, reality-driven street tales of gun violence and gangsterism adrenalized rap's rhymes. Dr. Dre's West Coast production style rewrote the beat book. And the collective's "express yourself" business approach revolutionized the model of success.

RUSH With prog all the rage in some new-music circles, the band that practically invented the genre is as big as ever. Rush's musi-

cal virtuosity, intricate time changes, suite-style song cycles and cerebral texts continued to fill arenas this year as the trio extended its *Snakes & Arrows* tour and prepared to release a live DVD.

SMASHING PUMPKINS With the 1991 LP *Gish*, this band, as much as Nirvana, created the sound of the 1990s. Now out on the road celebrating the band's 20th anniversary, Billy Corgan and company are innovating again by creating a multiset tour concept: They are offering ticket bundles to multiple shows featuring mutually exclusive music. And with a catalogue that includes such seminal albums as *Siamese Dream* and *Mellon Collie, why not?*

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NEIL DIAMOND



BILLY IDOL



N.W.A.

STREET TALK EXPRESS

TWO DECADES ON, THE IMPACT OF N.W.A.'S
STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPTON IS STILL FELT

When N.W.A released *Straight Outta Compton* 20 years ago, the group changed the world. There was Dr. Dre's distinctive production. There was Eazy-E's commercial acumen. There was Ice Cube's photojournalistic writing that basically invented gangsta hip-hop. And there was the astounding result: a multiplatinum record without radio play, without major-label backing, without a national tour to promote it. Ice Cube talked with us about *Compton's* anniversary.

PLAYBOY: What was going on in the streets in 1988 when the record came out?

CUBE: It was mean on the streets—the aftereffects of mean-spirited Reaganomics, when the regular people suffered. And crack cocaine and the despair and violence that went with it was a disease going from house to house, destroying families and lives. By 1988 the shit was unbearable. Somebody had to speak on it. That pimple on your face, it's been building up and it's ready to pop, but it don't pop, and that's where we were, right there. Something had to break. Somebody had to say something, and N.W.A said it on *Straight Outta Compton*. Then when the Rodney King riots happened in 1992, it proved what we were saying on the record was no lie.

PLAYBOY: Compton was hardly on the national radar until the record. Why the specific geographic identity?

CUBE: Eazy-E was always going on about how East Coast songs would mention the New York boroughs—the South Bronx, Brooklyn—that they were putting their hoods on the map. Eazy was adamant about putting Compton on the map, more than anybody or anything in Compton. He's kind of like the founder of Compton.

PLAYBOY: What has been the most far-reaching impact of *Straight Outta Compton* on the music scene?

CUBE: We never thought our records would go anywhere outside of our neighborhood, but things snowballed and we busted down doors. Before N.W.A, a record like that would've been considered a "blue" record, a Redd Foxx—raunchy kind of deal. It opened the doors for artists to do it how they feel it—all the good, the bad and the ugly. When we did that record, you could count on one hand the groups using profanity in their lyrics. Now everybody is doing it, so you go figure. For me, it changed hip-hop forever.

PLAYBOY: What's your take on the state of hip-hop today?

CUBE: The mainstream used it and abused it. Now they want to throw it back and say it's dead. But through the Internet and other means, the B-boys got hip-hop back in our hands again. When Lil Wayne, a good lyricist, comes out with a record that blows to the top of the charts and sells a whole lot of records, it tells me the universe is still right with hip-hop.



ICE CUBE

CONNECTING FLIGHT

THIS YEAR SCOTT WEILAND AND STONE TEMPLE PILOTS
PILOTS FLEW HIGH AGAIN BACK ON THE ROAD

Scott Weiland left Velvet Revolver for a huge 65-date reunion tour with Stone Temple Pilots. Given STP's tumultuous history, just bringing the quartet together again seemed like a minor miracle. But the re-formed STP rekindled the energy that made it one of the most dominant bands of the 1990s. We caught up with Weiland, who has also somehow found time to record *Happy in Galoshes*, his first solo album since 1998's *12 Bar Blues*.

PLAYBOY: What was the reaction in the Velvet Revolver camp when you decided to get back with STP?

WEILAND: When I told Slash I was gonna do some festivals with STP, he said, "Thank you for being straight up with me." It wasn't until later that another member of the band had some issues with it. But I had already committed to doing it by then. It's a shame certain people have a hard time letting go of past resentments and try to throw them onto other people.

PLAYBOY: Were you already feeling creatively confined in VR before you committed to the STP tour?

WEILAND: It was never an issue of creative freedom. But when you start bickering about little piddly financial things, it takes the fun out of it for me. It's like, this is not why I got into this. We're all doing pretty good, so if you're going to fuck the relationship up over this, I don't want to be involved.

PLAYBOY: How was the reunion?

WEILAND: It has been great. The tour made a few bucks. I'm sure there will be some offers for a record.

PLAYBOY: These were your first shows together in five years. How did it feel?

WEILAND: At first I felt physically uncomfortable, because the rhythm and sound of the band is completely different. I'm a lot about movement. So onstage it was almost as if I hadn't heard that rhythm and pulse in such a long time. It took me a couple of shows to get that groove beating back into my heart again.

PLAYBOY: How much of it was reestablishing a personal connection versus a musical one?

WEILAND: It was all musical, really. You dance to one form of rock and roll differently from how you dance to another. You wouldn't dance to the Grateful Dead the way you would to Elvis Presley. So the first show was a little weird, but after three shows we got our thing going. Not that there haven't been any bad shows. Even the best teams play lousy on some days.

PLAYBOY: Did you always know there would be a reunion?

WEILAND: Yeah, I knew there was one bookend left to this story. I didn't know when, but I always felt it wasn't complete.



SCOTT WEILAND

SILVER SCREEN GOLDENTHROAT

SCARLETT JOHANSSON IS HARDLY THE FIRST ACTRESS TO TRY SINGING. HERE'S A BRIEF HISTORY



Johansson's recent collection of Tom Waits songs, *Anywhere I Lay My Head*, has serious indie-rock cred: It was produced by TV on the Radio guitarist Dave Sitek, and David Bowie lent his talents. Meanwhile, Zooey Deschanel teamed with rootsy guitarist M. Ward this year as She and Him for *Volume One*, a collection of excellent soft-rock songs. These women are part of a tradition that stretches back to Marilyn Monroe and beyond. Sound dodgy? You decide.



MINNIE DRIVER She started out as a member of the nowhere band Puff, Rocks and Brown, which she abandoned for acting. She returned to her musical roots in 2004, charming critics with her folk-pop *Everything I've Got in My Pocket* and 2007's *Seastories*.



JULIETTE LEWIS Lewis has always been best in roles that are sexy, smart and just a little bit crazy, and that bad-girl image fits her current role as a club rocker. But not even Dave Grohl, who drummed on Juliette and the Licks' 2006 *Four on the Floor*, could improve the music.



JADA PINKETT SMITH When not attending red-carpet premieres with her A-list husband, this mom of three works out her aggression fronting her abrasive funk-metal outfit, Wicked Wisdom. The group formed in 2003 and by 2005 was at Ozzfest. Sadly, Wicked Wisdom's songs are generic Mr. Bungle knockoffs.

TIA CARRERE PLAYBOY's January 2003 cover girl had her pop solo debut, *Dream*, go platinum in the Philippines in 1993. Recently she veered into more interesting territory with last year's *Hawaiiana*, a collaboration with noted slack-key guitar and ukulele player Daniel Ho, which was nominated for a best Hawaiian music Grammy.



JENNIFER LOVE HEWITT At the age of 12 she was already a pop star in Japan. She got her first crack at the American market after *Party of Five* cast her as sexy tomboy Sarah Reeves. While 1995's *Let's Go Bang* was a flop, Hewitt kept her chin up and four years later scored her first U.S. hit, "How Do I Deal," off the *I Still Know What You Did Last Summer* soundtrack. She really hit her stride in 2002 when she embraced her inner boho vixen on *Bare Naked*.

LYNDA CARTER Wonder Woman jumped aboard yacht rock with 1978's *Portrait*, a smooth-rock album with a heavy Carpenters influence. Her voice is forgettable, as are most of the original tracks, save for "Toto (Don't It Feel Like Paradise)," a bizarre ode complete with snippets of dialogue from *The Wizard of Oz*.



BRIGITTE BARDOT BB was already established as an international sex symbol when she released her first album, *Behind Brigitte Bardot*, in 1960. More records followed, and she easily surpassed the low bar set for her with a campy mix of jazz, pop, swinging lounge exotica and tango. Things got more serious later in the decade when she paired with her then-lover Serge Gainsbourg for a series of singles, most notably the sultry 1968 duet "Bonnie and Clyde." Perhaps the pair's hottest collaboration—the original version of "Je T'Alme, Moi Non Plus," recorded in 1967—didn't surface until years later, as Bardot's orgasmic moans were too hot for radio.



HOTTUNES

NEW SOUNDS AND RECENT GOODIES



- 1 **"JOY RIDE,"** THE KILLERS Sprightly Franz Ferdinand disco complete with steel drums, sax and castanets from strong new *Day & Age* LP.
- 2 **"PLEASE JUST TAKE THESE PHOTOS FROM MY HAND,"** SNOW PATROL Harder than the band's signature sweeping love epics.
- 3 **"UP ALL NIGHT,"** HINDER Scorching, unapologetic neo-hair metal ode to a one-night stand, with huge guitars and sing-along chorus.
- 4 **"MONEY,"** THE DOORS From *Live at the Matrix*, the band entertains itself in front of a small crowd in 1967, just weeks before becoming stars.
- 5 **"NATURAL DISASTER,"** PLAIN WHITE T'S They called her out by name on "Hey There Delilah." Here the Chicago band gets a bit more cryptic.
- 6 **"I WANNA,"** ALL-AMERICAN REJECTS New producer Eric Valentine's touch shows up in cool arrangement of this cracking tune.
- 7 **"UN COUP DE LANGUE,"** PROTOTYPES Slinky track from French New Wavers has us hoping that girl is singing something naughty.
- 8 **"SKYWAY,"** THE REPLACEMENTS From the Minneapolis heroes' reissued catalogue, this highlights Paul Westerberg's wistful side.
- 9 **"SHAME OF THE OTAKU,"** MC FRONTALOT This may be nerd-core, but the bright production and Japanese female vocals transcend genre.
- 10 **"NO DIRECTION,"** LONGWAVE Cascading guitars, brooding atmospherics, driving bass and drums. Think U2 on speed.
- 11 **"PAST LIVES,"** THE BRONX Ingenious combination of Minor Threat-like hardcore with down-and-dirty barroom rock from sweaty new LP, *///*.
- 12 **"DO WHAT YOU DO,"** MUDVAYNE The first single from *The New Game*: The melody lulls you before serious heft kicks in.
- 13 **"BLUE MONDAY (12"),** NEW ORDER From reissue of the band's catalogue, this DJ stalwart is the greatest 1980s single ever released.
- 14 **"THE BOYS,"** DRAGONETTE Bonus track on U.S. version of *Gabre* LP is a throbbing re-rub of Calvin Harris's lascivious electropop tune "The Girls."
- 15 **"GERALDINE,"** GLASVEGAS If Billy Bragg had collaborated with Big Country or Simple Minds, it might have sounded like this.
- 16 **"EVERYTHING IS BORROWED,"** THE STREETS The soothing strings and sentiment of the new LP's title track are still ringing in our head.
- 17 **"UNATTAINABLE,"** LITTLE JOY Pretty, mellow ditty by trio of Fab from the Strokes, his girlfriend Binki and Rodrigo Amarante.
- 18 **"IN SILENCE,"** THURSDAY From new split album with Envy, this dark instrumental unfurls with a majestic roar.
- 19 **"RED DRESS,"** TV ON THE RADIO We're still grooving to this Oingo Boingo-like horn-fueled freak funk from the *Dear Science* album.
- 20 **"CHAMPAGNE OF CHRISTMAS,"** THE FLESHTONES Raw-throated garage-rock ode to getting lubed at holiday parties. Cheers.

CHRISTMAS GIFT



JUAN IVAREZ • JORGE G

THE PLAYBOY BAR: SCOTCH

Here at PLAYBOY we regularly host master distillers who come from Scotland to tell us how to drink single malt. Add water—not that much! Swirl it—don't spill! We recall the time we tossed an ice cube into a dram. The Scotsman looked at us as if we'd violated his daughter. The way we see it, drinking shouldn't involve rules (the law aside). Drink your liquor however the hell you want, and if you finish a bottle you just opened, so be it. That said, scotch is a substance that deserves deep respect. Centuries of history are in every drop, and flavors vary more than with any other distillate. What is the stuff? In a sentence: It's beer made from malted barley that's distilled and then aged in oak casks. A single malt comes from a single distillery. A blend marries lots of single malts with grain whiskey. Pour yourself one as we take a closer look.



MAKING THE GRADE

SPEYSIDE

In Scotland's most famous whiskey region, northwest of Aberdeen along the River Spey, renowned distilleries shoulder each other like bottles on a shelf: **Glenfiddich**, **Glenlivet**, **Cragganmore**... Among our faves at their respective price points are **Macallan Fine Oak 15** (\$80), with smooth dried-fruit and chocolate notes, and the 12-year-old **Singleton of Glendullan** (\$45), a new brand from an old distillery (founded in 1898), with a perfect balance of vanilla and fruit flavors.

ISLAND MALT

Scotland's smokiest whiskeys come from the islands. The Isle of Skye offers **Talisker**, a liquor that sips like golden velvet. Orkney, at Scotland's northern-most point, gives us **Highland Park** (pictured above: the 18-year-old, \$100). The drams from Islay are the boldest sippers of the lot, in which, it is said, you can taste the salt from the sea. Among the best are **Laphroaig**, **Ardbeg** and the lesser-known **Bruichladdich** (pictured: the Peat, \$65).

HIGHLANDS

Highland whiskey encompasses almost all other single-malt scotches. And while they may vary in taste and style, they all get you feeling warm and fuzzy. Our favorites include **Oban**, a distillery on the Atlantic in the western Highlands that's more than 200 years old, and **Glenmorangie** in the northern Highlands. (Pictured: **Glenmorangie Signet**, \$207, a unique whiskey made from chocolate malted barley, perfect with a cigar.)

"I should never have switched from scotch to martinis."

—Humphrey Bogart's last words



For Him
Perfect Rob Roy

Mix one teaspoon of sweet vermouth, one teaspoon of dry vermouth and 2.5 ounces of a blended scotch such as Johnnie Walker. Shake over ice and serve in a chilled martini glass. Garnish with a lemon twist.

For Her
Aberdeen Angus

A touch of theater never hurts. Mix two ounces of blended scotch with one tablespoon of honey and two tablespoons of lime juice in a glass mug. Then warm an ounce of Drambuie in a shot glass and ignite it. Pour burning liquid into the mug. Stir vigorously and serve.

For the Party
Black Jesus Shooters

Pour one part Jägermeister into a shot glass, then layer two parts scotch on top. Repeat 20 times. Carry results around your party on a tray. Make new friends.

Chill Factor Water, frozen or not, is a scotch drinker's best friend. Connoisseurs argue, however, that anything but the purest H₂O can alter the flavor of your booze. You can import your own clean Scottish springwater from aquamaestro.com. Highland Springwater, Gleneagles and Speyside Glenlivet all go for \$25 to \$30 a case. Over-the-top? Quite possibly, but the truly silly scotch drinker doesn't stop there. You can buy chunks of Scottish rocks (as in actual granite) for \$75 a pair from sippinontherocks.com. Toss two ice-cube-size stones into the freezer, then use them to chill your hooch without diluting it one drop.

BLENDED WHISKEY

Back in 1820 a young man named Johnnie Walker opened a shop in Kilmarnock, Scotland. He was one of the first to blend single-malt whiskeys, often crude flavors at the time, to come up with a smooth, dependable brand customers could rely on. They kept coming back. Nearly two centuries later **Johnnie Walker Black Label** (\$34) is still one of the standard-bearers for blended scotch, though today's blends include not just single malts but mass-produced grain whiskey.

► **The World's Greatest Hotel** ◀

Yes, it's in Scotland. We stayed one night at the famous **Craigellachie Hotel**, not that we remember much. The 115-year-old mansion sits at the confluence of the rivers Spey and Fiddich in the heart of Scotland's most famous whiskey region. Spend the day with a fly rod, drop off your catch in the kitchen for the chef to fillet, then hit the Quaich Bar, where more than 700 bottles of single malt line the walls. Be careful when you pick one out—some drams are so rare they'll cost you upward of \$500. Info at craigellachie.com.





BY STEPHEN REBELLO
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
SHERYL NIELDS



rosario dawson

The dangerously sexy star of *Seven Pounds* talks about growing up poor, hanging out on nude beaches, her crush on Luke Perry, waiting for that big breakthrough and the special moment when your grandparents see you naked in a movie

Q1

PLAYBOY: You're best known for playing strong, sexually provocative roles in *Sin City*, *Grindhouse: Death Proof*, *Alexander* and *Rent*. At the age of 15 you landed a part in the controversial movie *Kids* even though you had no experience. Where does your confidence come from?

DAWSON: My mom gave birth to me when she was 17. My dad was real young too. My mother, who is a gregarious, outspoken, full-of-life six-foot-tall plumber and part-time singer from the Bronx, never spoke to me in a way that messed with my mind—like, “The stork brought you”—but in a real, sometimes overly graphic way about how she had used a condom but it broke. But I got it. When I did *Kids*, I had no acting training and wasn't into movies, but like my mother, I've always been very observant, a people watcher. That film felt easy for me because I understood I was playing a girl who was really out there, like, “Yeah, I love sex.” I was a hundred million miles away from that person, but I had seen her and knew what persona she put on.

Q2

PLAYBOY: Where had you seen girls like the one you play in *Kids*?

DAWSON: We had squatted in an abandoned tenement on the Lower East Side for many years while I was growing up, across the street from a crack house and projects where there was a lot of violence and young girls were always getting pregnant. At 12 and 13, my teenage years of exploring sexuality, my friend and I would put on our bathing suits and take pictures of ourselves in sexy poses with peach fuzz sticking out of our armpits, thinking we were grown women. At 14 and 15, though, I noticed my friends changing the way they looked, thought and acted and becoming sexually active, totally different people, who said, “You know, my man doesn't like to wear condoms,” or bragged, “Oh yeah, we do it raw, dog.” Because I was such a late bloomer, I saw all that very clearly without being part of it.

Q3

PLAYBOY: How did you avoid a similar fate?
DAWSON: Knowledge. I was always very comfortable in my body and couldn't have grown up more healthy. My mom took us to a nude beach all the time

when I was young. She'd say, “I hate tan lines,” and off our bathing suits would go. I mean, why should there be any shame or weirdness about something so beautiful and natural?

Q4

PLAYBOY: When you look in the mirror, do you have a favorite body part?

DAWSON: I have big boobs, but I'm not a boob girl. I've never been flaunty about that. I always used my boobs like a dressing-up kind of thing. It's just your body, you know?

Q5

PLAYBOY: So you never had hang-ups about your appearance?

DAWSON: No, but a lot of the kids I knew wore Reeboks or Adidas, and we couldn't afford that so I grew up wearing Converse, which now is very cool but at the time made me feel embarrassed. I wore thrift-shop clothes and hand-me-downs, and I was superskinny—the “skinny tadpole.” Everybody used to call me a boy. That traumatized me, but later I realized how awful it must have been for the girls who *(continued on page 176)*

BLOOD'S A ROVER

It's 1968. Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King are dead. The mob, Howard Hughes and J. Edgar Hoover are in a struggle for America's soul. Wayne Tedrow Jr. is an ex-cop turned assassin, dope cooker and mouthpiece who plays all sides and plays to win. Don Crutchfield is a nobody, a wheelman, a kid and a private dick who stumbles into an ungodly mess from which he—and the country—may never recover

BY JAMES
ELLROY

AMERICA:

I window-peeped four years of our History. It was one long mobile stakeout and kicked-the-door-in shake-down. I had license to steal and a ticket to ride.

I followed people. I bugged and tapped and caught big events in ellipses. I remained unknown. My surveillance links the Then to the Now in a never-before-revealed manner. I was there. My reportage is buttressed by credible hearsay and insider tattle. Massive paper trails provide verification. This book derives from stolen public files and usurped private journals. It is the sum of personal adventure and 40 years of scholarship. I am a literary executor and an agent provocateur. I did what I did and saw what I saw and learned my way through to the rest of the story.

Scripture-pure veracity and scandal-rag content. That conjunction gives it its sizzle. You carry the seed of belief within you already. You recall the time this narrative captures and sense conspiracy. I am here to tell you that it is all true and not at all what you think.

You will read with some reluctance and capitulate in the end. The following pages will force you to succumb.

I am going to tell you everything.

