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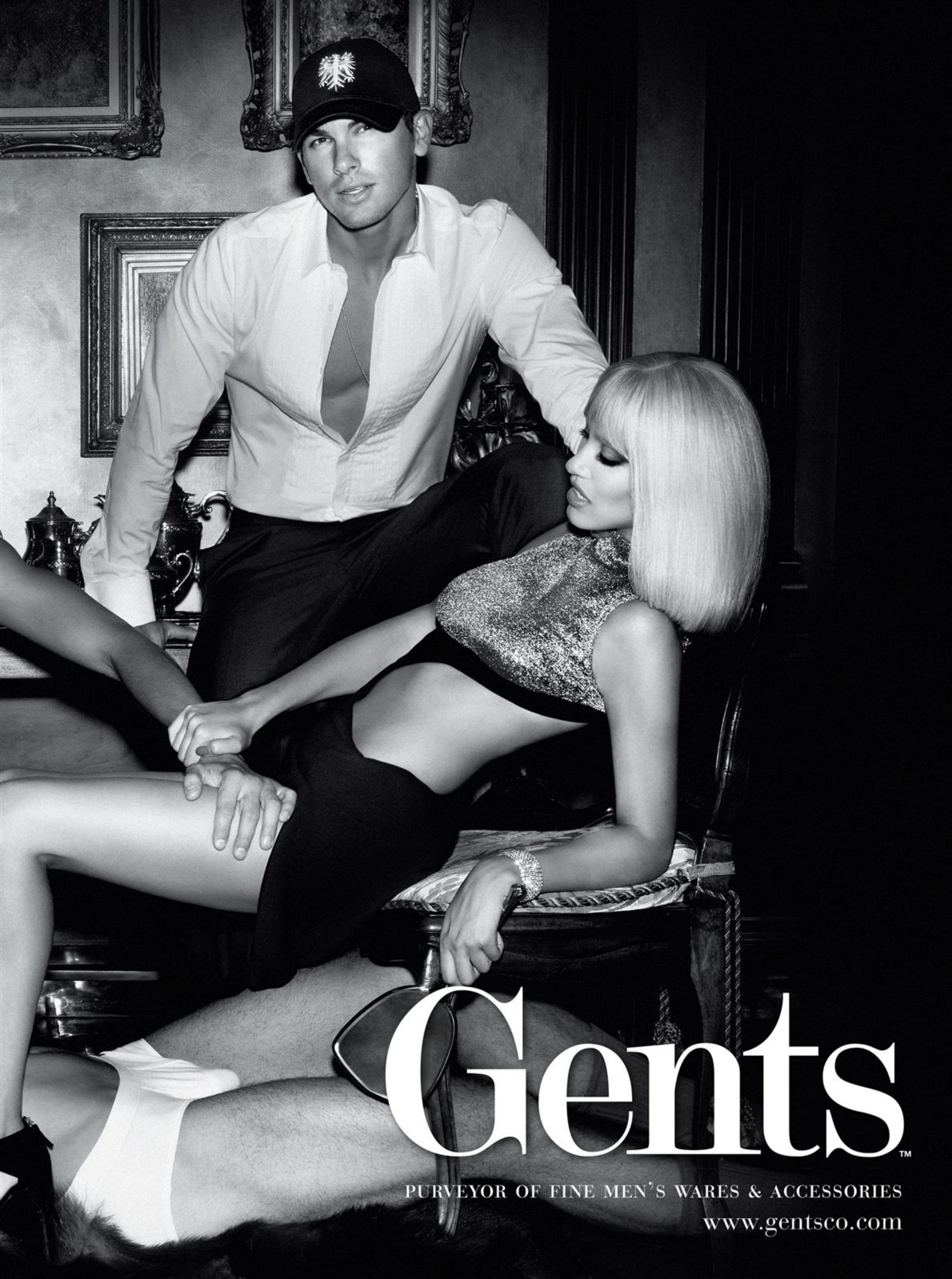
THE SEX & MUSIC ISSUE



Diplo • The Birth of West Coast Hip-Hop • Irvine Welsh on EDM • David Bowie
Boxing Lessons From Kid Chocolate • 38 Songs About Sex • Fiction by Jake Arnott
Clive Davis Interview • A Death in Benghazi • Lena Dunham 20Q • Playboy's Guide to Ganja







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From the first time some cave-man smacked a stick against a tree to celebrate the rhythm of his own beating heart, music has captivated humanity, inspired us, inflamed our emotions like nothing else could. Except perhaps the sight of the opposite sex at its most erotic. This month we combine those two subjects for our annual Sex & Music issue. It starts with veteran music journalist **Rob Tannenbaum**, whom we can thank for *The 38 Best Songs About Sex* and our *2013 Music Guide*. To provide visual stimulation to go with all that sound, we hired brilliant photographer **Tony Kelly** to dream up a montage of lusciousness for our cover and for the pictorial that leads off this year's celebration of beauties and the beats. For the *Playboy Interview* we turn to **Clive Davis**, the most influential music executive who has ever lived. Davis takes us down memory lane—discovering Bruce Springsteen, memorializing Janis Joplin and Whitney Houston, and more. **Lena Dunham** appears in our *20Q* this month.