Wayne Tedrow Jr.
(Las Vegas, 6/14/68)

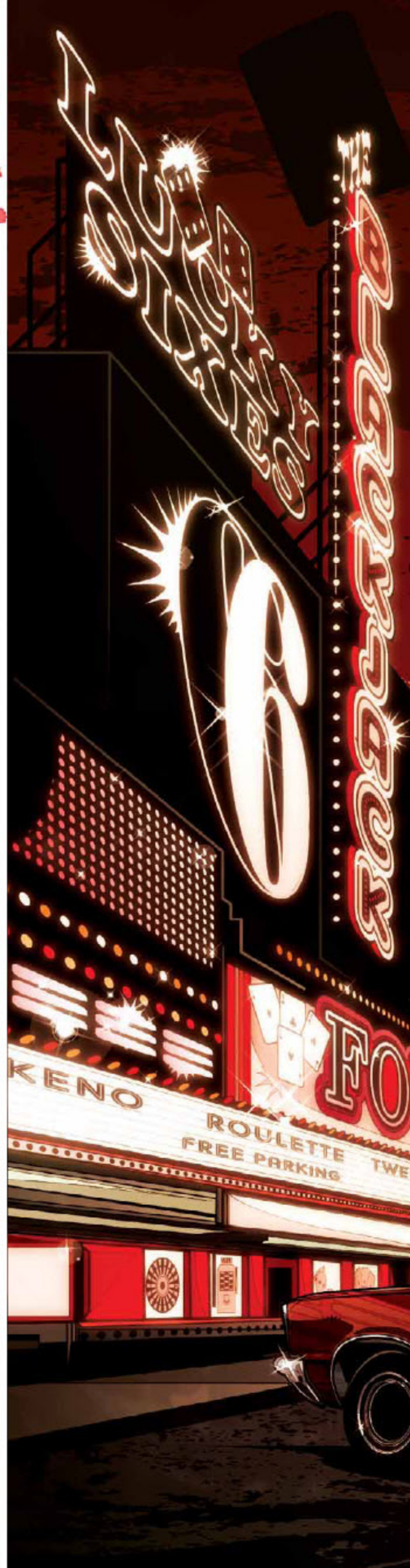
HEROIN:

He'd rigged a lab in his hotel suite. Beakers, vats and Bunsen burners filled up wall shelves. A three-burner hot plate juiced small-batch conversions. He was cooking painkiller-grade product. He hadn't cooked dope since Saigon.

A comp suite at the Stardust, vouchered by Carlos Marcello. Carlos knew that Janice had terminal cancer and that he had chemistry skills.

Wayne mixed morphine clay

ILLUSTRATION BY KAKO







Howard Hughes

J. Edgar Hoover

Santo Trafficante

Sam Giancana

Don Crutchfield

The much anticipated final installment of James Ellroy's Underworld U.S.A. Trilogy is a who's who of names popular with conspiracy theorists everywhere. Set during the social and political upheaval of 1968-1972, the novel tracks the complex and often deadly cat-and-mouse games played out by larger-than-life historical figures: Howard Hughes' real estate grabs sealed in backroom deals with mob bosses like Carlos Marcello and Sam Giancana; J. Edgar

with ammonia. A two-minute heating loosened mica chips and silt. He boiled water to 182°. He added acetic anhydride and reduced the bond proportions. The boil sluiced out organic waste.

Precipitants next—the slow-cook process—diacetyl morph and sodium carbonate.

Wayne mixed, measured and ran two hot plates low. He glanced around the suite. The maid left a newspaper out. The headlines were all *him*.

Wayne Senior's death by "Heart Attack." James Earl Ray and Sirhan Sirhan in stir.

His front-page ink. No mention of him. Carlos chilled out Wayne Senior. Mr. Hoover chilled out the backwash on the King/Bobby hits.

Wayne watched diacetyl mass build. His blend would semi-anesthetize Janice. He was bucking for a big job with Howard Hughes. Hughes was addicted to pharmaceutical narcotics. He could cook him up a private blend and bring it to his interview.

The mass settled into cubes and rose out of the liquid. Wayne saw photos of Ray and Sirhan on page two. He worked on the King hit. His father worked it high up. Freddy Otash ran fall-guy Ray for King and fall-guy Sirhan for Bobby.

The phone rang. Wayne grabbed it. Scrambler clicks hit the line. It had to be a Fed safe phone and Agent Dwight Holly.

"It's me, Dwight."

"Did you kill him?"

"Yes."

"'Heart attack,' shit. 'Sudden stroke' would have been better."

Wayne coughed. "Carlos is handling it personally. He can frost out anything around here."

"I do not want Mr. Hoover going into a tizzy over this."

"It's chilled. The question is, 'What about the others?'"

Dwight said, "There's always conspiracy talk. Bump off a public figure and that kind of shit tends to bubble. Freddy ran Ray covertly and Sirhan up front, but he lost weight and altered his appearance. All in all, I'd say we're chilled on both of them."

Wayne watched his dope cook. Dwight spied more news. Freddy O. bought the Golden Cavern Casino. Pete Bondurant sold it to him. Big Pete wanted out of *The Life*.

"We're chilled, Dwight. Tell me we're chilled and convince me."

Dwight laughed. "You sound a little raw, kid."

"I'm stretched a bit thin, yeah. Patri-cide's funny that way."

Dwight yucked. The dope pots started boiling. Wayne doused the heat and looked at his desk photo.

It's Janice Lukens Tedrow, lover/ex-stepmom. It's '61. She's twisting at the Dunes. She's sans partner, she's lost a shoe, a dress seam has ripped.

Dwight said, "Hey, are you there?"

"I'm here."

"I'm glad to hear it. And I'm glad to hear we're chilled on your end."

Wayne stared at the picture. "My father was your friend. You're going in pretty light with the judgment."

"Shit, kid. He sent you to Dallas."

Big D. November '63. He was there that Big Weekend. He caught the Big Moment and took this Big Ride.

He was a sergeant on Vegas PD. He was married. He had a chemistry degree. His father was a big Mormon fat cat. Wayne Senior was jungled up all over the nut right. He did Klan

ops for Mr. Hoover and Dwight Holly. He pushed high-line hate tracts. He rode the far-right zeitgeist and stayed in the know.

Extradition job, with one caveat: Kill the extraditee.

The PD suborned the assignment. A Negro pimp named Wendell Durfee shived a casino dealer. The man lived. It didn't matter. The Casino Operator's Council wanted Wendell clipped. Vegas cops got those jobs. They were choice gigs with big bonus money. They were tests. The PD wanted to gauge your balls. Wayne Senior had clout with the PD. Senior wanted Junior there. Wendell Durfee fled Vegas to Dallas. Senior doubted Junior's balls. Senior thought Junior should kill an unarmed black man. Wayne flew to Dallas on 11/22/63.

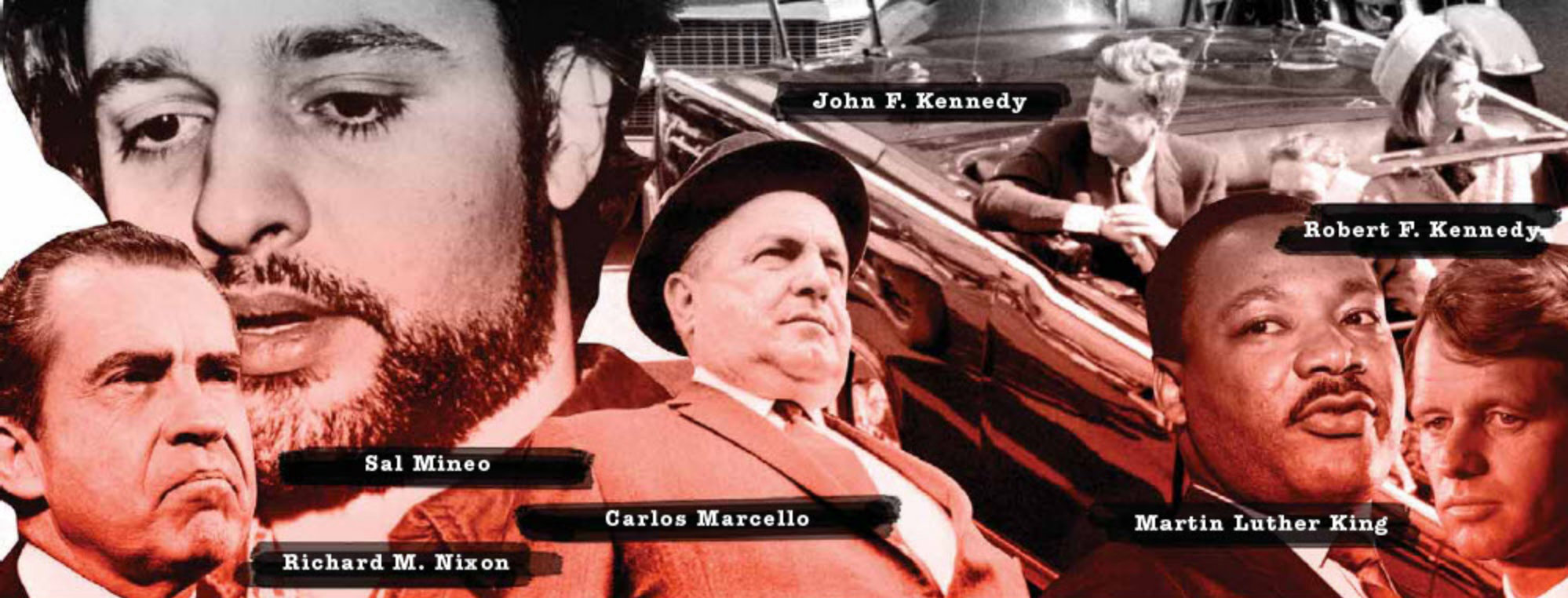
He did not want to kill Wendell Durfee. He did not know about the JFK hit. He blundered into the hit plot in post-hit free fall. He linked Jack Ruby to that merc named Pete Bondurant. He saw Ruby clip Lee Harvey Oswald on live TV.

It all went blooey that Sunday.

JFK was dead. Oswald was dead. He tracked down Wendell Durfee and told him to run. Cut to January '64. Pete heard that Wendell Durfee had fled back to Vegas. He told Wayne and warned him: Durfee's a rape-o shitbird and worse. Wayne went after Wendell. Three colored dope fiends got in the way. Wayne killed them. Wendell Durfee raped and murdered Wayne's wife, Lynette.

Wayne Senior and the PD worked to get Wayne a walk on the dope fiends. Mr. Hoover was amenable. He quit the PD and entered *The Life*.

Soldier of fortune. Heroin runner. Assassin.



Hoover's standoffs and collusions with these gangsters and a roster of counterrevolutionaries, corrupt politicians and G-men; and Nixon struggling to outmaneuver them all, never showing his cards. At the heart of the story is Hollywood celebrity PI Don Crutchfield. Several years ago he approached Ellroy and offered his recollections of the period, facilitating one of the most ambitious and damning fusions of American fact and fiction.

Lynette was dead. He vowed to find Wendell Durfee and kill him. Lynette was his best friend and sweetheart and the wall to shut out his love for his father's second wife. Janice was older, she watched him grow up, she stayed with Senior for his money and clout. The longing went both ways between them. It stayed there and plain *grew*.

Wayne fell in with Pete Bondurant. Pete was tight with a mob lawyer named Ward Littell. Ward was ex-FBI and the point man for the JFK hit. He was working for Carlos Marcello and Howard Hughes and playing both ends back, front and sideways. Wayne had two fiercely driven teachers. He learned *The Life* from them. He blew through their curriculum at a free-fall pace.

Pete was hopped up on the Cuban exile cause. Vietnam was getting hot. Howard Hughes was nurturing crazy plans to buy up Las Vegas. Wayne Senior got in with Hughes' Mormon guard. Ward Littell developed a grudge against Senior. A rogue CIA man recruited Pete for a Saigon-to-Vegas dope funnel, profits to the Cuban cause, vouchsafed by Carlos Marcello. Pete needed a dope chemist and recruited Wayne. Ward's hatred of Wayne Senior grew. He informed Wayne that his father had sent him to Dallas.

Wayne reeled and grabbed at air and barely stayed upright. Wayne fucked Janice in his father's house and made sure that Wayne Senior saw it.

The Life, a noun. A haven for Mormon burnouts, rogue chemists, coon killers.

Wayne Senior divorced Janice. He beat her with a silver-tipped cane to offset the cost of the settlement.

Janice limped from that day on and still played scratch golf. Ward Littell sold Howard Hughes Las Vegas at the mob's inflated prices and began a sporadic love affair with Janice. Wayne Senior increased his pull with Howard Hughes and sucked up to former veep Dick Nixon. Mr. Hoover directed Dwight Holly to disrupt Martin Luther King and the civil-rights movement.

Wayne cooked heroin in Saigon and ran it through to Vegas. Wayne chased Wendell Durfee for four years. The country blew up with riots and a shitstorm of race hate. Dr. King trumped Mr. Hoover on all moral fronts and wore the old man down just by *being*. Mr. Hoover had tried everything. Mr. Hoover whined to Dwight that he had done all he could. Dwight understood the cue and recruited Wayne Senior. Wayne Senior wanted Wayne Junior to be in on it. Senior thought they needed a recruitment wedge. Dwight went out and found Wendell Durfee.

Wayne got a pseudo-anonymous tip. He found Wendell Durfee on L.A.'s Skid Row and killed him in March. Dwight gathered some forensic evidence and coerced him into the hit plan. Wayne worked with his father, Dwight, Freddy Otash and the pro shooter.

Janice was diagnosed with last-stage cancer. Her beating injuries cloaked early detection of the disease. April and May were pure free fall. The Saigon dope deal factionalized. The '68 election hovered. King was dead. Carlos Marcello and the Boys decided to clip Bobby Kennedy. Pete B. was coerced in. Freddy O. waltzed over from the King hit. Ward Littell was still working angles on Carlos

and Howard Hughes. Ward had inherited an anti-mob file from a woman named Arden Smith. He left it with Janice for safekeeping.

Wayne went to see Janice on June 4. The cancer had taken her strength and curves and had rendered her slack. They made love a second time. She told him more about Ward's file. He searched her apartment and found it. The file was very detailed. It specifically indicted Carlos and his New Orleans operation. Wayne sent it to Carlos, along with a note.

Sir, my father was planning to extort you with this file. Sir, could we discuss that?

Robert F. Kennedy was shot two hours later. Ward Littell killed himself. Howard Hughes offered Wayne Senior Ward's job as mob fixer-liaison. His first assignment: Purchase the loyalty of GOP front-runner Dick Nixon.

Carlos called Wayne and thanked him for the heads-up. Carlos said, "Let's have dinner."

Wayne decided to murder his father. Wayne decided that Janice should beat him dead with a golf club.

Carlos kept a mock-Roman suite at the Sands. A toga-clad geek played centurion and let Wayne in. The suite featured mock-Roman pillars and sack-of-Rome art. Price tags drooped from wall frames.

A buffet was laid out. The geek sat Wayne down at a lacquered table embossed with *SPQR*. Carlos walked in. He wore nubby silk shorts and a stained tuxedo shirt.

Wayne stood up. Carlos said, "Don't." Wayne sat down. The geek spooned food on two plates and vanished. Carlos *(continued on page 148)*

CAROL ALT



IN THE RAW

The supermodel exposes the secret to a healthy life

by Jamie Malanowski

Like Lady Godiva, Carol Alt is going naked to make a point. Actor, author and one of the most super supermodels of all time, Alt is an ardent advocate of the raw-food diet and has decided the best way to demonstrate its benefits is with a body of evidence—her own. “All my professional life I have been showing clothes,” she says. “Now I’m showing me.”

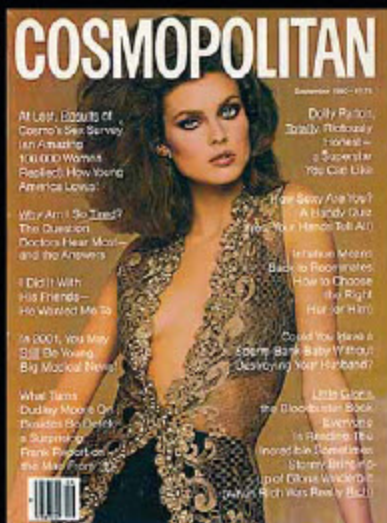
So put down that frying pan, step away from the stove and listen to what the lady has to say. Alt—48 and simply stunning—came to raw food about 14 years ago, when a career that had so far seen her on more than 600 magazine covers seemed close to ending. “I was done at 34, barely hanging on at 35, and I probably would have been dead at 40,” she says. The physical changes most people undergo during their 30s were landing heavily on a person who earned her living under the scrutiny of a Hasselblad. “I was gaining weight, getting fine lines and wrinkles, feeling bloated and puffy,” she says. However, it wasn’t just aging: She was also having trouble sleeping and suffered from chronic colds, acid stomach, allergies, sinus headaches and dry skin—a whole set of conditions that not only leave a person feeling awful but disqualify her from the cover of *Vogue*. “The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting to get a different result,” says Alt. “I was five-foot-10 and weighed 165 pounds when I started modeling, and I had been starving

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TIMOTHY WHITE





Nicknamed the Face, Alt has been on the cover of more than 700 magazines, enjoyed a thriving film career in Europe and been a frequent presence on TV. Below, she faces the music on *The Celebrity Apprentice*.



myself to be 125 pounds, sometimes 115 pounds, since I was 18 years old. I was hungry, and because I was hungry my body was breaking down. When I consulted the doctor who specialized in the raw-food diet, he had one piece of advice: Eat." But eat raw.

(Science teachers of America, please tell your students it is possible that one day a supermodel will lean across a restaurant table, look into your eyes and say, "Do you remember your chemistry from high school?" If it happened to me, it can happen to them.)

"Enzymes," says Alt, explaining the secret of raw food. She says the body needs enzymes, which come from food, but cooking causes them to break down, which sets us up for illnesses great and small. To arrest this process, learn to eat raw.

Which is not as hard as it may seem. "Raw food is everywhere," says Alt. "You can do 75 percent of your diet without a struggle. Start with carpaccio, tartare, sashimi. Seared foods. Almost all the dairy you eat has a raw cousin." Indeed, right in front of us in the sunny Peruvian sushi restaurant in Greenwich Village where we're eating, Alt has summoned a banquet of skewered cod, tuna ceviche and salmon sashimi—as light and flavorful a lunch as you could imagine. Alt is an impressive companion, starting with the stunning looks, her command of the menu and her fluency with nutritional science, all topped off with an amazing biography that has names like Bob Fosse, Howard Stern and Donald Trump studding her stories. But Alt, raised on Long Island, the daughter of a South Bronx fire chief and a housewife who herself was once a showroom model, seems rather matter-of-fact about her accomplishments. "I never believed I was beautiful," she says and then laughs. "I remember working in Florida with Renée Simonsen, who was going out with the guy from Duran Duran who is now married to the girl from Juicy Couture. We were walking in a mall, and her with her blonde hair and oversize features and the way she walked—people literally stopped dead to look at her. I was like the redheaded stepchild."

But Alt turns up the enthusiasm when she raves about raw. "I feel better today than at 24. I look better. My skin looks better. I'm more chiseled." It's these changes that have led a woman who says "I never stood up for anything" to become more vocal. "I believe God wants me to speak about this—I'm a born-again Christian, more or less—and I needed a platform, which is why I'm in PLAYBOY. Nobody loves the female form like PLAYBOY, and there's no better way to show women you don't have to live with getting old."

(text concluded on page 168)






Alt has worked with the greatest photographers of her era, but she doesn't really have a favorite. "It's easy to say that Horst was fabulous or that Irving Penn was amazing or that being in Patrick Demarchelier's studio was wonderful. But what I like is a photographer who loves what he does. When that kind of person gets behind the camera, he is completely transformed because he loves his work. And it's the same with any man. If he loves what he's doing, the average joe becomes gorgeous. That's how you get those situations when you see a beautiful woman and an average guy and you ask, 'How did he get her?'"



See more of Carol at cyber.playboy.com.



A photograph of a person's legs and feet on a white sheet, with a quote overlaid. The person's legs are bent at the knees, and their feet are visible at the top left. The white sheet is draped and wrinkled around the legs. The background is a soft, out-of-focus white. The quote is in a serif font, with the first letter 'P' in a larger, gold color.

People can look in your eyes and see if you're telling the truth. I always wanted people to look at my photos and know I was enjoying myself."



People can look in your eyes and see if you're telling the truth. I always wanted people to look at my photos and know I was enjoying myself."

ROVER

(continued from page 139)

poured wine from a screw-top bottle.

Wayne said, "It's a pleasure, sir."

"Don't make like I don't know you. You're Pete and Ward's guy, and you worked for me in Saigon. You know more about me than you should, plus all the shit in that file. I know your story, which is some fucking story compared to the other dickhead stories I heard lately."

Wayne smiled. Carlos pulled two bobbing-head dolls from his pockets. One doll represented RFK. One doll represented Dr. King. Carlos smiled and snapped off their heads.

"*Sahud*, Wayne."

"Thank you, Carlos."

"You're looking for work, right? This ain't about a handshake and a thank-you envelope."

Wayne sipped wine. It was present-day liquor-store vintage.

"I want to assume Ward Littell's role in your organization, along with the position in the Hughes organization that my father just inherited from Ward. I have the skills and the connections to prove myself valuable, I'm prepared to favor you in all my dealings with Mr. Hughes, and I'm aware of the penalties you dispense for disloyalty."

Carlos speared an anchovy. His fork slid. Olive oil hit his tux shirt.

"Okay, even if I'm fucking susceptible to favors and prone to like you, why should Howard Hughes go outside his own organization full of suck-asses he feels comfortable with to hire a fucked-up ex-cop who goes around shooting niggers for kicks."

Wayne flinched. He gripped his wineglass and almost snapped the stem.

"Mr. Hughes is a xenophobic drug addict known to inject narcotics into a vein in his penis, and I can concoct—"

Carlos yucked and slapped the table. His wineglass capsized. Pepper chunks flew. Olive oil spritzed.

"—drugs that will stimulate and sedate him and diminish his mental capacities to the point that he will become that much more tractable in all his dealings with you. I also know that you have a very large envelope for Richard Nixon, should he be nominated. Mr. Hughes is putting in 20 percent, and I plan to raid my father's cash reserve and get you another 5 million cold."

The toga geek walked in. He brought a sponge and swabbed the mess prestochango. Carlos snapped his fingers. The toga geek disappeared.

Carlos raised his glass. "You get 250 a year and points, and you jump on Ward's old job straight off. I need you to oversee the buyouts of legitimate businesses started with Teamster Pension Fund loans, so we can launder it and funnel it into a slush fund to

build these hotel-casinos somewhere in Central America or the Caribbean. You know what we're looking for. We want some pliable, anticommunist El Jefe type who'll do what we want and keep all the dissident hippie protest shit down to a dull roar. Sam G.'s running point now. We've got it narrowed down to Panama, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic. That's your main fucking job. You make it happen and you make your hophead pal keep buying our hotels, and you make sure we get to keep our inside guys, who just might help us out with some skim."

Wayne said, "I'll do it."

Don Crutchfield (Los Angeles, 6/15/68)

WOMEN:

Two bebies walked by the lot. The first group looked like shopgirls. They wore Ivy League threads and modified bouffants. The second group was pure hippie. They wore patched-up jeans, peacenik shit and long, straight hair that swirled.

They came and went. The wheelmen waved. The shopgirls waved back. The hippie chicks flipped off the wheelmen. The wheelmen wolf-called.

The Shell station lot, Beverly and Hayworth. Four pumps and a service bay-office. Three wheelmen sprawled in their sleds.

Bobby Gallard had a Rocket Olds. Phil Irwin had a 409 Chevy. Crutch had a '65 GTO. He was the rookie wheelman. He had *the* boss ride: 390, Hurst 4-speed, coon maroon paint.

Bobby and Phil were midday-blitzed on high-test vodka. Crutch was residual torqued on the girl show. He scanned the street for more walk-bys. Zilch—just some old hebes loping to shul.

Back to the paper. Yawn—more jive on James Earl Ray and Sirhan Sirhan. Snore—"America Grieves"/"Accused Assassin's Lair." Ray vibed pencilneck. Sirhan vibed towelhead. Hey, America, I got your grief swingin'.

Crutch flipped pages. He hit flyweights at the Forum and a grabber—*Life* magazine offers million scoots for Howard Hughes pix! A redhead walked by. Crutch waved at her. She scowled like he was a dog turd. Wheelmen emitted *baaaad* vibes. They were low rent and indigenously fucked-up. They perched in the lot. They waited for work from skank private eyes and divorce lawyers. They tailed cheating spouses, kicked in doors and took photos of the fools balling. It was a high-risk/high-yuks job with female-skin potential. Crutch was new to it. He wanted to groove the job forever.

The paper called Howard Hughes a "Billionaire Recluse." Crutch got a brainstorm. He could starve himself down to bones and shimmy up a heat shaft. Snap—one Polaroid and vamoose.

It was hot and humid. Crutch yawned and aimed the AC vent at his balls. It perked him up and got him head tripping. Gas-station blahs, adieu.

He was 23. He got expelled from Hollywood High for candid-camera stunts in the girls' gym. His old man lived in a Goodwill box outside Santa Anita. Crutch Senior panhandled, bet all day and ate pastrami burritos exclusive. His mom vanished on 6/18/55. Crutch was 10. She up and split and never returned. She sent him a Christmas card and a five spot every year, different postmarks, no return address. He built his own missing-persons file. It filled up four big boxes. He killed time with it. He called around the country and ran PD checks, hospital checks, obit checks.

Nothing—Margaret Woodard Crutchfield was still stone *gone*.

The wheelman gig fell on his head. It happened like this:

He kept up with his high-school pal Buzz Duber. Buzz shared his passion for pad prowls. *Soft* prowls, like this:

Hancock Park. Big dark houses. Preppy girls' lairs. Knock, knock. Nobody's home? *Good*.

You enter undetectably, you carry a penlight, you dig some plush cribs. You walk through girls' bedrooms and exit with lingerie sets.

He did it a few times with Buzz. He did it *a lot* by himself. Buzz's dad was Clyde Duber. Clyde was a big-time PI. He did divorce jobs and got celebs out of the shit. He installed college kids in left-wing groups and got them to rat out subversion. The fuzz popped Crutch on a panty prowler. They snagged him with some black lace undies and a sandwich he glommed from Sally Compton's fridge. Clyde bailed him out and got his record expunged. Clyde got him wheelman and chump surveillance gigs. Clyde said window peeping was kosher, but nixed B&E. Clyde said, "Kid, I'll *pay* you to peep."



Clyde Duber's office, Beverly Hills. Knotty-pine walls, golf trophies and red leather.

Crutch said, "Freddy Otash bought some hotel in Vegas."

Clyde poured a triple scotch. "Freddy's a dipshit. Rumors are circulating, and that's all I can say about that."

Buzz said, "Tell Dad about the Hughes deal."

Crutch scratched his balls. "*Life* magazine's offering a million bucks for a photo of Howard Hughes. I think we can do it."

Clyde made the jack-off sign. *Kids*—this white man's burden. Kid wheelmen, kid infiltrators, kid stakeout geeks.

Buzz nudged Crutch. "You got plans tonight?"

"I thought I'd drive around."



"Marcy...do you think there really is a Santa Claus?"

"Shit, you're going to peep Chrissie Lund."

Clyde said, "Who's Chrissie Lund?"

"She's USC frosh. She's got Crutch all wired."

Clyde sipped scotch. "Don't do anything I wouldn't do. Like PC 459, breaking and entering."

Crutch blushed. Buzz seltzer-spritzed his scotch.

"Get us a decoy job, Dad. Send us into some commie group."

"Nix that. You're too green, and you look too square. You've got to be able to talk commie lifestyle shit to make those gigs work. You kids don't know from social upheaval. All you kids know from is this college-girl gash you can't get."

Buzz laughed. Crutch blushed.

"That reminds me. Dr. Fred's got a job for us. A woman stole some money from him and absconded."

Buzz looked at Clyde. Crutch looked at Clyde. Both looks said *Me*. Clyde flipped a coin. Buzz called tails. The coin hit the floor heads.

(Las Vegas, 6/17/68)

The Sheriff's blocked off Fremont. The low-roller casinos flew flags at half-mast. A lackluster motorcade slogged through.

Dig: a memorial parade for Wayne Tedrow Sr.

Noon in Vegas. 109 and climbing. City fathers in cowboy hats and broil-inducing suits. The mayor's last-second brainstorm. Senior was a heavyweight. Let's dispense respect.

The car procession crawled. The standing spectators sizzled and gaped, sun-stupefied. Some kitchen workers waved placards and booed. Wayne Senior ran their union and fucked them over with management side deals.

The LVPD sent an honor guard. Snail trail—the cars moved bumper-lock slow. Tourists capered and waved chip cups and beers. Negro protestors lugged anti-cop signs. A subgroup taunted Wayne. He heard muffled chants of "Honky killer!"

Wayne saw Carlos Marcello across the street. They exchanged smiles and waves. Wayne got jostled. The crowd swelled and pushed him. They looked pissed. Wayne saw why: Dwight Holly was shoving through with his badge out.

Wayne stepped over to a shady spot. It was semiprivate. Dwight found him fast.

He stepped in close. "We've got a little seepage. I'll tell you about it in a second, but you've got to hear the lecture first."

Wayne weaved a tad. A protestor spotted him and did the clenched-fist thing. Dwight pulled him behind the platform.

"You're juiced now. You're in with Uncle Carlos and you may get in with Hughes. I'd be a piss-poor friend if I didn't tell you to be careful."

Wayne stepped in close. "Friend? You fucking coerced me into Memphis."

Dwight stepped closer. He bumped Wayne into a light post and pinned him there.

"Wendell Durfee came with a price, son. And don't tell me that you didn't want the job on some level."

Wayne pushed Dwight back. Easy hands, don't rile him. Dwight made nice and brushed off Wayne's coat.

"Give me an update on Carlos. Something to keep the old poof happy."

"It's stale news. The Boys want to sell Hughes the rest of their hotels and keep their skim guys inside. Hughes wants a peaceful town. Someone has to fill Ward Littell's shoes, and it's me."

Senior was a racist! Junior is a killer!—Wayne heard faint shouts.

"The envelope for Dick Nixon. Tell me about that."

"How did you—"

"We've got his pad in Key Biscayne bugged. Nixon mentioned it to Bebe Rebozo."

Wayne said, "The Boys want to build some casinos in Central America or the Caribbean, and they want things slowed down at Justice. They think Nixon will win the election and be amenable."

Dwight nodded. "I'll buy that, for now."

"The seepage? Memphis? You were going to—"

"I'm trying to run down some hate-mail subscribers. I'd like to get a look at your father's lists."

Wayne shook his head. "No. I'm out of the hate business. Talk to Fred Hiltz."

"Shit, Wayne. I'm not asking you for the world, I'm just asking for—"

"Seepage? Memphis? Come on, don't string me out on that."

Dwight reached for a cigarette. The pack was empty. He threw it into the crowd.

(Los Angeles, 6/18/68)

"Clyde tells me you like looking for women."

Bam—the Hate King's first words. Bam—at the door, no handshake or introduction.

Crutch said, "Yes, sir. That's true."

Dr. Fred Hiltz laughed. "He said, 'Looking at women,' but I won't press the point."

The Hiltz hate hacienda—a big Spanish manse. Beverly Hills, prime footage, Jew neighbors galore. A jumbo sunken living room festooned with hate art.

Fine oils. The masters reconsidered. A Van Gogh lynching. A Rembrandt gas-chamber tableau. Matisse does Congolese atrocities. Man Ray does Bobby Kennedy dead on a slab.

Fuck—

Crutch fought off a dizzy spell. Hiltz said, "I met a cooze at Lawry's Prime Rib. Her name was Gretchen Farr. She shot me some trim and got me addicted. She stole 14 grand from the bomb shelter in my backyard. You find her, you get me back my money."

Devil-horned kikes by Frederic Remington. Grant Wood does LBJ drawn and quartered.

"Description? Last known address? A photograph, if you've got one."

Hiltz fast-walked Crutch out back. The bum's rush: *Raus! Mach schnell!* They cut down long corridors. They dodged cats and cat boxes. JFK morgue pix were taped to the walls.

The yard featured a statue garden. A wetback hosed down a lifesize Klan-klad Khrist. Hiltz said, "I've got no pictures."



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Gretchen was photo-phobic. She's a tall, stacked cooze with a slight Latin tinge. She was staying at the Beverly Hills Hotel, so I made her as kosher. I tried to hire Freddy Otash, but he's not taking skip jobs these days."

The wetback hose-spritzed Hitler and Hermann Goering. Bird shit and dirt decomposed.

"What else can you tell me about her?"

"You're not listening. I know bupkes. I led with my *shvantz* and it cost me 14 big ones. *Get it? I'm hiring you, because you know how to find people, and I don't.*"

Crutch gulped. Hiltz quick-marched him over to some underground steps and shoved him down them. They hit a steel-reinforced door. Hiltz unlocked it and tapped a light switch. Fluorescent bulbs lit a 12-by-12 hate hive.

Hate-tract wallpaper. Hate-niggers, hate-Jews, hate-papists, hate-Japs, hate-Chinks, hate-spics, hate-commies, hate-the-muthafuckin'-white-oppressor. Hate placards stacked on the floor. A banner: GENOCIDE IS THE SACRED MANDATE OF ALLAH!!!!!!

"The *shvartzes* eat this shit up. You wouldn't believe the market all this black-militant tsuris has created. I've got a whole sideline going. It's *shvoogie* prison tracts, allegedly written by these radical shines in San Quentin. You know who really writes them? This kike nigger-lover guy I play golf with."

Crutch sneezed. The hate hive reeked of mildew and cat piss. That dizzy spell revived.

Hiltz pulled the lid off a king-size clothes hamper. The inside was crammed full of C-notes. The tally had to veer toward a half mill.

"Here's the enduring mystery, *schmen-drick*. She only nailed me for 14 Gs. I

know, because I count my gelt every night. You want my opinion? Gretchen was subtle. The cunt ganef nailed me for what she thought I wouldn't miss."

Crutch looked in the hamper. Hiltz grabbed a bill and stuffed it in his shirt pocket.

"Lunch is on me. Find her, and I'll get you a threesky with Brigitte Bardot and Julie Christie. Believe me, I've got that kind of clout."

Schvartzes, shvantz, shvoogies, the beast with two backs. A potential threesky. A time-clock gig for Clyde Duber Associates.

Next stop: the Beverly Hills Hotel.

Crutch drove there and got situated. He whipped out his fake cop's badge and made a sound impression. The fruit desk guy looked askance at his low-rent attire. Crutch told him he worked for Clyde Duber. The fruit desk guy dug on that. Clyde had panache. Okay, kid, let's talk.

Crutch asked the standard skip-job questions. The fruit desk guy responded. He called Gretch Farr "dicey." She rented bungalow 21 for three weeks. She tricked with wealthy European and Latin guests of both genders. She paid cash for her flop and extra charges every morning. Gretch supplied one check-in referral: a phone drop called Bev's Switchboard. It was a message-pick-up service for the fly-by-night crowd. Gretch was a quintessential fly-by-night chick.

That was it. The fruit sashayed off. Crutch hit the phone bank and called Information. Bev's Switchboard: 8814 Fountain, West Hollywood.

He drove there and got situated. The address was a storefront adjoining a quick-script pharmacy.

The pharmacy was closed. Ditto Bev's Switchboard. A walkway led back to a rear parking lot. Clouds absorbed moonlight. The side door looked weak.

Crutch stuck a #4 pick in the keyhole. Two jiggles eased the main tumblers back. He pushed a #6 in. He twisted in unison. The lock button slid. The door snapped.

He let himself in and got out his penlight. He saw a file cabinet. Three drawers set on sliding runners. All three: unlocked.

He hit the ATOG drawer. Aaronson, Adams, Allworth. Some Bs, Cs and Ds. Echert, Ehrlich, Falmouth. There, Gretchen Farr.

The file was skinny. He quick-skimmed it. The call log went back three weeks, to late May '68.

No personal stats on Gretch Farr herself. Just incoming calls listed.

Six calls from foreign consulates: Panama, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic. Huh?—*whazzat?*—this wild brew so far.

DU3-2758/"wouldn't give name." Sal/NO5-2808. *He* knew that name and number: Clyde's actor pal.

The Klondike Bar, 8th and La Brea. A Greek grail and a lavender lodestone for the limp-wristed set.

Crutch sat in his car and scoped the door. Sal's Lincoln was back in the parking lot. Sal *lived* at the Klondike. He'd walk out sooner or later, with or sans the night's quiff.

Sal Mineo. Paid informant for Clyde and Fred Otash. Two Oscar nominations and Skidsville. One trouble-prone fruit fly.

Someone drummed on his windshield. Crutch saw Sissy Sal—all spit curled and tight-jeaned. He popped the door. Sal got in. He wore this look of wop-fruit enchantment.

Crutch pulled around the corner and reparked. Sal said, "You could have come inside. You didn't have to lurk all night."

"I wasn't lurking."

"You always—"

"Gretchen Farr. She took one of Clyde's clients for some money, and I know you know her."

Sal pouted and lit a cigarette. "Sure, I know her. I know that she fucks strings of men and rabbits with their money routinely, but I don't know how you traced her to me. If you explain that to me convincingly, I'll tell you what you need to know."

That pout, that dago hair—Crutch balled his fists.

"I ran a phone check. You called her service two weeks ago."

Sal cracked the window and de-smoked the car. Sal tucked up his knees and went doe-eyed.

"I'd say Gretchen Farr is an alias. She's too spic-looking to be a Farr. I don't have a line on her whereabouts, because she never tells people where she lives. I called *her* service because she called *my* service. We didn't actually speak. I've steered her to men before, but she usually develops her own prospects."

"Give me some names."

"No. I am *truly* drawing a blank, and



"I find it strange that you just happened to invent the wheel right before my mother's visit."



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Gretch *paid me* to steer her, and I promised I wouldn't tell on her, cross-my-heart, hope-to-die."

Crutch slapped the steering wheel and the dashboard. Sal made with the doe eyes and never flinched.

"Feel better, sweetheart?"

Crutch flexed his hands. His fingers and palms stung. Sal twirled his spit curl and sighed.

"And she doesn't *live* in L.A.?"

"No, she just passes through, causes travail and moves on."

"Known associates? Do you know *anyone* who knows her?"

Sal doe-eyed him. "You sound resigned, so I'll give you a nibble. I set Gretchie up with a realtor named Arnie Moffett, who is a *horrible* man who used to pimp for Howard Hughes. He bought a string of Hughes' old fuck-pad houses in the Hollywood Hills, so maybe Gretchie is staying in one of them."

Crutch cracked his knuckles. His head hurt. He couldn't get situated. His thoughts jumbled and veered.

Sal said, "I'm waiting for the day, sweetheart."

"What day?"

"The day that you figure out you're not at all tough."

Buzz dubbed the Hiltz job "The Case." Crutch dubbed it "My Case" in his head. Arnie Moffett was their one lead outstanding. Buzz called it hot. Crutch called it a scorcher.

They drove to the Miracle Mile. Dexies and Jim Beam drove *them*. Crutch felt his eye sockets expand.

Moffett Realty was a hole-in-the-wall. It was right beside Ma Gordon's Deli, the "Home of the Hebrew Hero." The door was open. The lights were on. A skinny guy was kicked back at the one desk. He wore a red bowling shirt with a stitched-on ARNIE.

He was embroiled. He was staring into a swivel mirror, squeezing his blackheads. Crutch cleared his throat. Buzz cleared his throat. Arnie stayed transfixed.

Buzz said, "Uh, sir?" Crutch shushed

him. Arnie said, "Frat boys, right? You want to rent one of my dumps for a kegger and lure in some gash."

The room de-situated. Funny lights swirled. Crutch said, "We're private detectives."

Arnie stood up. Arnie grabbed his crotch and said, "Detect this."

Crutch saw RED. RED room, RED room lights, RED world. He kicked Arnie in the balls. He jackknifed him. He rabbit-punched him. He threw him on the floor face-first. Arnie's nose cracked. Blood spattered. Arnie flopped and flailed for his desk phone. Crutch pulled the cord out of the wall and threw the fucking phone across the room.

Buzz trembled. His lips did funny things. Crutch saw the piss stain on his jeans and smelled the shit in his shorts.

Arnie gurgled. Buzz ran for the john, making like upchuck. Crutch threw down a handkerchief. Arnie rolled on his back, covered his nose and stanchied the blood flow. Crutch pulled out his short dog. Arnie made a gimme sign and tilted his head. Crutch fed him little pops. Jim Beam, 100 proof.

Arnie sucked, gasped and coughed. Arnie dredged up savoir faire. Arnie said, "You evil little shit."

Crutch squatted. He kept himself clear of the blood mess. He was all re-circuited. The room leaped and whirled.

"Gretchen Farr."

"She's a commie. She's some kind of left-wing transient with more names than half the world."

"Keep going."

"She heard I used to score snatch for Howard Hughes."

"Keep going"

"She rented one of my pads. The Hollywood Hills, a half-ass little house. Two-week rental, in and out."

"Keep going."

"They're skeeve pads. Fuck-film sets, keg-bust spots, short-term rentals."

Crutch said, "Give, Arnie. I know there's more."

"Give *what*? She's a commie with some fucked-up agenda."

"Arnie..."

"Okay, okay. She pumped me for dope on the Hughes organization. She said she wanted to get next to a guy named Farlan Brown. I said I knew him. He's this cunt man who plays Mormon to stay kosher with Hughes. When he passes through L.A., he always hits Dale's Secret Harbor."

Buzz stumbled back from the can. Crutch steadied him. Arnie grabbed for the short dog. Crutch let him have it. His Red World veered and swerved.

Crutch parked outside the Hate Hacienda. Shrieking opera blasted from the backyard. He walked down the driveway. The gate was unlocked. Birds nested on the dictator statues. The music blared out the bomb-shelter door.

He walked over and popped down the steps. He made noise on purpose. Dr. Fred was at a draftsman's desk. He wore a Klan robe and sandals. A Luger on a gunbelt bunched up his sheet.

He saw Crutch. He hit a desk switch and killed an aria mid-shriek. He quick-drew the Luger and did some gun-slinger shtick.

Crutch rubbed his ears. Dr. Fred said, "You've got blood on your pants."

"It was on your time card, sir."

The shelter reeked: must, mildew, money for sure.

"Gretchen, Arnie Moffett and Farlan Brown. Tell me what you haven't told me."

"Why should I do that, *schmendrick*? You know what *schmendrick* means? It's a synonym for *schlemiel*."