Rob Tannenbaum



Tony Kelly

The creator and star of the hit HBO comedy *Girls* talks about having sex in a drainpipe. Yes, you read that right. While we're big fans of nudity, we also like to get dressed now and again. Star DJ **Diplo** models spring wares in *Diplo-matic Mission*. When it comes to hip-hop, few can drum up rhymes like the **D.O.C.**, the subject of our story *Ghost in the Machine*. The genre's most prolific writer—he has written for N.W.A, Dr. Dre, Eazy-E and Snoop Dogg, among others—is reinventing himself after a tragic accident. We have the inside story. From music we move to international and even interreality

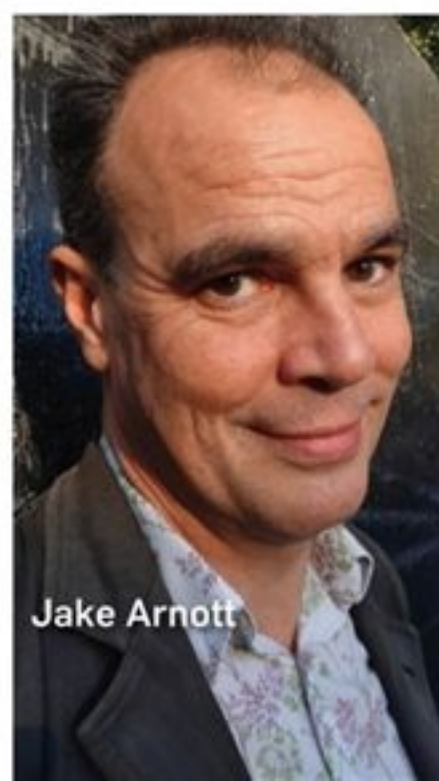


Clive Davis

diplomacy. When the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya was attacked, American Sean Smith lost his life. In a weird twist, it turns out Smith had lived a double life—in the State Department and also in the cult online galaxy *Eve*, where he was known as Vile Rat. In his final moments, Smith's real life and his fantasy life collided, as **David Kushner** reports. For our fiction we offer the talented **Jake Arnott**. *The Hierophant*, an excerpt from Arnott's new novel, *The House of Rumor*, takes us to southern California in the 1940s, where a scientist working on jet-propulsion systems finds strange, erotic ways of cutting loose after work. Finally, we bring you *Dancing Off the Edge* by the great **Irvine Welsh**. The Scottish writer famous for *Trainspotting* outlines the evolution of dance music from an underground European phenomenon to the electronic dance music craze in America today. How far we have come since cave-men beat out crude rhythms with sticks! Now slip on a favorite tune and turn the page. More surprises await.



David Kushner



Jake Arnott



Lena Dunham



Diplo



The D.O.C.



Irvine Welsh

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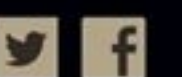
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PLAYBOY

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SEX & MUSIC ISSUE



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This month you'll find our Rabbit keeping the music alive on our gorgeous Playmates' turntable, where good vibrations are never in short supply.

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THE WORLD OF PLAYBOY

HEF SIGHTINGS,
MANSION FROLICS
AND NIGHTLIFE NOTES

PLAYMATE SUMMIT

"Playmates are more than images on a page. You are what brings the magazine to life, touching the hearts and minds of our readers." Crystal Hefner delivered these words from Hef at the Playmate Summit, the first in a series of workshops to keep Playboy the best brand on the planet as we near our 60th anniversary.



SUPER BOWL BASH

If the Super Bowl is now considered a national holiday, we like to think of Playboy's preceding party as the new Mardi Gras. This year's celebration in New Orleans—sponsored by Crown Royal, Mini USA and Tabasco—was thrown on the banks of the Mississippi River at the Jackson Brewery Bistro Bar, where spirited revelers rubbed elbows with the likes of Daniel Dae Kim and David Arquette. Trombone Shorty and rapper B.o.B. did their jobs getting the Playmates' hips moving.