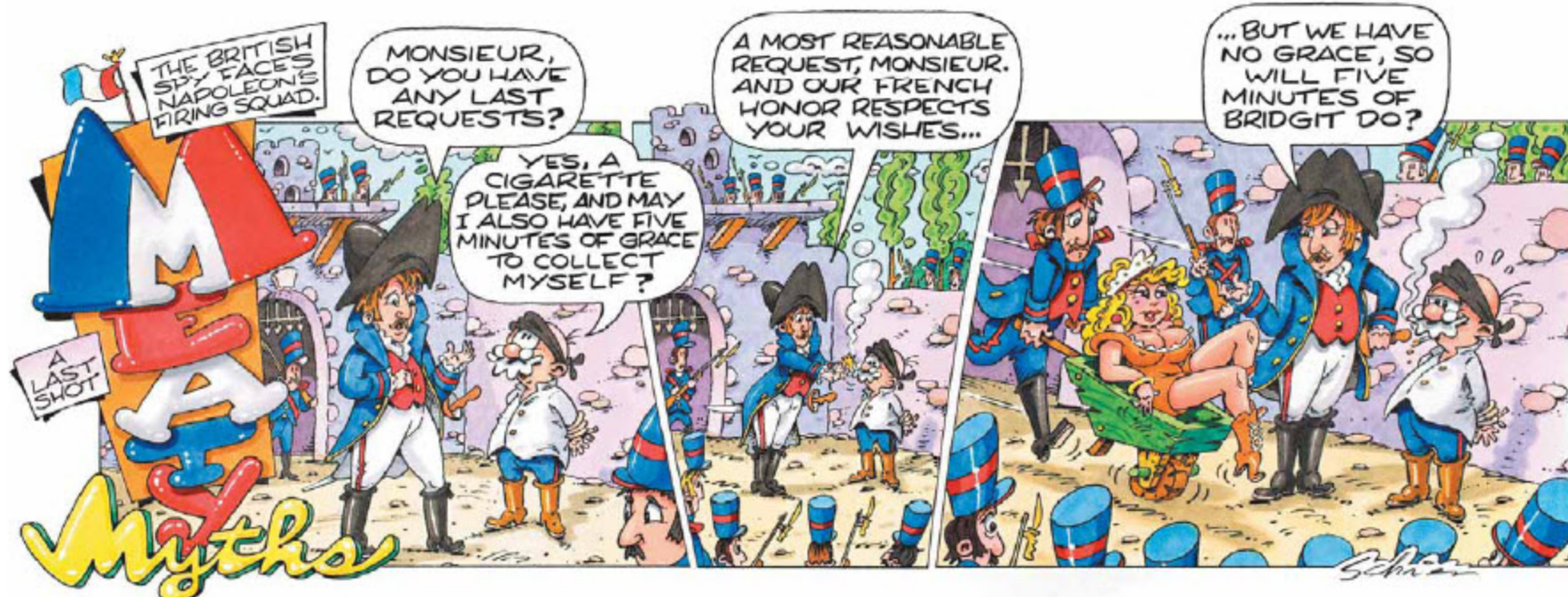
"I'm trying to help you, sir. I'm just—"

"A kid-adventurer who fell into some shit with Clyde Duber. And now you've fallen into some shit with me. Clyde's paying you \$6 an hour, but I'm going to split a full million with you."

A squirrel sat on the steps. Dr. Fred aimed the Luger and plugged it. The shot sonic-boomed the shelter. The squirrel vaporized. Dr. Fred snagged the ejected shell in mid-twirl.

He said, "Dracula." Crutch went *Huh?* Sonic-boom remnants banged his head.

Dr. Fred reholstered. "I got suspicious



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of Gretchie. So, I rifled her purse and found Arnie Moffett's number. Arnie was pliable. So, I paid him for the scoop on Gretchie. So, he told me that Gretchie was trying to get next to a Howard Hughes *macher* named Farlan Brown."

Crutch said, "So?"

"So, I wanted to get next to Hughes. We've got the same racial sensibility, and I've got a purification plan he can bankroll. I had a rival named Wayne Tedrow Sr. Between the two of us, we had the hate-tract biz dicked. He just died, and his numbnuts kid Wayne Junior may be Dracula's new point man. I want to get my hands on Senior's hate-mail stash and get next to Dracula, and I'm thinking this Mormon hump Farlan Brown is the key. I'm too controversial to make the approach, but a kid-loser like you could breeze in innocuous. *Life* magazine is offering a million bucks for a snapshot of Hughes, and a kid-opportunist like you could get close."

Tilt, swerve, veer and blood on his pants—Crutch said, "Yessir."

(Miami, 8/5/68)

It was a party. Sam Giancana called it a "Buy Nixon" bash. Santo Trafficante laughed and shushed him. Carlos roasted a pig on the terrace. Drove of flunkies and call girls. Fools with noisemakers. Convention delegates with Italian surnames. Three bars and a mile-long buffet.

Wayne circulated. The condo was bigger than the Orange Bowl. He walked room to room and got lost twice. It was old home week. He saw a fruit actor he popped at a glory-hole stall.

A call girl walked him to the den. Carlos, Sam and Santo were already ensconced. The walls were plywood paneled. A photo frieze showed Carlos playing golf with Pope Pius.

The call girl split. Wayne sat down.

Santo sipped Galliano. "Howard Hughes. Tell us the latest and greatest."

Wayne said, "He wants to buy the Stardust and the Landmark. I assured him they're for sale. Farlan Brown thinks he may be breaching antitrust laws, which might push the purchases off until next year."

Carlos sipped XO. "The cocksucking Justice Department."

Santo sipped Galliano. "Yeah, but lame

duck. And I have to say that our boy Dick will not let shit like that impede us."

Sam sipped anisette. "The inside guys. That's what concerns me. We have to keep our people on the premises."

Wayne nodded. "Yes. Mr. Hughes thinks the transition will run much smoother that way."

Carlos switched to Drambuie. "The Fund books. What's going on there?"

"I want to buy out banks and loan companies, so they can earn marginal profits and double as laundry fronts. There's a Negro-owned bank in Los Angeles that interests me. Hughes Air is in L.A., and we need a funnel close to the border."

Santo said, "The front team. Let's talk about that. Once we pick our spot, we'll have to send some guys down."

A little birdie keeps telling me that Mesplede wants to clip them."

Bob Relyea. Gaspar Fuentes. Miguel Diaz Arredondo.

A redneck shooter and two Cuban exiles. Part of the Saigon cabal. Relyea sided with the Carlos faction and fucked over Wayne and Mesplede. Relyea joined the Memphis team. Fuentes and Arredondo were pro-Carlos and anti-Wayne and Mesplede. They plain disappeared last spring.

Santo sighed. "I'll concede he's a good choice."

Sam sighed. "I know he speaks Spanish. Let bygones be bygones? I don't know, you tell me."

Wayne said, "I want him."

Santo sipped Drambuie. "He'll want to clip those guys."

Carlos said, "It's your call, Wayne."

Cuba.

He'd been there. He killed militiamen on Varadero Beach. The Saigon deal carried a Cuban Cause commitment. The betrayals resulted from it. He knew the Cause was right-wing bullshit from Jump Street.

Cuba.

It got to you. It got JFK offed. It got to him for 10 seconds tops. It got to Carlos and the Boys in a very large way. They bankrolled exile groups. They cooked up the Saigon deal as a dope funnel, with profits to the Cause. They betrayed the Cause from Jump Street. Wayne and the Boys knew it: Castro was in for keeps. J.P. Mesplede would never know.

Wayne foot-cruised Little

Havana. Bodegas, fruit stands, vendors selling shaved-ice treats. Leaflet distribution. Pamphlet-packing punks in KILL FIDEL T-shirts. Political offices: Alpha 66, Venceremos, the Battalion for April 17.

Wayne watched. It was roast-all-night hot, with flying bugs like Godzilla. Wayne glanced in a coffee-bar window. There's Jean-Philippe Mesplede.

The glance flew two ways. Mesplede stood and bowed. *Le frog sauvage—habillé tout en noir*. Black shirt, black coat, black pants—*le grande plus noir*.

Wayne walked in. Jean-Philippe hugged him. Wayne felt at least three handguns under his clothes.

They sat down. Mesplede was halfway through a fifth of Pernod. A waiter brought a fresh glass.

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Wayne coughed. "I want to bring in Jean-Philippe Mesplede."

Carlos gulped. Santo gulped. Sam gulped. Looks traveled three ways. Mesplede fucked Carlos on the Saigon H deal. The deal factionalized and blew up six ways. Mesplede was a French-Corsican merc. He was far right. He was an anti-Castro militant. He was in Dallas that weekend.

Sam sighed. "I'll admit he's a good choice, but we got problems with him."

Santo said, "I heard he's here in Miami. Wherever you got anti-Fidel shit, you got Jean-Philippe."

Sam said, "Is this where we all say 'Let bygones be bygones?'"

Carlos sipped Drambuie. "Three names keep popping into my head.

"Ça va, Wayne?"
"Ça va bien, Jean-Philippe."
"And your business in Miami?"
"Political."
"Par exemple, s'il vous plaît?"

"For instance, I was looking for you."
Mesplede flexed his hands. His tattooed pit bulls grew snarls and erections. He was an ex-French para. He went back to the Algerian war and Dien Bien Phu. He pushed heroin wherever he went.

Street agitation swirled outside. They rehashed Vietnam and their ops deal. Mesplede cursed Carlos, *le petit cochon*. Wayne did a riff on strange bedfellows. Bygones as bygones. Carlos had work for them. Let me tell you.

Ça va, Wayne. Okay.

Wayne described the foreign-casino plan. Mesplede routed the riff to Cuba. LBJ, Nixon, Humphrey—Castroite *cochons* all.

They got to the yes-or-no stage. Mesplede said Maybe. He had pressing business first. Wayne raised three fingers. Mesplede nodded. Wayne said that he'd spoken to Carlos. It's my call now. I'll let you kill two out of three.

"Who is allowed to live?"

"Bob Relyea."

"I know why, but please inform me precisely."

"He was in on a big job in April. He's too close to some people I'm with."

"Memphis."

"Yes."

"You were there, too."

Wayne pricked. "Yes, I was."

Mesplede spit on the floor. "Shameful. A horrible blow to the American Negro. I greatly revere their jazz artistry."

"You can take out Fuentes and Arredondo. That's as far as I can let it go."

Mesplede shrugged and bowed. "They may be here in Miami."

"Let's go find them."

(Miami, 8/8/68)

Bugwork:

The wires, the pliers, the screwdrivers. The drills, the mounts, the baseboard dust. Butterfingers: sweaty hands on gnat-size devices.

The Eden Roc Hotel. Drill job: suite 1206 into suite 1207. Crutch worked with Freddy Turentine. Freddy was the "Bug King." Freddy's bug résumé astounded.

Freddy was on loan to Clyde Duber Associates. Freddy usually worked for "Shakedown King" Fred Otash.

They drilled. 1206 was their listening post. Farlan Brown was due in 1207 shortly. Time clock: The Find-Gretchen-Farr gig was moving into five figures.

They drilled. They bored through to 1207 and pushed wires in. Crutch picked the door lock. They got full-suite access. They miked up the bedroom lampshades. They tapped the two phones. They spackle-covered the wall wires and applied touch-up paint. They stuffed baffling in the bore-through holes and sanded the rough spots down smooth. They swept up all the baseboard dust and zoomed back to 1206.

Finger-cramping drudge work—four full hours. Crutch was grit-encrusted. His

Wayne Tedrow Jr. was here already. Junior had Senior's hate-mail stash. Dr. Fred wanted it. Junior worked for Farlan Brown and Dracula Hughes. Dr. Fred wanted to sell Drac his racial-purity plan. Crazy shit—sure. But crazy shit with dollar signs attached.

Crutch brain-looped and watched TV. He got nigger-riot visuals and headphone fuzz next door. Dead air—Farlan Brown's suite was still still.

He'd looped through Vegas six times. He spot-tailed Farlan Brown and Wayne Tedrow. He saw them at the DI. They took the private elevator up to Dracula's lair. Brown has *not* seen Gretchen in Vegas. He's sure of it. Maybe she never hooked up with him. Maybe she ripped him off in L.A. and split.

He ran a Miami-airline check on Wayne Tedrow and hit positive. He tailed him three times. The Clark County DA passed a rumor on to Clyde Duber: Wayne Junior might have offed Wayne Senior in June.

The tails went A-OK. Wayne Junior met a black-clad, foreign-looking guy twice. Crutch hit his rooming house and records-checked him. Jean-Philippe Mesplede, French merc, age 45. Mesplede and Wayne Junior combed Little Havana twice. Crutch followed up. The deal: They were looking for two Cuban men named Gaspar Fuentes and Miguel Diaz Arredondo.

The riot heated up. The TV screen almost throbbed. Spooks lobbed Molotov cocktails. Spooks chased honkies with two-by-fours. Crutch

heard movement next door.

Yeah, it's Farlan Brown's voice. That's him tipping the bellman. *Slam*—the bellman's gone. Yawn—there's Brown on the horn with his wife.

Blah, blah—the kids are fine, the dog has fleas, I love you, too. Hang-up noise. Door-opening noise. A young woman's voice.

Yeah, dig it—

They negotiated—50 for French, a yard for half and half. Brown took the latter. The bed was by the wall unit. Air hum drowned out most of the trick. The climax came in fuzzy.

Brown bragged postcoital: I'm a big cheese with Howard Hughes. The call girl said, "Is that so?" Brown blathered: I'm hip, I'm cool, I swing.

The call girl stifles a yawn. The 157

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Shown: Ruby Velour Lounge Set

fingers hurt. He had spackle dust in his ears, eyes and nasal nooks. Freddy went to his room to snooze. Crutch turned the living-room TV on and put the sound low. The screen faced the bug-tap receiver. He grabbed a chair, hooked on headphones and listened to dead air next door.

The TV half-ass absorbed him. Nixon got the nod, first ballot. The news cut to riot footage. The Miami Congo blazed. It derived from a spook-housing-project brouhaha. Spooks were stoning and sniping white motorists. Nigger mobs, arson, looting. Hot-weather action. Groovy footage.

Crutch yawned. He was running on a six-week sleep deficit, all per HIS CASE.

HIS side deal with Dr. Fred. HIS shot at the million-dollar Hughes deal.

Farlan Brown was Miami-bound.

bedsprings creak. A zipper threads. Bye, bye, baby—she's out the door.

Brown got back on the horn. Crutch hit console buttons and activated the tap line. He got garbles and a dial tone. He heard a gruff "Hel-lo."

Brown said, "Freddy, it's Farlan." A man said, "What's happening, *paisan*?" Crutch made the voice: Shakedown Fred O.

He hit his tape feed. The spool turned. He got garbles and voices verbatim.

Brown: "...Miami. You know, for the convention."

Otash: "Nixon. Jesus, that fucking retread has got nine fucking lives."

Brown: "This one's a keeper. He's going to win."

Otash: "I've got a sports book at the Cavern. My guy's calling the race even money."

Brown: "I'll take those odds."

Otash: "Then place a bet, you cheap Mormon cocksucker."

Brown: "A grand on Dick. For real, Freddy. I smell victory."

Otash: "I smell you trying to Jew me down on a room rate. That's it, right? Your old buddy Freddy's an innkeeper now, so let's put the boots to him."

Laughter—six seconds' worth.

Brown: "I need a suite for August 23, Freddy. Girls and booze. I've got some Democrats coming in."

Otash: "You're in, you cocksucker."

Laughter—four seconds.

Otash: "So, confirm or deny a rumor for me."

Brown: "Sure."

Otash: "Tell true. Is Wayne Junior working for the Count?"

Brown: "He is. And high up at that."

Otash: "Fucking Junior always lands on his feet."

Brown: "Care to elaborate?"

Otash: "No comment."

Brown: "On that note."

Otash: "Yeah. Thank you, fuck you, and good-bye."

Two hang-up clicks—Miami and Vegas. Crutch switched to the bug line. There: yawns, bed creaks, silence and snores.

He hit switches and shut down the feed lines. It was 1:14 A.M. He called Freddy T.'s room and roused him. He said they had a bug job in Vegas—a hotel suite by August 22. Freddy said, "Remind me tomorrow," and hung up.

The TV was still on. Nixon did the V-for-victory thing. What a geek. He always needed a shave.

Crutch yawned and got antsy concurrent. He popped four dexies and snagged his rent-a-car keys.

Wrong turns and U-turns de-situated him. The Doral was near the Eden Roc. Wayne Junior's hotel—just two minutes out. One-way streets put him on a causeway. The bay water churned with confetti and floating Nixon signs. The exit markers confused him. Side streets sidetracked him. He smelled smoke. He heard gunfire. Neighborhoods devolved into shine shantytowns.

Crutch got his bearings. He drove fast and steered clear of smoke stench and flames. He parked outside the Doral. Wayne Tedrow walked out at 2:49 A.M. He shagged his rent-a-car. Crutch tailed him.

Convention traffic was still steady.

Tail cover was good. Crutch hovered two car lengths back. Wayne Junior stuck to spook-free zones and booked to Little Havana. He swooped by Jean-Philippe Mesplede's rooming house and picked up the Frogman. Crutch vibed it: another trawl for Gaspar Fuentes and Miguel Diaz Arredondo.

Flagler Street hopped. The coffee bars were open late. A radio guy did man-in-the-street interviews. Arson outside the Cuban Freedom Council—some beaners burning a straw Fidel.

Mesplede and Wayne Junior did their thing. Crutch knew it now. They ditched the car, walked storefront to storefront and asked questions. The Frogman looked avid. Wayne Junior looked vexed. Crutch stayed mobile and eyeball-tracked them.

The night slogged on. Wayne Junior walked to a parked taxicab and got in the back.

The cab pulled out. Crutch tailed it. Traffic was too sparse to get close. Crutch killed his headlights and cued on the cab's taillights.

Urban Miami disappeared. The terrain got rural. The roads got rough and swervy. Crutch turned his lights on just to see. Dirt roads swerved up to a rinky-dink airfield. Crutch saw a two-seater prop job on the runway.

He stopped the car. He couldn't see the cab. He got out and squinted in the dark. He was discombobulated. He couldn't see shit.

Floodlights snapped on. Crutch got glare-blinded. He blinked. He rubbed his eyes. He got some sight back. He saw Wayne Junior, standing by the airplane, looking straight at him.

(Las Vegas, 8/9/68)

The sheets were moist. Her gown was damp. Her pulse ran weak-steady. Wayne flicked the dial and fed dope to the tube.

Heroin. His compound. A morphine-base synthetic.

Janice unclenched. Wayne wiped her brow and toweled the sheets half dry. The night nurse was sleeping in the living room. Janice was all sweats and chills.

Wayne flicked the dial. Dope flowed bag to tube to vein. Janice went out, shuddering.

Her pulse was weak-normal. Wayne grabbed the bedside phone and dialed Mesplede in Miami.

Three rings. A sleep-slapped "Oui?"

"It's Wayne."

"Yes, of course. My American friend in duress."

"Do something for me."

"Of course."

"There was a kid tailing me in Miami. I don't know what it's about, but it's trouble."

"Yes? And your wish?"

"Early 20s, medium-sized, crewcut. He's driving an Avis rent-a-car. The plate number is GQV-881."

"Yes? And your wish?"

"Clip him."



"Make it a double."

The vault was 12 miles east of Vegas. Wayne Senior dubbed it the Führer Bunker. It was



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Pages 86-87: *Benjamin Bixby*, available at select Barneys New York and Neiman Marcus locations. *Bonobos*, bonobos.com. *C.P. Company*, cpcompany.com. *DDC*, ddcnyc.com. *Eagle Shirtmakers*, available at Macy's stores. *Lenie R. by Lenor Romano*, lenorromano.com. *L.B.M. 1911*, 212-755-0737. *Milus*, tourneau.com. *Nautica*, nautica.com. *Paul Smith*, 646-613-3060. *Report Collection*, available at Dillard's stores. *Tommy Hilfiger*, tommy.com.

SUITABLE PUNISHMENT

Pages 124-125: *Boss Black*, 800-HUGOBOSS. *Giorgio Armani*, available at Barneys New York. *Mark Nason*, neimanmarcus.com. *Salvatore Ferragamo*, 800-628-8916. *7 For All Mankind*, 7forallmankind.com. *Ted Baker London*, available at Lord & Taylor stores nationwide.

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a scrub-covered cement square sunk in a sand drift. It was straight out I-15.

Wayne brought a flashlight, a gas can and a Zippo lighter. The location was a mile off the interstate. The vault held copies of all Senior's hate tracts and his subscriber lists.

Wayne parked on a turnaround near a Chevron station and walked into the desert. It was 106 at midnight. Sand sucked at his feet and slowed his walk to a trudge. It was slow slow-motion. He thought about Dallas the whole time.

He got there. He pulled off scrub branches, unlocked the door and hauled hate lit out. Titles jumped off of covers. He saw *Miscegenation Generation* and *Jew Stew: A Recipe Book*. He saw *Pope Pontius: How Papists Rule the Jewnited Nations*. He saw doctored pix of Dr. King and little kids. He saw vintage Klan kode books.

He stripped the shelves. He lugged paper and ink-smudged his arms black. He saw hate headlines. He saw pornographic hate cartoons. He saw lynching photos with gag captions.

He built a big hate pile. It stood eight feet high. He doused it with gasoline. He sparked the Zippo and put the flame down.

The pile flared straight up and out. The big black sky went red.

(Miami, 8/10/68)

Smoke and fire. The spooks refused to quit. Gunshots, sirens and a 4:00 A.M. light show.

Crutch pulled into the Avis lot. The clutch on his rent-a-car blew. The gears were stripped. The car lurched and lugged. He called ahead. The desk guy said screw the riot, you come right in.

Half-tracks rolled down Biscayne Boulevard. The governor called the Guard in. There's a string of cop cars and a six-seater Jeep. Fuck, the driver's smoking a joint.

The car lurched and died by the gas pumps. Crutch got out and stretched. Heat and fumes smacked him. His head hurt. He'd been working the bug post full-time. He'd been up since God knows—

Someone/Something pushed him. He tumbled back in the car. His head hit the shift knob. His arms hit the dashboard. The Someone/Something pinned him down. He/It was all black.

Then the knee on his back. Then the gun in his face. With the silencer barrel-threaded and the hammer half back.

"Why are you surveilling Wayne Tedrow? Be honest. Evasion will decree an even more horrible death."

The French accent. The Frogman. Frog couture all black.

"I repeat. Why were you surveilling Wayne Tedrow?"

Crutch tried to pray. The words hit his brain jumbled. His piss tubes swelled. He held it in. The weight on him helped. He remembered his lucky rabbit's foot and obscure Lutheran Church lore.

"I repeat."

His shit chute swelled. He held it in. The weight on him helped. He opened

his mouth. He squeaked and got some sounds out. He got ventriloquized. God or some unseen fucker fed him word soup. He saw his mother. He heard "Dr. Fred," "Howard Hughes," "Million dollars." He heard "Missing woman." He heard "Please don't kill me." He tried for prayers and dredged up hymns.

The weight eased up. He smelled brandy. The scent touched his lips strong. He opened his mouth. He dipped his head and took the pour. He opened wider and let it roll in. He opened his eyes and saw the Frogman.

"I have been prone to sympathetic lapses before. You must affirm my perception of your youthful willfulness and capacity for acquiescence."

Crutch crawled into the passenger seat. His heartbeat kept multiplying. He was head-to-toe sweat. The Frogman stretched out in the driver's seat. He nipped off the flask and passed it back. Crutch chugged brandy and looked out the window. Shit—the spooks just won't quit.

Mesplede said, "I may ask you to report information to me."

Crutch nodded—yessir, yessir, yessir.

The flask went back and forth. A sync settled in. Their eyes stayed locked while the Frogman monologued. It was all CUBA. It was *Le Grande Putain* Fidel Castro and the Cuban Freedom Cause. There was JFK's Bay of Pigs betrayal. There was LBJ's commie appeasement. There were brave men willing to die to quash the Red Tide.

The flask went back and forth. The oration continued. Crutch rode the world's greatest buzz.

(Las Vegas, 8/23/68)

The feed lines worked. The 307-to-308 wiring laid firm. Crutch bored a tiny spy hole through the wall yesterday. Sight-and-sound access, confirmed.

The console faced the connecting wall. Crutch settled in with his headphones. Fred T. was back in L.A. This gig was his solo.

The 308 door opened. *Click-thump*—that's the sound. Crutch checked the spy hole. On time: Fred Otash and Wayne Tedrow.

They sat down. They chit-chatted. They sat away from the lamp feed. Their voices were dim.

Click-thump—the door again. This time: a tall, gray-suited man. Crutch heard garbles and read lips. Fred O. and Wayne called the man Dwight.

The console-to-spy-hole cord was stretched taut. Crutch pulled up a chair and got adjusted. Note: Respackle the spy hole tomorrow.

The doorbell rang. Fred O. opened up. *Sacre Frog*—there's Jean-Philippe Mesplede.

Confluence. Clyde Duber's word. It's who you know and who you blow and how you're all linked.

Wayne introduced Fred O. to the Frogman. They spewed some staticky talk. Fred O. introduced "Dwight" to the Frogman and spied his last name as "Holly."

Confluence. Dwight Holly knew Clyde. He was some kind of rogue Fed.

Crutch got situated. His headphones

fit tight and the spy hole was there at eye level. The crew pulled chairs up close to the lamp feed. Fred O. bopped to the wet bar and came back with highballs and chips. Dwight Holly declined the drink. The other guys dug in. Crutch got a vibe: This had nothing to do with His Case.

Clock it—3:18 p.m. Roll the tape, live.

The guys settled in. Sentence fragments overlapped. Dwight and the Frogman lit cigarettes. Fred O. looked plump and sassy. Wayne looked raggedy-ass and too thin.

Fred O. said, "Enough bullshit," pitch-perfect headphone sound.

The headphones *pooled* sweat. Crutch whipped them off, wiped them dry and put them back on. He got four-way garbles, fuzz, bips, pops, line hiss. Sweat-clogged feeder lines, *shit*.

More bips and line hiss. Food noise—Fred O. and the Frogman snarfed chips. Crutch took the headphones off, shook them dry and put them back on. He pressed up to the spy hole. He squinted. He tried to read lips and gestures and sync them to hiss. He got squeaks, he got crackle, he got words here and there in the mix.

He heard "Memphis." He saw Wayne twitch. He heard "Patsy," "King," "Ray." Dwight Holly and Wayne shared queasy looks. He heard food noise. He squinted harder. He breathed harder. He fogged up the spy hole. He lost a full minute to *bip-bip-bips*.

He heard "Witness."

HE STARTED TO GET IT.

Fred O. ran a monologue. His bass voice cut down line hiss. Crutch heard "Sirhan." Crutch heard "Bobby K." Fred O. mimed a shooting—*bam, bam*, you're dead. Wayne and Dwight H. shared a *très* queasy look.

HE GOT MORE OF IT. His bladder almost blew. He clenched up, sucked up and kept it in.

The spy hole was fogged. The bug line was clogged. Fucking potato-chip-chomping noise fucked it up worse. Crutch took the headphones off, banged them on the wall and put them back on. Crutch spit on the spy-hole glass and shirt-wiped it clean.

The sound died altogether. Crutch shook his head. The phones cleared and the bug line re-fed. He got *hiss, snap, crackle, pop, buzz, fuzz, bips*. He heard "*Le grande putain Jack*" and "*Dallas*." He saw Jean-Philippe Mesplede assume a rifleman's pose.

And he pissed in his pants.

And he shit in his pants.

And he vomited and gasped.

He pulled off his headphones. He ran to the console, pulled the wire and ripped spackle out of the wall. He made a small through-hole. It fed into 308, all wire-free. The spackle blew back into his suite. He squinted and put his ear to the hole—God, please please please.

(Los Angeles, 8/25/68)

Fred T. called him yesterday. Fred O. found some bug-tap debris. Fred O. leaned on Fred T. Fred T. ratted out Crutch. Fred T. convinced Fred O.: *It* was Dipshit Crutchfield, solo. Fred T. showed Crutch his bro-

ken fingers. "Kid, I don't know *what* you heard, but you better run."

Yeah, he put it all together. But, it was all instinct. Sputter, squelch, static and some words mixed in.

He knew. They knew he knew. Fred O. would tell the others. Wayne would be pissed at the Frogman. Froggy let him live. It would *alllll* blow up.

It was too big and played too preposterous. Clyde wouldn't believe him. Some left-wing Jews and paranoid hippies *might* believe him. The hebes would turn on him in a hot tick.

Bluff.

He put the fail-safes in place yesterday. He devised the plan off his one ray of hope. *They didn't know his bug gear was defective.*

Crutch waited at his pad. The dump was near-empty. He moved his mother's file and his personal shit to a hotel yesterday. His Case file was there. Buzz would find it.

He waited. He skimmed the November '67 PLAYBOY. Kaya Christian smiled from the foldout. *Baby, speak to me.*

The southbound view beckoned. Crutch walked to the window and looked out. All those shrubs that served as his perch spots. New shrubs blocking windows he'd peeped.

He leaned out the window. He caught smog in the air. He leaned too far. He started to drop. He heard noise behind him. A force slammed him down and pulled him back up.

He was on the floor. He was foot-pinned. He was blurry-eyed, half there and half not. He smelled oil on metal and knew they'd greased the door lock.

The half there expanded. The blur decreased. A full there came on. He saw Wayne Tedrow with a silenced gun and the Frogman holding a pillow. He clutched his Saint Christopher medal and prayed the Gloria Patri.

Their feet were dug in. The Frogman sweat-oozed nicotine. Wayne said, "You dipshit cocksucker."

Froggy dropped the pillow on his head. Crutch thrashed it off and gulped in air to say it.

"I've got four tape copies, plus depositions. Four bank safe-deposit boxes. I show up in person, six-month intervals. They verify me at the sites with photo and fingerprint checks. If I don't show, you know what."

Wayne looked at Mesplede. Mesplede looked at Wayne. Wayne picked up the pillow and foot-mashed it down on his head. He couldn't see. He couldn't hear. No voices, no gunshot, no pain or white clouds. Breath spurts and heartbeats, dear God am I dead?

Then light and air and the model airplane dangling from his ceiling. Then some breath. Then Wayne's gun with the silencer untapped.

A red Fokker triplane. Historically cool. He built it and sniffed the glue the day JFK got whacked.

Crutch said, "I want in. I'll take whatever you've got."

Blood's a Rover will be published in the fall of 2009 by Alfred A. Knopf.



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CHAI

(continued from page 98)

Stewart. The guys on *SportsCenter* might make a dumb pun here and there but they always just give me the scores.

Watching Oprah was like staring into a human mood ring—each day a glint of light from some unseen source shifted her emotional core.

Before I started writing this piece I would have guessed that my take on Oprah would have been skewed toward the negative and that—like anyone else twisting a comic turn—I would be focusing on her flaws and foibles. But you know what I came to realize? It's impossible.

Whatever flaws she has, SHE has already found them.

Her weight loss, her weight gain, her impatience, her pretense, her most recent weight loss, her upcoming weight gain, her face her hair her legs her obsession with clothes? Done.

Holier Than Thou Oprah, Down And Dirty Oprah, Black Oprah, White Oprah, Oprah Outside Hermès, Oprah With Obama, I Was Molested As A Young Girl And Could Have Become A Stripper But Instead I Became Oprah Oprah, Mochi-atta Oprah, The Color Purple Oprah, The Oprah Makes Up With David Letterman Oprah, Skinny O, Chubby O, O In Size 10 Calvin Klein Jeans, O In A Cashmere Fluffy-Necked Puff Sweater—Oprah On A Couch, Oprah In A Slouch—Oprah Yelling Oprah Laughing Oprah Scowling Oprah Braying Oprah Giving Away Free Cars To Everyone—she has already praised, prodded and taken the piss out of all those Oprahs as she makes her journey forward.

Listen—don't sit there searching for my hidden, ironic tone. There isn't one.

I am way way, way way, Way Into Oprah. She can do no wrong.

Let me explain:

First off, every single woman you or I know has a place to go to listen to other women talk about what women like to talk about which is pretty much almost any subject you can raise outside of professional sports, removing back hair and inexpensive but sturdy hammers.

Meanwhile—I'm sure Oprah could find a way to touch on even those manly subjects.

Did you see Michael Jordan on *Oprah*? Genius.

So here we go:

I just Googled Oprah and Oprah.com came up.

I sped through space to Oprah.com and typed "back hair" into the search engine and guess what I got? Information on unwanted hair and how to remove it and where to go to get it done. Specifically mentioned? Hair on the back. On MEN'S backs.

I did the same with "hammers"? I got Oprahed over to Oprah's DIY site, where the toolbox she suggests you keep at home includes a hammer section that—after much testing and research—prefers that you buy an OXO Good Grips 16-ounce rip-claw hammer for \$12.98.

Oh. My. God.

Or should I say Oh My Oprah.

Wait. I gotta Google something else.

Hockey sticks.

What do I get?

Dr. Mehmet Oz—one of Oprah's many medical friends—talks to hockey legend Mark Messier about being a role model, how he stays fit and what kind of equipment he uses.

Mark Messier—one of hockey's all-time toughest, meanest, scariest competitors—has been on *Oprah*.

You cannot beat her, guys. She will Oprah-ize any subject you raise.

I am literally just going to pick random guy-type titles I know that a Million Man March Of Men Of Any Color would not only find funny to type onto an Oprah site, but at some level would have a very basic, slovenly, man interest in:

Semen count?

Ten entries, including Are Vasectomies Dangerous? and Can A Woman Be Allergic To Her Husband's Semen? (The answer is yes, by the way, and not just after a long day left alone with the kids.)

Scrotum?

You get Oprahed over to an interview with author Paul Joannides featuring his book *The Guide to Getting It On*.

Make my penis bigger?

Thirteen thousand two hundred and ninety-four results—including A Man's Dipstick and Treating a Broken Penis. I didn't even know you COULD break your penis. Bruise? Yeah. Scrape? I've done it (there was a girl, half a bottle of cheap vodka and a faulty zipper involved). But break? The mere thought makes me shudder.

Make my penis smaller?

Thirteen thousand two hundred and forty-six. Including Weight Loss And Penis Length—where Oprah says if a man loses 35 pounds he may gain one inch of penis length, which in my case means that in order to gain another five inches I would eventually have to become just a cock with feet.

Now I'm just going to type in words you would never expect Oprah to say:

Tits.

Three entries.

Vagina.

Sixty-seven.

Pussy?

C'mon, man. Oprah doesn't use that word.

Here's a flurry of more practical male topics:

How to hit a baseball—1,755 entries.

How to make a woman come—18,898. (Stop laughing—it's the actual number that's listed right now.)

I'm just spitballing here guys—flying by the seat of my pants now:

Fixing your truck—700.

Punching a guy in the face? 3,793.

It's amazing. Now I'm just gonna focus on totally silly male fantasy theses:

Big nipples? 3,509.

Nipple hair? 1,383.

Blow jobs? 2,510—including a section called How Sex Is Like Pizza. With one of her male doctor friends. Jesus.

Areola. One entry. Which is one more than ESPN.com.

Ass lint—36 entries.

I give up. I give in. I give away my subscription to *ESPN The Magazine* in favor of *O*.

It's insane.

Like most men—until this very moment—I had no idea. I didn't know about Oprah.com until I pointed out the Michael Jordan interview—I was only planning on parsing Oprah from notes I had already made, but now?

My life has changed. My Google goggles no longer bear the fog of testosterone-driven prejudice.

I can't get these answers from any existing sports channel. Scores? Yes. Scrotum health headlines? Not a chance.

I want an Oprah And Friends roundtable section halfway through every episode of *SportsCenter*.

I want Gayle King to co-co-host Pardon the Interruption, running down a Twelve Topics In Two Minutes chunk of Man Stuff That Matters—sure LeBron James may be averaging 30 points a game but how are his testicles doing? Has he had them checked? Does he know that Dr. Oz says testicular cancer is the number one form of cancer for men between the ages of 15 and 35?

I doubt it.

I look at Oprah now and I see why she doesn't want to run for president. Why she hasn't had kids. Why she does what she does day after day after day after day:

We ARE her kids.

She is the be all and end all—the queen bee the queen mum the voice of reason and insanity and hilarity and disparity—becoming president would be a step down for her. It would only suck her power away. Would she be able to ask The Pregnant Man about his clit/penis if she were in the Oval Office? No. Could she discuss the best bras for buxom girls as she sat with visiting heads of state? No. Can she hold a press conference in the Rose Garden and ask a male medical friend to explain how eating pizza can help you get your husband hard? Hell no.

Oprah is where Oprah belongs—right there on the hot plasma rectangle that hangs on each of our walls, illuminating our bedrooms and kitchens with a warm fire of unending, uplifting infotainment.

Celery-Colored Sheets. Wow!

Little League Pedophiles. Oooh!

Cybill Shepherd On Menopause. Train Wreck!

She loves us she feeds us she makes us get fit she sends us out shopping and makes us redecorate she shields us and warns us and reminds us to have good sex bad sex food sex fat sex she gives us a sharp crack across the knuckles about race and religion and rich food and she makes us READ goddammit READ—read new books read old books reread the books she told us to reread last year—she is your teacher your mentor your multidimensional mensch she is actually married to us which is why she has no husband and will never have one:

That's how much she cares about us.

I suggest we make every sitting president

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visit the *Oprah* set once every three months to listen to a million little questions about how he or she is doing on the job.

There will be no lying.

There will be no deceit.

No man can lie to Oprah and a roomful of Oprah women.

It's the power of *O*.

You've seen it yourselves with James Frey.

She will roast you and toast you like a fine hamburger bun.

Those gorgeous eyes, those luscious locks cascading down those round, chocolate cheeks—no man can look at her and get away without telling the truth.

I don't care Who You Are, Who You Might Think You Are or how many big, burly guys are calling you God's Gift To Mankind. You get put in front of Oprah—all the bullshit turns to smoke.

And once the smoke begins to clear?

Strap yourself in, stud.

Roger Clemens would Misremember

and Disunderstand and wriggle and wraggle until she caught him square in her Cocoa Gaze and then he would try to look away and quote His Heroic Stats and hold up each of his Seven Cy Young Awards and she would still be sitting there—brown glare glaring, arms folded across her aqua turtle-neck chest—waiting for the truth to ember it's way out of his gimungo, drug-thumping head.

And then it would happen.

He'd realize that women—especially Oprah's women—would trade all those expensive trophies in for 20 pairs of Jimmy Choo shoes.

He'd scratch his itchy, guilty, steak 'n cheese eating chin and come to see—there is no escape from Oprah.

He would wilt into a frenzied fopsweat of Dismisremembering and Reunforgetting and finally just break down and admit that his big fat ass-abscess was in fact the result of a giant set of jet-fueled human growth hormone injections. The Mighty Rocket

would fall back to earth in a puddle of his own pretension.

Yay.

Congress couldn't crush him.

The Commissioner Of Baseball couldn't lay a finger on his wide, sneaky back.

But Oprah could.

She would swat him aside like an insect.

Just imagine the other possibilities: con artists, accused murderers and just plain free-ranging dolts.

Speaking of all three:

George Bush would chuckle it up with a smug shrug and some fumble bumble Texas twang pulled out of the bottomless pocket of his nitwit pitter pat before Oprah's glaring brown orbs began to produce long, unlaughing pauses and suddenly—the man in charge of eight bad, ugly, idiotic and financially foolish years for this country—would come to realize he was surrounded by a sea of unimpressed faces bobbing calmly atop Oprah's Angry Ocean.

The guns in the Harpo studio are almost all female and they would be pointed firmly at his prep-school privileged grin as it slowly waned into a grimace and he knew the only way out was owning up to how ridiculous it was for the American people to elect and then RE-elect a guy they thought they could "have a beer with," when in fact that same guy was a recovering white-knuckle alcoholic and would have to have not "a" beer, but six or 10 or 23 before calling his old coke dealer and getting the secret service to pick him up an eight ball, two quarts of Jack Daniel's and a bag of small, nonchokeable pretzels.

It wasn't God who was talking to Him—it was Cheney hiding behind and using a really deep voice

You saw what happened when Tom Cruise went on the show—picture George Bush hopping around on the guest couch like a circus pet on crystal meth and you'll see where we are going: you work in the White House, you answer to Oprah. Four times a year. I guarantee we'd all be better off.

Men in particular.

We'd know not to lie, cheat and steal.

Because—just like answering to your mom—Oprah and her army would be there waiting for an explanation.

Talk about the ultimate system of checks and balances.

We'd learn to do the things Oprah and the girls put on our "Things To Do This Week" list.

We'd learn to let the woman talk.

We'd learn to listen and stay in the other room and watch TV—let the girls do the shopping and make all the key decisions—from The Best Value In Ball-Peen Hammers to What Color Hammock.

We'd keep our mouths shut and do all the grunt work and expect no credit but get paid back with pizza.

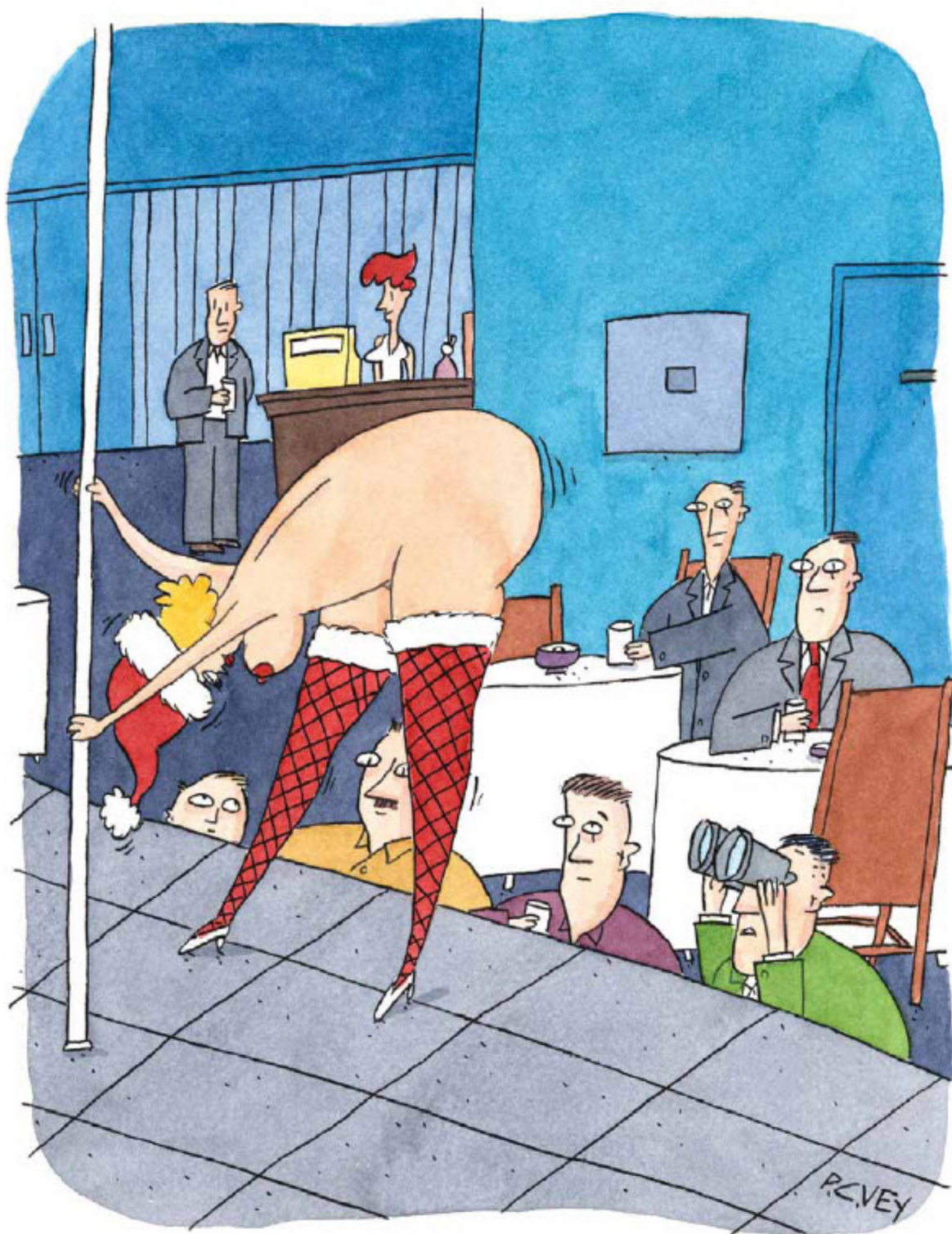
Which might just be a code word for oral sex.

Just ask Stedman.

You punch his name into the Oprah engine and it comes up empty.

Areola 1; Stedman 0.

Doesn't that say it all?



"It says, 'Do not open till Christmas.'"



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HUGH JACKMAN

(continued from page 64)

that being asked what time they eat breakfast is an invasion of privacy, but people on-screen are put on a pedestal, and the public wants to know, How can I be like that? It's a mixed-up, complex relationship, but I totally get it. No one dives into acting without realizing, Hey, if I get what I wish for, if I'm successful, I'll have to deal with this.

PLAYBOY: How do you feel when you're at the beach with your family and private moments are being photographed by some guy hiding behind a tree?

JACKMAN: It's a relatively minor distraction. I'm comfortable in my own skin. I am protective of my family, though, and I want my kids to have their shot at a private life. I'll say to the photographers, "I get it. I'm not going to get in your way. Just do me a favor and don't let my kids know you're photographing them. I don't want them to be self-conscious on the beach. They're too young; they shouldn't know." And they listen. They'll sit back behind a tree. I see them, but the kids have no idea. I don't want to retreat from life. I don't want my children to see me become a recluse or feel there's anything to be ashamed of. I have personal relationships, feelings and experiences I won't share, but generally there's not a lot about my life I wouldn't tell you.

PLAYBOY: You once studied to be a journalist. Do you consider what the tabloids do to be journalism?

JACKMAN: I don't think it's what any of those journalists thought they would be when they grew up. We had a compulsory class called Ethics in Journalism. I was very idealistic: I thought I'd be doing great investigative journalism, touring the world, telling amazing stories. The instructor said, "Here's the reality. First three or four years, you're doing death knocks, chasing celebrities. Someone dies; you interview their parents and ask for a picture." It was quite disillusioning, but it has given me a sense of sympathy. It's fairly easy to pick up on whether it's a genuine question from a journalist or an obviously ridiculous personal question they've been forced to ask. I'll usually take pity on them, give them something and not embarrass them.

PLAYBOY: Look at all the trouble young celebs like Britney Spears, Lindsay Lohan and Shia LaBeouf are in. How would you have handled fame at that age?

JACKMAN: Not until 25 did I feel any real confidence in handling myself like a human being. At 21, 22, it was "Woo-hoo!" I was really reactive. How would I have handled wealth, unlimited opportunities or the single life? One of my great blessings is I was happily married when I became famous. It must be incredibly hard to meet a partner and be open and trusting. I'm completely loved and accepted for who I am. I had that before anything else. When you're searching for that after you're famous, where's the reality check? Is she here for me or for

the lifestyle, the fame, the success? Success and power are great aphrodisiacs.

PLAYBOY: What's the biggest trouble you remember getting into at that age?

JACKMAN: [Laughs] Oh, I remember a few bar fights. Like when I was 18, in London, I met up with a few Aussies, and I was so drunk and singing Australian songs obnoxiously. Somebody tapped me on the shoulder and clocked me across the face, laying me out. I don't know how long I was unconscious. All I remember is getting up and smelling blood. Today that would be on someone's cell phone, right? I was by no means an out-of-control youth, but we used to do nutty things. There's a road near here, and I used to jump on top of my mate's car, and we'd drive about 100 miles an hour. Roof riding, we called it. Now? I'd be a disgrace, setting a bad example for youngsters.

PLAYBOY: Hugh Hefner recently men-

tioned you as a candidate to play him in a movie. What about his story resonates with you?

JACKMAN: I think Hef is an embodiment of the male American dream. He pushed that in the 1950s and said, "Come on, this is what you really want. Let's be honest. I'm living what you really want." If I read the script right, he was a dreamer and not particularly the ladies' man as a teenager. Hef became an alter ego, who he wanted to be. All of us have those dreams, but few of us even attempt to achieve them. I admire his ambition, his courage in not caring what anybody thought and just doing what he thought would make him happiest. He was a real fighter who prevailed. He also has the ability to kind of laugh at himself, which from the Australian point of view is probably the most important thing.



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PLAYBOY PICKS

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THE EPIPHANY

(continued from page 116)

His first shocking encounters with **Le Petit Mort**, who presented himself to **The Epiphany** as a boon companion, a long-lost brother—only to discover that time spent in **Le Petit Mort's** company gave way to staggering sensations of emptiness, self-loathing and doubt, days when he couldn't even crawl from beneath the bedcovers let alone fumble his way to the chest of drawers where his costumes lay folded or balled, waiting for him to resume his Heroism, to reassert himself, where they indeed lay in drawers smelling of mustiness and mothballs, probably he should take them all to the Chinese laundromat and have them fumigated, or then again possibly instead build a bonfire in his backyard and quietly incinerate the costumes and scatter the ashes, his whole superheroic career a momentary whim taken seriously for far too long—but no! The infernal and insidious **Le Petit Mort** had snuck up on him again!

And above all, his Origin Story, still an artifact of wonder and mystery even to himself. Other superheroes find their points of origin in outward action and reaction, colorful tales of being irradiated in space or bitten by an animal or experimented upon by some government or villain, bright anecdotes easily distilled into legend and swapped around as keepsakes: Superheroes aren't born, they're made! Not so for **The Epiphany**. He, apparently, was born, though unknown to himself, mistaking his life for ordinary until that moment in late adolescence when, awake at night in bed watching headlights flicker long across the ceiling plaster, his parents having quit murmuring through the wall beside him, alone awake in that ordinary house in the ordinary suburbs in which he'd to this point taken himself to be an ordinary child within a perfectly ordinary family, he'd with a sensation of ineffable unquantifiable yet unmistakable intensity *discovered himself*, hidden up to that point in plain sight. Felt the powers in him all at once go from inchoate to manifest, with a thrill of self-understanding as complete and all-encompassing as it was quick to shudder from him and vanish: These were the very first moments of the existence of **The Epiphany**, facing no villain yet apart from doubt and fear and time itself hurtling so precipitously into the future. Tasting that which would bring him so much joy and sorrow through his lifetime, the ineluctable inception and quick termination of his recurring Interludes of Power. And it was this that he most feared his enemies discovering: It was only during the Interludes that **The Epiphany** was any kind of superhero at all. In the long stretches between, he was as vulnerable as any hostage or bystander, as some extra face tucked into a crowded comic-book panel, pointing to the skies and crying for help from some costumed Person of Wonder.

It is at this exact instant of self-recollection that **The Epiphany** knows that he has fallen again into the oldest and simplest trap of all, that the life flashing before his eyes is a premonition of the future, not a vision of the past, that **The Chair of Death** is only the chair in his breakfast nook, where he sits at the start of each day, that he has survived another brush with **Le Petit Mort** and stands on the verge of his whole life all, again or for the first time, impossible to say which. For **The Epiphany** the beginning is always also the end, every villain ahead of and behind him at once, the day starting anew. This is precisely the nature of his powers: life always flashing before him, life always waiting for him to resume in its interrupted course. He has only to get out of his chair. In fact, **The Epiphany** is already wearing his costume, rather than his civilian clothes (not that anyone besides **The Epiphany** would notice the difference between the two, his costume is so subtle, so slight). He must have put it on without thinking, when he first got out of bed.



PLAYBOY PICKS

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CAROL

(continued from page 142)

Looking better, feeling better, Alt also reports she's more active. "My energy is up all the time," she says, a good thing for a woman constantly on the go. She travels the world on modeling assignments, has an award-winning acting career in Europe and is launching a line of completely raw, chemical-free skin-care products on HSN. (Alt happily points out that she has had no face-lifts and seldom wears makeup.) She had a more than respectable third-place finish earlier this year on *The Celebrity Apprentice*, and she has just published her first novel, *This Year's Model*. The critics have been complimentary: "It brings high fashion's hautest mannequins to life," enthused the New York *Daily News*. As with her pictorial in *PLAYBOY*, Alt aims to accomplish some good with her book and hopes aspiring models will learn some lessons from her tale. "I'm tired of watching these poor young girls get used and abused by photographers and agents," she says. "They have to wise up. They need to know that girls came before them and lots of girls will come after them and that if they treat it like a business, they can have a career."

"I always was a worker bee," she says. "I wasn't the best-looking girl in the business, and I didn't have the best body—Elle Macpherson did. But it is a business, and I treated it like one. I remember John Casablancas said to Patrick Demarchelier, 'Why do you work with Carol? She's no fun; she doesn't party.' Patrick said, 'It's because I know when I book Carol I will get the job

done.'" It's revealing to learn the disciplined Alt almost didn't become a model; at the same time her career took off she was awarded an ROTC scholarship to pursue a pre-law major at Hofstra. "I was faced with a huge decision," she recalls. "I had been battling for the scholarship. They didn't want to give it to a woman—to the extent that, the year before, they had given it to a guy who was less qualified than I was. And my family wanted me to stay in school. But the agency said, 'You're out of your mind! You're working every day. Why would you want to give this up?' To me it was just a summer job, but I decided to give it a try." No doubt it was the right decision: Think of all the soldiers who would have hazarded a court-martial just to be prosecuted by Colonel Alt.

Having once been married to former New York Ranger Ron Greschner, Alt is currently in a long-term relationship with Alexei Yashin, the former NHL star who now plays for Lokomotiv Yaroslavl in the Continental Hockey League in his native Russia. Yashin is 13 years Alt's junior, and yes, she says raw food helps keep them together. "I have to keep up with all those women who are 13 years younger," she says. "Those Russian women are gorgeous." Although being apart is difficult, Alt understands why Yashin continues to play. "It's not about the money. It's about what you've set as your goal. He doesn't feel he has reached it. I don't feel I have, either. There's always something else I want to do. It's a big question: What are you going to do with the rest of your life? I eat raw—I'm going to be around for a long time."



WILLIAMS

(continued from page 80)

entire 2006 season. He applied for reinstatement in April 2007. While NFL commissioner Roger Goodell was considering his request, Ricky failed his fifth drug test, in May. That failure elicited less condemnation, despair and sadness than it did laughter, for by now Ricky was seen as a character not in a Greek tragedy but in a French farce.

Unbelievably, almost immediately after his failed 2007 drug test was made public Ricky applied again for reinstatement to the NFL. While he waited for that day, he spent his time in a small apartment in Waltham, Massachusetts with two of his children and their mother, Kristin Barnes. He awoke around six a.m., had a breakfast of fruits and nuts (he's a vegetarian), meditated, did some yoga, went to a nearby high school field to work out alone and then drove into Boston, where Ricky Williams was psychoanalyzed by a psychiatrist.

I courted Ricky for two years, through his agent, Leigh Steinberg; the Dolphins' media director, Harvey Greene; and Ricky's girlfriend, Kristin. Ricky is reclusive and self-protective. He never sleeps too often in the same bed.

Ricky doesn't answer his calls or return messages. He avoids reporters until, inexplicably, on a whim he summons them for a chat. Even then, he may show up at the appointed time and place hours late or maybe not at all.

The voice on the phone in early July 2007 was as soft and light as a girl's. "This is Ricky." I flew to Boston.

Ricky is driving us to an Italian restaurant in Waltham. Kristin, in the backseat, gives him directions. Usually she drives. Kristin is a small, slightly built woman of 38. A Joan Allen type, she is an understated beauty without artifice, her face all angular planes. An Okie face. She was born and raised in Arkansas and still, to her embarrassment, has a Southern drawl. Ricky is wearing a baggy T-shirt and baggy slacks that can't hide his bulk. He is just shy of six feet tall and weighs maybe 230 pounds. He has a stubble of a beard on his handsome face, but his dreads are gone, his head shaved. "I don't need them anymore," he says. "I'm more of Ricky Williams without my dreads."

Ricky once said he didn't value money because "I've always had money. I couldn't imagine worrying about money; it's just not my style." When he played for the Saints and Dolphins, he had all the toys: expensive homes, expensive cars, Ferraris, Hummers, Mercedeses. But now he's sold them all, most at a considerable loss, to help pay for his living expenses with Kristin and their two children and the \$100,000-a-year child support he pays to the other two mothers of his children. Soon, he says, he will have to worry about money. He tells me if he doesn't return to the NFL, at least for a veteran's \$500,000-plus minimum salary, he'll be broke in a year. Then, for the first time in his life, he will have "to work



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for a living." Ricky has avoided the lunch-bucket brigade by signing first a \$730,000 contract with the Dolphins and then a contract extension that could net him \$2.2 million. Although none of it is guaranteed, the 31-year-old hopes it will keep him with the Dolphins for the rest of his career.

The waitress stands over us. Kristin and I order. Ricky studies his menu. He leans toward Kristin and points at something on the menu. Kristin looks up at the waitress and says, "He'll have the sautéed vegetables." I ask them how long they've been together.

Ricky says, "Seven years. Two good years, three bad ones and two good ones."

Kristin says, "I worry about the seven-year itch."

They met when Kristin was a Delta flight attendant based in Baton Rouge and Ricky was with the Saints. Kristin worked a Saints charter flight one day, and Ricky went to the galley to help her clean up. "I was like, 'Okay.'" Kristin's eyes get wide. "But it wasn't a come-on. It was just Ricky being nice." After they started dating Ricky took Kristin to San Diego to show her all the plants and flowers he had grown at each of the houses he had lived in as a boy. She says she found this sensitivity to beauty "intriguing."

When Ricky was traded to the Dolphins he bought a \$1.3 million condo in South Beach and a \$2.3 million house on Las

Olas Isles in Fort Lauderdale. He asked Kristin to move into the Las Olas house with him and their son, Prince, now six. "I thought that signified something," says Kristin. "It signified something to me. But not to Ricky." He stayed with her and Prince sometimes, and sometimes he stayed alone at his condo.

"I wanted to be single and married at the same time," says Ricky. "You know, do the family thing and then get away from it in South Beach. Kristin was patient, though. She let me get it out of my system."

Kristin says, "I didn't have a choice."

Ricky says he's "a very sensitive, introspective person who overly expects everyone to see what's inside me." When they don't, he's very sensitive "to being hurt." He calls this his feminine side, the result of growing up in a house with three women—his mother, younger sister and twin sister—and no father. When I ask him what he learned growing up around women, he says, "I learned to stay away from them." Ricky is a walking contradiction. A perfect solipsist, he sees the world in relation to himself and his hurts, not the hurts he inflicts on others. He is proud of his "feminine side" because it reinforces his view of himself as a "sensitive" man, but he can be totally insensitive in his treatment of women. Ricky doesn't see it that way, though. He always has a very

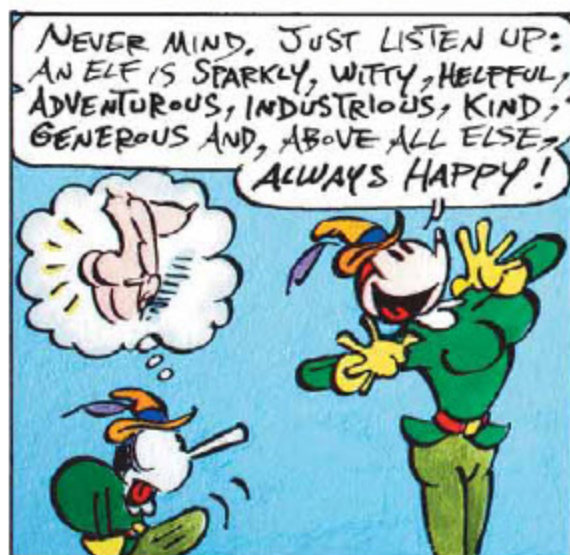
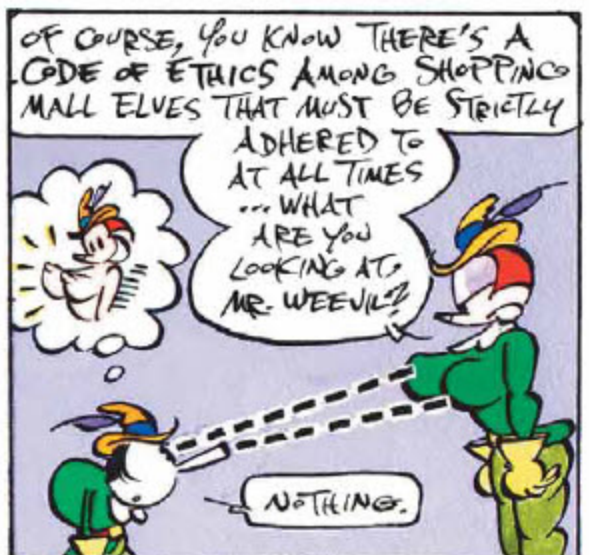
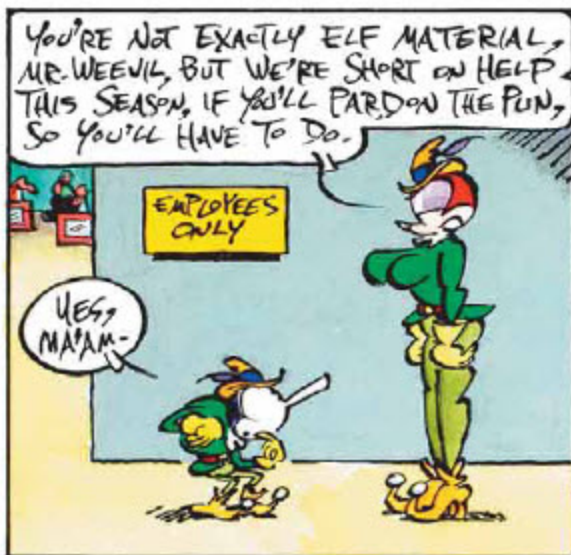
good reason for doing what he does. That reason is always about Ricky.

The next morning Ricky and Kristin pick me up in front of my hotel in a cold, drizzling rain. Ricky is on time, as he will be each of the four times we meet during my four-day stay in Waltham. Kristin drives us back to their new apartment. They have just moved in after living in a hotel room. Their apartment is in a small nondescript complex. Bags are strewn around the living room. Kristin's mother, Jane, a small woman with a shy, sweet smile, is emptying the bags and putting things in drawers while at the same time babysitting for their children, Prince and Asha, one and a half years old. They are beautiful children with café-au-lait skin and sandy-colored hair. When Ricky enters the room, Prince does not go running to his father. Ricky barely acknowledges him or Asha. They have not always lived with their father. Ricky sits on a sofa as Kristin and her mother gather up the children and go out to buy groceries in the rain.

Alone with Ricky, I ask him about New Orleans. What went wrong? He begins talking in his light, reedy voice about what, fortunately for him, will not be the end of his NFL career.

When the Saints gave up eight draft choices to be able to draft Ricky fifth overall

Dirty Duck by Bobby London



in the first round, their fans and the media complained they were giving up too much to get him. Ricky says, "That put pressure on me almost immediately to be the savior of the team." Then he posed in a wedding dress for *ESPN the Magazine* before he went to his first training camp. "In the ninth grade I dressed as a cheerleader on Halloween," Ricky says. "It was my idea to wear the wedding dress. I didn't think it'd offend anyone. I just wanted to show my relationship with Ditka. I was looking at myself not as a football player but as an open, interesting person. The reaction from reporters and fans was shocking. I didn't see why it was such a big deal for a football player not to be afraid to be in touch with that side of himself. It doesn't make sense that a football player is supposed to be fearless but should be afraid to be in touch with his feminine side."

All would have been forgiven by the Saints, their fans and the media if Ricky had performed up to their expectations over the next three seasons. But he didn't. He was injured a lot his first year and never proved himself much more than an adequate running back for the Saints. He missed 10 of 48 games with the team, and even when he did play he averaged fewer than four yards a carry and fewer than 100 rushing yards a game. He was a powerful bruising runner off tackle but not an exceptionally speedy and elusive runner in the open field. He seldom ripped off huge, eye-catching gains that would have the fans on their feet. He was a plodder who needed to carry the ball a lot, 35, 36 times, to wear down defenses in the last

quarter (not unlike O.J. Simpson). He was more a blue-collar workhorse than a derby thoroughbred. What he did on the field for his team was not as obvious to fans as it was to knowledgeable football people.

It didn't take long for Ricky to feel unloved by the fans, the media and his coaches, whom he accused of treating him like "a piece of meat." His own teammates, he says, didn't even help him up off the turf after a tackle. The media disparaged his efforts, so he began to avoid the media. When he couldn't, he conducted interviews wearing his football helmet with the visor covering his eyes. He began to have trouble looking people in the eye when they talked to him. In New Orleans he became a recluse, seldom leaving his French Quarter condominium. Finally, in 2001, he was

diagnosed with a social anxiety disorder. He was prescribed the mood-leveling drug Paxil. (Today Ricky says, as if embarrassed, "I didn't have any social anxiety disorder. I was just a little depressed, that's all.") He was also not diagnosed as bipolar. His problems have always been less medical and more psychological: Ricky thinks too much.)

It was also at about this time that Ricky began to self-medicate his anxieties by smoking pot. He had smoked pot, he says, "maybe six times at Texas," but in New Orleans he began smoking more often.

By his third year the Saints let Ricky know how disenchanted they were with him by drafting running back Deuce McAllister. Ricky let the Saints know his feelings by muttering out loud how much he disliked what he called "this dark city" and how he'd pre-

my coaches and teammates not liking me. There was always some controversy. So I began smoking pot maybe three days a week when I came home from practice, just like you'd have a drink after work. I know now I was using pot as a tool to sabotage myself."

Ricky deliberately played himself out of New Orleans with his petulant, childish behavior, which he describes as passive-aggressive. He sulked, came late to meetings, seemed always to be photographed during games sitting alone on a bench far from his teammates. He was fined for such ridiculous things as "uniform infractions." In fact, he was fined so often at New Orleans that one year it was reported he pocketed only \$100,000 of a \$500,000 salary. Finally the Saints had had enough, and in 2002 Ricky got his wish and was traded to the Dolphins.

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Ricky's first year in Miami was an idyllic honeymoon in the sun, with piña coladas on the beach, candlelit dinners, whispered terms of endearment. He rushed for 1,853 yards, an average of 116 yards a game and 4.8 yards a carry, which led the NFL and set a Dolphins record. He also scored 16 touchdowns. His teammates called him intelligent and "a good person," and his coaches called him one of the hardest-working players on the team. But Ricky wasn't able to sustain that marriage much beyond its first-year honeymoon. By his second season he complained of being overworked and underpaid.

What really happened to Ricky in 2003 was he lost his enthusiasm for his new marriage, the pattern of his life. A

fer to play in a city of sunlight, like Miami.

"There was nothing I wanted more than to be a Texas Longhorn," says Ricky. "I wanted to be a star because I loved college football traditions. At Texas I was treated like a kid, with a support system that allowed me to be myself. But in New Orleans, Ditka was old-school. He didn't believe in support. He expected you to do things on your own. Then I got hurt in my first and second games and played hurt most of my first year. I dislocated my elbow and had a bad ankle. I didn't have the courage to tell Ditka I couldn't play. But the pain caught up with me, and my confidence went down. Everything that could go wrong did. And I had no one to turn to. There was all this personal stuff I had to deal with. The wedding dress, baseball, my trashing New Orleans,

honeymoon isn't a marriage. You can drink only so many piña coladas on the beach, eat only so many stone crabs at Joe's, hit only so many late-night dance clubs in South Beach, and that sunlight, once warm and comforting, can become blinding, disorienting and oppressive day after day. So you stay inside, out of that blinding sun, and work on those small details of a relationship that bring the kind of ordinary satisfactions most people cherish in a marriage. But Ricky is not satisfied with small pleasures. His life has always been a succession of big explosive pleasures.

"At Texas, after I won the Heisman and set the NCAA rushing record, I crashed and burned without any more goals," he says. He also says that if he wasn't constantly on the move, going to new places and

trying new things, his life would stagnate and so would he.

"That first year with Miami," he says, "everything was wide-open. The guys were happy and supportive. I thought, Whoa! I have an opportunity here to be the best. I had a great, great year. I felt I could build on that in 2003. But then we got no new offensive linemen, no new receivers, and our quarterbacks didn't play well. So the coach was afraid to pass the ball, and he just handed it off to me. My linemen couldn't block for me, and I got hammered. I broke my shoulder, my collarbone. It was all so out of control. And then, when I asked the Dolphins to renegotiate my contract, they insulted me with their offer. I thought, The things I thought were going to make me happy aren't, so why am I doing this? So I began to look for a way out."

On Memorial Day 2004, at his South Beach condo, Ricky claims, he had an epiphany. "That's when football began to fall apart for me," he says. "I wanted to move on from football. I was done with this. You know, life is like a dance. If you stop, you get your toes stepped on. If you go too fast, you're out of rhythm. But when you go with the flow, you're content." But Ricky wasn't content, and, he says, "I didn't have the balls to say that. So I let marijuana serve as a way to get me out without my having to say or do anything. I'm convinced I don't have a drug problem. I never took painkillers for injuries like 95 percent of the players do. I don't like putting foreign substances in my body. I'm a vegetarian. But whenever I'm ambivalent about football, I smoke. I mean, it wasn't like I couldn't stop when I was motivated to play. I'm an athlete. I'm disciplined. But my pot smoking was definitely a way to deliberately sabotage my career when I didn't have the balls or didn't value myself enough to put my foot

down. Marijuana served the purpose of making my decisions for me."

Ricky had already failed two drug tests with the Dolphins, the first right after he was traded in May, for which he was put in the NFL's substance-abuse program, which required him to submit to eight to 10 random drug tests a month. He failed the second, in December 2003, and was fined four weeks' pay, and he failed the third, in February 2004. Ricky knew with his third failure would come a suspension, probably for four games. So before his failed test was made public he called the Dolphins in July 2004, a week before training camp was set to begin. He told his coach, Dave Wannstedt, that he was retiring from football. The Dolphins' fans and the media were furious, the players crushed. Because Ricky waited until just before the opening of camp, the Dolphins had little time to find a replacement for him. The fans and the media called him a quitter, a traitor and a coach killer. They would be proven right. After the Dolphins struggled to a 1-8 start in 2004, Wannstedt resigned. (Ditka had lasted only three years in New Orleans.)

Wayne Huizenga, the Dolphins' owner, was so furious with Ricky that he demanded he return his \$8 million signing bonus. Ricky contested the demand, and in September 2004 an arbitrator ruled he had to return his bonus. Ricky's response was to run away from the whole mess. He flew to Japan and then Australia, where he stayed for a month, backpacking from one hippie commune to another. He lived in a tent with only books on yoga, meditation and vegetarian lifestyles. He read the books by the light of a candle while he smoked ganja. He ate almonds and rice. He drank carrot and celery juice. He smoked ganja. When he lost his wallet, he said it was proof he

"wasn't supposed to be carrying a wallet." He smoked more ganja. Then he found a little bit of paradise on a mountaintop, 165 acres of lemon trees that looked down over the ocean. Ricky looked at the land and said, "This is where I'll live." He phoned his agent, Leigh Steinberg, and told him there was "no way I was coming back." Steinberg said, "Don't burn your bridges."

"I never did buy the 165 acres," Ricky says in the tiny living room of his small apartment. "I thought I could live there at the time. It was the most enriching, fulfilling time of my life when I was away from football. But that's the past. You have to keep up with your evolution. I'd miss what I have now."

What Ricky missed in Australia was his ties to football, to people who knew who he was, people who pursued him, tried to understand him, wooed him, wanted to love him. He had neurotic needs that "paradise" could never fulfill. After Ricky returned to the States, he joined the Sivananda Ashram, a yoga monastery in Grass Valley, California, near Sacramento. He spent his days with Kristin and their two children in a \$426,000 house next to the yoga farm or at the ashram, where he studied meditation, spiritualism and positivism. He says for the first time in his life he felt free from "a life of money and fame, which brings a loss of self."

"Football represented the black, or Western, part of myself," Ricky says. "Yoga represented the white, or Eastern, part of myself that I'd abandoned. I had been too heavy on the football side, so I got into yoga to get back that part of myself that wants to approach God."

Ricky's marriage to the ashram and his divorce from football didn't last long. It was put in perspective by an older Vietnamese woman who became Ricky's guru at the ashram. She told him he was neglecting his responsibilities to things outside himself, like football. She told him he had an obligation to football. She made Ricky realize that "I couldn't live in the monastery forever. I couldn't give up my ego." So in 2005 Ricky announced he was unretiring from football because, he tells me, "Football was such a big part of my life, and I missed it. I wanted to go back to the NFL and fix things, my legacy. There's nothing in the world I love more than playing football, but I had been conflicted about it. I was too idealistic about football. I thought my strength was in holding on to what I believed without compromising. I rebelled by showing I didn't fit the mold. Now I realize my strength is in compromising. A part of me needs to conform but without giving up part of myself. I didn't have the wisdom to see that before."

The south Florida media were not so accepting of Ricky's epiphany that convinced him to return to the Dolphins. The media wrote that he was returning so he wouldn't have to give back his \$8 million signing bonus. "Hell, no!" Ricky says. "I wouldn't do anything for money. But money was definitely the reason I came back. It dawned on me that it was out of my control, that I was supposed to play football...just like I

(concluded on page 175)



"Hard to believe, wouldn't you say?"

PLAYMATE NEWS



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Clockwise from left: Brande Roderick models a bikini by Financially Hung, her networking (and now clothing) company. Alesha Oreskovich is the face of her line of masks, including one that contains mud from the Dead Sea. Charis Boyle and family model their Silver Star clothes, made, she says, "for people who want to be noticed." The spicy Devin DeVasquez holds her Cajun seasoning mix. Hot.

10 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

In 1998 we presented the **Dahm Triplets** as Misses December. Nicole, Erica and Jaclyn have done almost everything together, from *The Jenny Jones Show* to *Boy Meets World* to *The Ladies Man*. When they appeared on *1 vs. 100* (it's not *1 vs. 103*) in January, they were apprehensive about having to split up. But why? After all, we're pretty sure Erica was the only one to marry Dr. Phil's son Jay.



Pick up a present made with Playmate love. To promote her networking company, Financially Hung, PMOY 2001 **Brande Roderick** designed shirts with its logo; some of her friends liked them so much that she now sells bikinis, boxers and even onesies for babies that say MY DAD IS FINANCIALLY HUNG. Being a model, Miss June 1993 **Alesha Oreskovich** has a fascination with skin care and turned that passion into a line of facial masks for Holy Mud. Go to holymud.com and enter the code

HEF to receive 15 percent off any purchase. After seeing her home state of Louisiana battered by Hurricane Katrina, Miss June 1985 **Devin DeVasquez** put together Devin's Kickass Cajun Seasoning and is selling it at devronn.com (a portion of the profits helps the bayou's rebuilding). Miss February 2003 **Charis Boyle** describes her Silver Star clothing line as "skurban," combining looks from the street with styles from the skate park. Check out the hip threads at buysilverstar.com.

LOOSE LIPS

"I wasn't nervous about taking it all off," Miss July 2008 **Laura Croft** said about her pictorial, her first nude shoot. "Anyway, there was also Jack Daniel's on the set."



HOPPIN' DOWN THE BUNNY TRAIL



From left: PMOY 2007 Sara Jean Underwood at AFI's Life Achievement Award. Bunnies in real life, Miss October 2005 Amanda Paige, Miss February 1999 Stacy Fuson, Miss July 2002 Lauren Anderson and Miss September 2002 Shalan Meiers at the *House Bunny* premiere with Anna Faris. Miss November 1998 Tiffany Taylor looks smoking at Marijuana Policy Project's party at the Mansion.



HOT SHOT



STEPHANIE LARIMORE

MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

By Todd O'Neill

—country singer-songwriter

"My favorite Playmate is Miss

March

2007

Tyran

Richard. She's a Louisiana girl, which means she can handle spicy food and good football—that's my kind of woman."



POP QUESTIONS: LUCI VICTORIA

Q: We hear you recently started the Luci Victoria Modeling School. What inspired you?

A: I've been in the modeling industry for 12 years, and I feel I can guide girls in the right direction.

Q: When does the program begin?

A: I'm planning to take 10 girls away for a week each month with my photographer. We went to Spain in September, and we're going to Majorca in November.

Q: What does the training entail?

A: I'm teaching these girls everything I know—how to walk, how to present

themselves. The U.K. modeling industry is fickle, and I want to do all I can to help out young models.

Q: How has being a Playmate helped you achieve this dream?

A: As soon as the girls hear I've been a Playmate they want to be involved. It gives me a high profile and tremendous respect.

Q: Are you teaching aspiring Playmates?

A: Oh yes. All my girls want to be in PLAYBOY.

Q: What's the best part of being a Playmate?

A: The partying! I love *Midsummer Night's Dream*. The Mansion is such a loving environment.



SHE MISSED YOU

Miss May 2006 Alison Waite could have used you: In September, during the Ditch Fridays party series at the Palms, she was the MC and co-host of the World's Largest Underwear Party. Unfortunately, though the action was hot and sexy for the thousands of guests who dressed down for the event, Guinness World Records didn't give it the thumbs-up. The counters must have had trouble with their eyes popping out of their heads. Alison says she is excited to have another shot next year. Have panties, will travel.



PLAYMATE GOSSIP

PMOY 2008 Jayde Nicole escorted Brody Jenner to the MTV Video Music Awards (and the two have been spotted together at the Mansion; see page 14). Ever since, gossip has been flying about their relationship. Is the star of *The Hills* and *Bromance* romancing Jayde? E! Online saw them "holding hands and kissing all night long." When asked, Jenner said, "We're really good friends. She's a great girl both inside and out, but she's not my girlfriend—at the moment." We echo the sentiment of thehollywoodgossip.com: "Yowza. Well done, B-Jen!"... Possibly more of an odd couple, Miss March 2005 Jillian Grace and her ex-boyfriend comedian David Spade now have a baby girl (born August 26). As of press time Jillian is resting in Missouri, and Spade promises to visit as soon as he gets time off from filming *Rules of Engagement*... Miss December 2001 Shanna Moakler rushed to her ex-husband Travis Barker's side following his near-fatal plane crash. We're glad they are together, because during the summer Shanna and Kim Kardashian fought over Barker. Despite the two women trying to stay away from each other, they found themselves face-to-face at a party hosted by Carmen Electra. Shanna became enraged and threw her drink at Kim. Apologies circulated through the blogosphere.



Are Jayde and Jenner dating? What does Lauren think?



The hope is Jillian's baby has mama's looks.

A catfight between Kim and Shanna erupted at Carmen Electra's barbecue, where drinks and words were spilled.



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.

WILLIAMS

(continued from page 172)

was supposed to be with Kristin. Everything I ever did to get away from that relationship with Kristin never worked. I had never thought that having kids, a wife and a stable family life was a reality for me, that I could fit into that role. I never thought that role was natural for me, so I ran away from it. Now I'm working with Kristin on being aware of hurting others."

Before he could play for the Dolphins in 2005, Ricky had to sit out a four-game suspension for his 2004 failed drug test and agree to 10 drug tests a month for the rest of his career. When Ricky finally began playing for the Dolphins, his new coach, Nick Saban, who had replaced Wannstedt, told him he'd have to share running-back duties with the Dolphins' young back, Ronnie Brown. Neither of the two backs benefited from that arrangement. Ricky averaged only 61.9 yards a game, and he says of Brown, "It was detrimental to Ronnie's career to play with me." Of Saban, Ricky says, "He called me into his office twice a week to check on me. He said he valued my opinion. He fooled me into thinking he really cared about me." (Saban left the Dolphins after the 2006 season to coach at the University of Alabama.)

Shortly after the season was over, in February 2006, it was made public that Ricky had failed his fourth drug test and would be suspended for the entire 2006 season. With no place to go and no job, Ricky let Steinberg negotiate a one-year contract for up to \$500,000 to play with the Toronto Argos in the Canadian Football League, which at the time had no substance-abuse policy.

Ricky says he loved playing in Canada because "Canadians weren't so uptight about football. In the NFL, being myself wasn't acceptable." He also felt comfortable for the first time talking with the media because the Canadian media "wrote what I said and didn't try to make a stir like the NFL media." In fact, the Canadian media just quoted Ricky verbatim, without critical comment, which was not necessarily a favor to him. He told the Canadians, "I outgrew marijuana when I found yoga." He said yoga put "balance, beauty and harmony" in his life and taught him that "God plus mind equals man" and "oxygen is a better source of energy than food." He showed reporters his meditation room with a ghee-burning lamp beside a deity-laden altar. "I found myself with yoga," he said, "and now I'm going deeper into myself."

Ricky played only five games with the Argos before he broke his left arm and had to sit out the rest of the year. At the time, he was the sixth-rated rusher in the CFL.

Ricky is sitting in his Waltham apartment, explaining how failing his fifth drug test brought him to where he is now, visiting a shrink five days a week "to help me recapture that boyish, passionate innocence I've given away" while waiting for his NFL future to be decided.

"I failed the test," he says, "but I didn't

smoke. I just didn't take the necessary steps to keep myself out of harm's way. I was living in the monastery and inhaled second-hand smoke. It was freakish. I was shocked. I should have stuck up for myself with the NFL and explained. But I didn't know whether I forcefully wanted to come back." So he came to Boston, to a shrink, to see if that shrink could "help me dig down deep to see if I still have a passion for football."

Ricky says one of the things he has learned from his shrink is that he has a problem with confrontation, with repressed anger he can't express. "I thought not expressing my anger meant I was good, sensitive," he says. "But it meant I was weak. You need anger in sports to compete. But I was never comfortable with that side of football. I'd go to extremes to be sensitive. It was detrimental to me. It seemed I didn't care that much about football because I wasn't aggressive off the field, on the bench, sitting alone with my head down in the locker room, talking to the media. But that went against my nature."

Ricky can trace his repressed anger to his childhood when his father left the family and Ricky became, for all intents and purposes, the caretaker of his twin sister, Cassie, and younger sister, Nisey. "It wasn't so bad," he says. "There was no one to tell me what to do." Ricky's mother, Sandy, was 25 at the time, with three children and no husband. She was a competitive, stylish woman with a lot of frustration, says Ricky. "Her parents pushed her to marry my father," says Ricky, "and now she wanted her life back. She worked, went to school at night and had her boyfriends. She had no time or maturity to see who I was, so I grew up with an exaggerated need to be liked and understood."

Ricky is not close to his mother today, he says. Yet the first thing he did when he got his Phillies bonus money was to buy her a house and pay for his sisters' college education. When I talk to Sandy over the phone, she says there is a distance between her and her son now, a wariness, she says, because "it's not all about Ricky with me. Ricky is not my whole life."

As the man of the house at the age of six, it fell to Ricky to do the laundry and cook meals for his sisters. It was not long before his repressed anger at his role in the family finally surfaced and he underwent anger counseling. What he learned from that counseling was to hide his anger behind his faux gentleness. In third grade, as one of only two blacks, he listened to his white friends talk about all the places they'd visited on vacation. This made Ricky determined to travel when he got older, which is why, he says, "I've never been in one place more than six months these past three years. As I got older, I pursued all my interests to catch up to what I never had as a kid."

By the time Ricky was a young teen, he had pierced ears and tattoos, which, he says, made him look "threatening" in his predominantly white community. When he walked on the sidewalk and a white person who didn't know him came walking toward him, that person would cross the street. "That was difficult for me," he says. "I never thought my mere existence could be threatening to people. I didn't want people

to be afraid of me, so I overcompensated by being soft-spoken. As I got older that gentle stereotype was exacerbated." Ricky smiles and adds, "You know, God gives us the parents who make us stronger."

Kristin, her mother and the children enter the house with bags of groceries. They are dripping wet from the rain. Ricky gets up and goes outside to get the rest of the bags. I ask Kristin if I can talk to her tomorrow morning before I leave. She says, "I've always refused to talk to the press." Then she says okay.

Kristin meets me in the hotel lobby for breakfast. She is wearing a little makeup for the first time in four days. It has transformed her from an attractive woman to a beautiful woman. She sits down and orders an omelet, toast and a stack of pancakes. She can't weigh 100 pounds. I tell her that pound for pound she's the most impressive eater I've ever seen. She laughs and says, "I'm just a country girl. I sound like it, don't I?"

I ask her how long she and Ricky have had a real relationship. Kristin laughs. "HMMMMM. Let's see. What's today? Well, the past few months have been good." She says they have had problems, their age difference and cultural differences. "I've always wanted someone to take care of me," she says. "When Ricky went to Australia, I thought he'd be gone a year. I was alone with my son. I had to take care of myself. I played golf and sat alone in my house on Las Olas, drinking wine. I believed Ricky would come back to me even as I thought, You can't do this! But it was good for me. I wouldn't trade any of it. Being with Ricky has forced me to be independent."

I ask Kristin if she smokes pot with Ricky. She says, "No. I drink wine. But I never thought Ricky had a problem with pot. It didn't change his personality. He doesn't wake up and smoke. But I do agree that he smoked pot when he wanted to fail his drug tests."

Ricky appears. He slides into the booth on Kristen's side. She smiles at him and pats the seat closer to her. He says, "You come to me." Kristin looks at me. Then she slides toward Ricky and curls herself into his big body.

Ricky says, "I was thinking of something last night that I had to tell you." He goes into a Ricky monologue about how we're all pack animals and it's human nature for animals in the pack to nip at the one who's not in line. "You either fight, leave or fit in," says Ricky. "I fled, but I need to learn to fight the system so I can be myself in the system. I'm not a perfect role model. I've pissed off a lot of people, but I can bring something to the NFL."

Ricky and Kristin get up to leave. "All my life I have been searching for guidance. I fantasized that one day I'd be walking in the park and an old man would call me over. He'd look up at me and say, 'You're the one. The Golden Boy.'"

Then he leaves.



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rosario dawson

(continued from page 135)

were meanest to me, who said, "You're so flat-chested," as though there was something wrong with me because they had blossomed at 11. Things changed that way for me when I was 15, but that was old compared with a lot of my friends.

Q6

PLAYBOY: Were you aware of **PLAYBOY** as a young woman?

DAWSON: Yes, and now I collect old issues. They represent such interesting moments in the way the idea of beauty has changed over the years, from the 1950s and 1960s to the 1970s, with that *Last Tango in Paris* look. From there women got thinner, and there were lots of animal prints. It's fascinating watching the changing palette of our beauty.

Q7

PLAYBOY: Growing up, how did you rebel against your family?

DAWSON: I didn't get any tattoos or pierce anything, although my mom wanted her chest pierced for Mother's Day. My dad has a tattoo, and I just got him a Harley and a motorcycle for myself. My family's a little screwy, but I didn't really rebel against them until my 20s when I went through that phase of "You ruined my life" and needed to be away from them.

Q8

PLAYBOY: Has your family reacted strangely to anything you've done on-screen?

DAWSON: My grandfather loves war movies and history, but he didn't want to see me naked in *Alexander*, so my grandmother watched the movie past the point where I was naked, then invited my grandfather in. He said, "This looks really good. I'm going to watch it from the beginning." He took the video into his den and watched it, and my grandmother called me, cackling, "Your grandfather saw you naked." I was like, "I know you're retired and everything, but it's sad and scary if you get your kicks by tricking each other into seeing me naked."

Q9

PLAYBOY: Did you decide to go to college or try any other line of work after your first movie?

DAWSON: We ended up moving to Texas; as a New Yorker, I actually thought there would be tumbleweeds blowing down the street, but instead it was a huge suburb. I lived there for a year, but when *Kids* came out everybody was like, "You've got to act," so I moved back to New York, took Theater 101, suddenly had an agent and got very lucky and started working pretty con-

stantly. When I had that natural freak-out in my 20s—like, "What am I going to do with my life?"—I took precalculus and calculus at the Cooper Union and a civil-engineering course at Columbia.

Q10

PLAYBOY: It sounds as if you still hadn't fully bought into the idea of being an actress.

DAWSON: After *Kids* Spike Lee cast me in another amazing movie, *He Got Game*, and people just assumed that's who I was. With the scripts I got after that, I didn't see the point of revisiting that kind of character. But I still wasn't sure what I was doing. I didn't feel committed to being an actor then.

Q11

PLAYBOY: Has that changed?

DAWSON: As I got a little older I started feeling sexier, and all of a sudden I was doing *Sin City*. The perception changed that I was this very tough, very sexy woman. The first time the costume designer showed me what she had made for me to wear, it reminded me of my Harley friends who go to Goth parties. I was like, "Hey, man, if I can't wear this outfit at this age, I'll never be able to. We may as well go for it." I walked out of there, went to the hair-and-makeup department, chopped off my hair and came back in. Everyone was upset with me, but the way I've always approached things is, I don't know what will happen tomorrow, but I know I'm committed to this right now.

Q12

PLAYBOY: Did your playing a lethally sexy, domineering prostitute in *Sin City* change how guys acted around you?

DAWSON: I'm a huge comic-book fan, and I co-wrote one we launched two years ago called *Occult Crimes Taskforce*. I was at Comic-Con for five days, and this sheepish, kind of pulled-back guy kept coming by. He was like, "Can I ask you a question? You seem like you're really nice." I said, "Okay, thank you." And he goes, "But you were scary in *Sin City*, like, really scary."

Q13

PLAYBOY: Have you ever geeked out when meeting a celebrity you greatly admire?

DAWSON: When I was a teenager collecting stickers and hanging out with my girlfriends, I loved Luke Perry on *Beverly Hills 90210*. I wrote him a letter to tell him about it, along with a hate letter to Shannen Doherty. Today I still obsess over David Bowie and Tim Curry. I haven't been able to speak to Tim Curry, who in *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* is one of the most fantastic, mind-blowing things I've ever seen. I think those two understand their mortality.

Q14

PLAYBOY: As someone who starred in the movie version of *Rent*, which has a lot to do with mortality, are you in touch with your own?

DAWSON: Many of my first memories are of growing up with people who had HIV—friends, relatives—so I guess mortality is a big deal to me. I wish I could be alive as fully as some of the people I've known. I read *The Sun Also Rises*, and with someone who is now an ex-boyfriend I did the same trip as Hemingway and we wound up in Pamplona for the running of the bulls. It was incredible, honestly the most frightening thing I'd ever gone through. It's good to feel alive like that, but I was continuously scared for three months afterward.

Q15

PLAYBOY: What has been a peak sensual experience for you so far?

DAWSON: I was in Italy for Fashion Week, and though I had known this particular man for a couple of years, he always had a girlfriend or I had a boyfriend. This was the first time we met when we were both single, and we had a strong flirtation going on. I let him know I was meeting friends for drinks, and he said, "Okay, I'll meet you there." I came downstairs in this gorgeous hotel, wearing an incredible white dress, with my hair and makeup done and bright-red lips. I was having a drink, and this man watched me from across the room. The tension was there, the history between us was there, and it was just one of those delicious moments like in a movie or a book. It all fed into the rest of this amazing evening. It was charged. Sex can be amazing, but something truly sensual has a different level of intimacy, a beauty to it that, as an earthy Taurus, I need.

Q16

PLAYBOY: As a sexy, earthy Taurus, what other famous woman do you find desirable?

DAWSON: This is going to get weird because I love David Bowie, but I have to say Iman. I did a photo shoot for her, and she suddenly took off her T-shirt to change into another and I was like, "Damn!" She was so beautiful, elegant, classy and timeless, and there was something really erotic about it. Very few human beings have been that sexy and desirable. I wanted to say, "You are sculpted by God." It was, like, wow.

Q17

PLAYBOY: You wow Will Smith in the new film *Seven Pounds*, in which he plays a guilt-ridden IRS agent who sets out to help seven strangers and you play a young beauty with a serious illness. Big things have been predicted

for the movie, but you've been in that position before, right?

DAWSON: Someone in the British press wrote that the only two good things in *Alexander* are my left breast and my right breast. It took me more than a year to produce *Descent*, which had taken a year to write, then a year to shoot and another to edit. It was the hardest thing I've ever done and probably some of my best work, but no one saw it. Everyone thought *Rent* would explode, and it didn't—although it could last for 100 years. I've gone through interesting ups and downs on this journey of even feeling okay with being an actor.

Q18

PLAYBOY: What physical qualities in a man turn you on?

DAWSON: I'm big on hands and forearms. Even when nothing else about the guy did it for me, I was still into him because at least his hands and forearms could get me kind of excited. I love calves, too, and I have to say I'm an ass woman. I like a nice ass. I'm not looking for a man to seem like one of my girlfriends, but I like a guy who can hang in different situations.

Q19

PLAYBOY: When the relationship goes wrong, do you freak out?

DAWSON: I read *He's Just Not That Into You*. It's so genius about what to do after a breakup: Do not page him, do not answer the phone, don't drunk dial or text him. What's amazing is, when our hearts are broken—men and women, across cultures, nationalities and age lines—we all behave the same way. I'm so in love with that. I read that book and thought, You mean I'm not the only asshole idiot who does this? That's such a relief.

Q20

PLAYBOY: Are you satisfied with your accomplishments? What more do you want?

DAWSON: I want my life to be about something. When my mom got pregnant with me at 16, she was just another Puerto Rican who got pregnant and didn't have a husband. She almost aborted me and was in the doctor's office and was about to do it and said, "No, I feel her move," and decided to have me. I'm pro-choice, and I know that was a very hard decision for her. We were the black sheep of the family, and today the same people who used to talk to us like crap are like, "Oh, Rosario." I don't condemn them either way. We can be either just another child who was born or someone you consider special. People erect a statue after a king dies, and other people tear it down later because he was a dictator. Opinions can change.

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NEW ERA

(continued from page 68)

outlined. To govern boldly requires a mandate, and a mandate can be achieved in one of two ways: either out of necessity because of dire circumstances, of which the Great Depression–World War II years are the most recent example, or by a campaign premised upon a substantial change of direction. John Kennedy and Ronald Reagan adopted this approach.

Your transformative opportunity is here because the Nixon-Reagan-Bush era, a conservative cycle in our history, is drawing to a close. The nation is ready for, and indeed requires, new directions. Broadly speaking, those new directions are necessary in three categories: the economy, energy and defense. As you take the oath of office and address the nation, you should call for a transition from a consuming to a producing nation, a dramatic national departure toward a postcarbon economy and major reformation of our military structures and forces.

Under our Constitution you have three major responsibilities: establishing domestic priorities, acting as head of state for America's role in a new world and serving as commander in chief to reform our military forces. Each of these responsibilities now demands a caliber of leadership demonstrated by the Jeffersons, Lincolns and Roosevelts of our history. Consider these in order:

I. Setting domestic priorities. We must start transforming the American economy from one of consumption to one of production.

We are the largest consuming nation in the history of the world. That means most Americans enjoy a better overall lifestyle than even those in other developed economies. Were we paying as we go, this would be all to the good. Unfortunately, we live on credit to sustain this lifestyle. Our creditors are foreign lenders, particularly China and Japan, and future generations. We spend more than we earn, borrow more than we save and consume more than we produce. This 30-year trend is not sustainable.

To make the transition to a producing economy, we must reward saving instead of spending, encourage thrift, invest in math and science education and in invention and new technologies and increase our public and private laboratory systems. You should

send a package of measures to Congress featuring these investments and a savings-based tax system and challenge its members to join in this crusade.

By the end of your second term the United States can make huge progress in reducing its trade deficits, dramatically improve the value of the dollar and substantially reduce the deficits in its foreign accounts. Once again this transformation will continue beyond your presidency because of the redirection your initiatives represent. Future generations will honor your memory as a visionary who rescued his nation from a destructive path.

The companion part of the domestic transformation is to set a course toward a postcarbon economy. The overwhelming scientific consensus is that global warming must not

standardized, modestly sized nuclear plants with proven waste-storage technologies.

Climate change is only one imperative for this historic transformation. Independence from dangerously unreliable sources in the Persian Gulf is another. The liberation of our foreign policy from oil dependence, especially in the Middle East, is yet another. Drastic reduction in trade imbalances and rescue of the dollar's value are additional reasons we need to make this change. Our current energy policy of trading the lives of young Americans for foreign oil is immoral, and you must state that this policy—and it is our policy—is no longer acceptable for a great nation.

This transition to a productive economy and the postcarbon age will take longer than your two terms. But starting the country down these twin paths toward transformation will be one of your most enduring legacies and will rank you with the great presidents.

II. America's role in a new world. At the same time we transform our economy, we must also restore America's credibility and moral authority in the world. As head of state, you should adopt the mantle of Harry Truman as a creative internationalist. The United States must lead, as it did in the mid-20th century, in creating a new round of internationalism based on the central premise that we all inhabit a global commons and all nations of goodwill must share in its administration.

The new realities of the 21st century include proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, failed and failing states, cli-

mate change, viral pandemics, mass migrations, fading national boundaries, trade friction and a host of challenges unfamiliar in the previous century. No single nation, nor all the military power in the world, can solve these challenges. The international institutions of the mid-20th century were not designed for these missions either.

This new chapter of history gives you an opportunity few U.S. presidents have had: to stimulate a new international dialogue. The international community must consider new institutions to address this century's new realities. For example, we should now begin to network the public-health services of allied nations to prevent pandemics. This network should establish a common database and communications system, stockpile vaccine and inoculation banks

Sizzling-Hot Holiday Girls



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continue unless we are willing to accept a drastically altered planet. Carbon, released by fossil fuels, is the villain. By fundamentally changing our transportation and construction practices, in two and no more than three decades the United States can vastly reduce if not eliminate carbon-producing fuels from our national energy budget.

The required policy steps include escalating fuel-efficiency standards for all vehicles; converting vehicle fleets to plug-in hybrids made of composite materials; enforcing building codes for sustainable homes and office buildings; replacing coal-fired power plants with renewable energy sources; adopting efficiency standards and practices in all energy sectors and researching new energy technologies such as hybrid engines and those in mass transit and building materials; and constructing stan-

and be prepared to quarantine outbreaks immediately. Another new international institution should be developed to enforce a post-Kyoto climate treaty. Treaties are meaningless unless they can be enforced. A third institution should guarantee the security of world oil supplies. The United States should not be, as it currently is, the de facto guarantor of world oil supplies. Consideration should also be given to an international nation-building entity to support unstable states. Further, the mandate of the International Atomic Energy Agency to restrict proliferation of weapons of mass destruction should be strengthened.

Times change and new realities arise. The international institutions of the mid-20th century helped prevent World War III. But the global commons of the 21st century requires new instruments to deal with these new realities. Since the age of Franklin Roosevelt, the president of the United States is not only the leader of our nation but the leader of the free world. Your constitutional obligations are to this nation. Other nations will look to you for global leadership and new approaches to new challenges as well.

III. Reforming our military to meet new challenges. Seldom has a nation reformed its military absent a major military defeat. We do not have the luxury of accepting that formula. The history of the world is a history of the changing nature of conflict. Traditional wars between nation-states, to which we have become accustomed, are declining—the destructiveness of nuclear weapons and the rising economic aspirations in the developing world are rendering them obsolete. However, unconventional wars and insurgencies involving subnational entities and nonstate actors are increasing.

Our withdrawal from Iraq and successful completion of Afghan operations should not become simply the occasion for “resetting” our returning military forces. This word was used to describe reequipping our forces along Cold War lines. The Cold War is over, and military confrontation with a peer competitor is becoming increasingly remote. Big divisions, giant carrier task groups and extravagantly expensive aircraft are becoming less useful. Special Forces and smaller, faster, more mobile units and equipment are becoming more important. In your role as commander in chief you should convene the nation’s best

and most creative military and civilian experts to design the force structures and weapons systems for the low-intensity conflicts of the future and increase the size and capabilities of our Special Forces for counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations.

All this suggests nothing less than a grand new strategy for the United States in the early 21st century. Strategy is the application of a nation’s power to the achievement of its large purposes. Our powers are economic, political and military. At this point we are unrivaled in all three. Our economic power must be transformed for a new competitive age. Our political power, our diplomacy, must be based on constructive goodwill and moral authority derived from

become a good president who restores our principles or, I hope, a great president who leads us through major transformations, you have the burden of restoring our national purpose and our respect and honor in the global community. The confidence of our people in their government and the confidence of the world in us have diminished. That confidence can and must be restored. That will require candor, openness and integrity. By demonstrating a Jeffersonian respect for the common sense and good judgment of the people, you will restore their respect for their leadership.

Sunlight is still the best guarantor of integrity in government. Trust the people and they will trust you. Most important, respect our Constitution. Virtually every

abuse of power in our history, particularly in our recent history, has originated in a decision to ignore constitutional principles. You are entitled to no power that is not granted to you by the Constitution, and you should seek none. The Madisonian concepts of checks and balances, of equal branches of government, of accountability in an open political marketplace have been central to our survival and our flourishing. Follow the Constitution’s bright light throughout your presidency and you will earn your place in history.

Virtually all these recommendations are premised upon visionary leadership. *Leadership* is a word often used but almost never defined. Leadership has three qualities: the ability to see over the horizon,

the talent to devise new solutions and the skill to convince fellow citizens of the need to adopt these solutions to address new realities in a new age.

Very few politicians can perceive the future (“the vision thing”). Your successful campaign has demonstrated you have this ability. The transformative ideas suggested here, and even better ones that others may provide, can lay the base for new governing policies at home and abroad. Your greatest challenge is to educate the American people, as did the great presidents of the past, to embrace a new future that requires the restoration of our pioneering spirit.

Now the hard, yet most exciting and rewarding, part begins. Godspeed.

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principled action. Our military power must seek permanent alliance partners to share common security interests.

The central issue is, What are our large purposes? I believe they are to expand economic opportunity globally, to promote liberal democracy peacefully and to organize the security of the global commons. A 21st century grand strategy will require us to apply our traditional economic, diplomatic and military powers to the achievement of these large purposes.

But we have a fourth power: our constitutional principles, the ideals we claim to believe in. These have been unnecessarily sacrificed for the short-term expediency of combating terrorism. Your highest duty is to restore America’s highest principles.

Above and beyond your challenge to





The Judgment of Paris

Say what you like about PARIS HILTON—she's blessed with extreme confidence, and we think that's sexy. Many celebrities would balk at wearing such a cheeky getup in public. She's also blessed with a really nice ass, which is sexy too.

SPURKIN NEWS



Chick Magnet

For doubters, here's photographic evidence that, yes, LINDSAY LOHAN is a sapphic dream date. Spaghetti-strap top? Check. No bra? Check. Comfortable footwear? We can only assume.



WILLIAM AY

Supporting Her Troops

Former U.S. marine SUSIE WUSTERBARTH served in Operation Iraqi Freedom. As you can imagine, she was a drill sergeant's dream: stomach in, chest out.

Plenty More Fish in the Sea

You know the expression "If you must marry, do like Billy Zane and snag KELLY BROOK, considered the hottest woman in the U.K." Catchy for sure—but no longer valid. The couple have broken their engagement. Yes, Zane is back on the market. Lock up your women-folk.



BIG PICTURES/ALISON HITCHCOCK.COM

Back to School

Viewers of a certain age cheered the return of Jennie Garth and Shannen Doherty to TV on *90210*, the revival of their old series (*Beverly Hills 90210*—please try to keep up). Viewers of less than a certain age don't know who those two old ladies are but are digging the babe-laden cast nonetheless. This is ANNALYNNE MCCORD—who just may be the next Tiffani Thiessen.



JACONUM/STYLING/ABC.COM

If She's #2, Who's #1?

Sharp-eyed moviegoers may recognize Haiti-born MARIE BLANCHARD from Kevin Smith's *Zack and Miri Make a Porno*, in which she plays Exotic Dancer #2.



RYAN TREASER/PHOTOGRAPHIC



JULY BOON/WIREIMAGE.COM

Hangs Out With Charlyze Okay, Halle Not Bad and Angelina Sufficient

MEAGAN GOOD isn't just good; she's fantastic. But we can't call her Meagan Fantastic—sounds like something kids would watch on Nickelodeon.

Next Month



WE SING THE BODY ELECTRA.



REVISIT THE ANGELS WHO GRACED OUR PAGES.



THE BRASH BILLIONAIRE BREAKS DOWN THE ECONOMIC CRISIS.



FIFTY-FIVE NEVER LOOKED SO GOOD.

CARMEN ELECTRA—HAPPY 55TH ANNIVERSARY! ONE OF THE SEXIEST WOMEN ON THE PLANET HONORS *PLAYBOY* WITH A GORGEOUS NEW PICTORIAL THAT GIVES US YET ANOTHER REASON TO CELEBRATE.

55 MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN SEX—WE NAME THE MOST ESSENTIAL PEOPLE WHO SHAPED MODERN AMERICAN SEXUALITY: WHO'S IN, WHO'S OUT AND WHO COMES FIRST?

MARSTON AND COOPER—THE TWO YOUNGEST HEFNERS, 18 AND 17 RESPECTIVELY, TALK TO **BILL ZEHME** ABOUT GROWING UP IN THE MANSION, THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARD SEX AND WHAT THEY'LL DO IF AND WHEN THEY TAKE THE REINS OF THE FAMILY EMPIRE.

MAILER'S LETTERS—WE PLUNGE INTO **NORMAN MAILER'S** PAPERS TO GET AN INSIDE VIEW OF HIS FEUD WITH GORE VIDAL AND HIS BLISTERING DRESSING-DOWN OF JACK HENRY ABBOTT.

LOST IN HIS OWN WOODS—A MAN CANNOT TRULY FIND HIMSELF UNTIL HE REALIZES HE HAS NO CLUE WHERE HE IS. FICTION BY **SCOTT TUROW**

BUSH AND CHENEY, A LOOK BACK—THEY'LL LEAVE OFFICE WITH LOW APPROVAL RATINGS, BUT CONTRARIAN COLUMNIST **CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS** EXAMINES THEIR OVERLOOKED ACHIEVEMENTS AND WONDERS WHETHER FUTURE GENERA-

TIONS WILL SEE THE CURRENTLY DISPARAGED DUO AS ONE OF THE MOST BENEFICIAL IN HISTORY. YOU BE THE DECIDER.

AGENT ORANGE—SATIRIST **JOE QUEENAN** TRAVELS THE U.S., EATING ONLY AT HOOTERS; THINK MORGAN SPURLOCK WITH EYE CANDY. HE SERVES HIS REPORT WITH A SIDE OF BLEU CHEESE.

55 BEAUTIFUL YEARS—DID WE MENTION IT'S OUR 55TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION? TO CELEBRATE WE'VE GATHERED THE UNFORGETTABLE IMAGES THAT SET EACH DECADE SIZZLING.

RICHARD BRANSON—THE MODERN-DAY KING MIDAS TALKS TO **DAVID SHEFF** ABOUT HOW HIS NEW U.S. VENTURE, VIRGIN MONEY, WILL AFFECT THE ECONOMIC CRISIS AND SEX IN SPACE.

THE SUPER RAT—**WHITEY BULGER**, THE INSPIRATION FOR *THE DEPARTED* AND THE FBI'S SECOND-MOST-WANTED MAN (BEHIND OSAMA BIN LADEN), HAS BEEN ON THE LAM FOR 10 YEARS WHILE A LEGIT FBI AGENT SITS IN THE CLINK. **RICHARD STRATTON** GOES BEHIND BARS TO FIGURE OUT WHY.

PLUS: WE THROW *THE PARTY OF THE YEAR* (WONDER WHO WILL BE SPITZER'S "DATE?"), *THE PLAYBOY BAR* POURS THE BUBBLY, THE YEAR'S PLAYMATES RETURN, AND WE REVEAL—AND UNDRESS—THE **55TH ANNIVERSARY PLAYMATE**.



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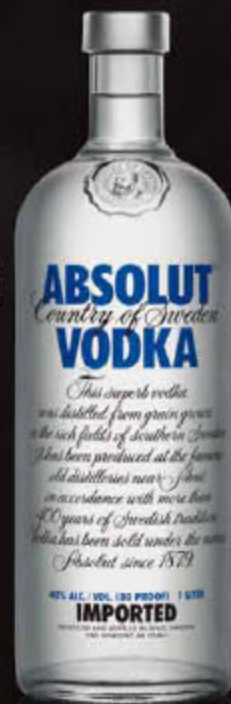
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