HANGIN' WITH HEF

GOLDEN GLOBES AT THE MANSION

One of Hef's greatest loves is film. "My childhood dreams and fantasies came from the movies," he has said, "and the images created in Hollywood had a major influence on my life and PLAYBOY." Hef has appeared in movies and on TV shows, has his own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame and even helped save the famous Hollywood sign—twice. It's no wonder that screenings and award shows are special to him. At his Golden Globes gala, Hef hosted family and friends such as Jon Lovitz, the Tweed-Simmons clan and Keith and Kaya Hefner. Playmates aplenty also attended the party, including Raquel Pomplun, Irina Voronina, Alana Campos, Miriam Gonzalez, Summer Altice and Jaslyn Ome.



LORD OF DOGTOWN

A lover of dogs, Crystal Hefner hosted the *Guinness World Records'* fastest skateboarding bulldog, Tillman, at the Playboy Mansion. Tillman met Cooper Hefner and sniffed around the grounds. Then he and Crystal had an epic skating session for the Hallmark Channel's *Who Let the Dogs Out?* As for Crystal and Hef's dog Charlie getting on a board...well, he's past the age of learning new tricks.



GRACE UNDER FIRE

Salman Rushdie's comments about one of his critics, the writer Roald Dahl ("The only thing worse than being attacked by Dahl would be to be his friend"), are hilariously spot-on (*Playboy Classic*, January/February). I met Rushdie about three years after that 1996 *Playboy Interview* appeared. I was working at a New York bookstore and he was promoting *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*. He was gracious and, even with people flowing around him as he sat signing books in full view of the street, seemed quite at ease for a man bearing the hatred of the Muslim world on his back. Serving chai to Pamela Anderson was also cool but not quite the same.

Shell Scott Bush
Villa Rica, Georgia

EARLY VOTING

There are too many excellent choices for Playmate of the Year (*Playmate Review*, January/February). After much deliberation, I managed to narrow my list to Raquel Pomplun (April), Amelia Talon (June) and Pamela Horton (October). Pomplun, like PMOY 2012 Jaclyn Swedberg, has a divine quality. Talon is a video gamer, so she gets bonus points for that. Horton is also a gamer and smoking hot. Thank God Miss January 2013 Karina Marie doesn't qualify. Holy hell—those eyes.

John Heusler
New York, New York

Over the past three years the PMOY honor has gone to the Playmate who appears on the last page of the *Playmate Review* (Hope Dworaczyk in 2010, Claire Sinclair in 2011 and Jaclyn Swedberg in 2012). If that tradition continues, Miss May Nikki Leigh will be the 2013 PMOY, though my vote is for Amelia Talon.

Shayne Cowell
Los Angeles, California

MISSING PLUG

I'm surprised you didn't include the Tesla Model S in *Cars of the Year 2013* (January/February). In your description of the electric Honda Fit EV, you mention the Chinese CODA and its 125-mile range. But the Model S has ranges of 160 to 300 miles, depending on the version.

Bruce Johnson
Kalamazoo, Michigan

The first Model S rolled off the line too late in the year and in too few numbers (five per week) for us to arrange a test-drive before our deadline. We'll consider it next year.

FAN MAIL

Month after month PLAYBOY is the most interesting, informative, entertaining magazine on the newsstand and in my mailbox. Thanks, Hef!

Lauren Freeland
Seattle, Washington

You've outdone yourselves with the December and January/February issues,

DEAR PLAYBOY

The Mighty Paz

Kudos for the stunning cover image of Paz de la Huerta (January/February)! It's delicious and direct.

R. Gabriel
Denver, Colorado

As you show in your cover shot, a woman's hands complete her beauty.

Steve Carcieri
Tamarac, Florida

Like Bettie Page, Paz de la Huerta makes female nudity look fun, natural, free and practically spiritual.

Sarah Root
San Jose, California



which also feature two of the best Playmates ever, Amanda Streich and Karina Marie.

Edward Janca
Lyons, Illinois

The December issue has claimed a spot among my all-time favorites. Every element is perfect, cover to cover. I am impressed with how Hef and his staff raise the bar time and again.

Sam Wrobel
Chicago, Illinois

DEVILS IN THE DETAILS

I enjoyed your article on the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and its former



Tark the Shark took the 1990 Rebels on a run.

head basketball coach Jerry Tarkanian (*Rebel Nation*, December). In 1991 the NCAA was not going to let Tarkanian and UNLV win two championships in a row. This was evident during the final five minutes of the semifinal game when every call went Duke's way. Every person I know who roots against Duke traces his or her dislike to that game. The collection of players on that 1991

UNLV team was one of the best ever. It is a shame the NCAA did not allow them and Tarkanian to fulfill their destiny.

Todd Crandal
Bossier City, Louisiana

WHITEY'S DEFENSE

In *The Secret Life of Whitey Bulger* (December), Richard Stratton notes the 83-year-old accused killer has a court-appointed lawyer. I presume this means a public defender, i.e., a lawyer provided at no charge to Bulger, despite the fact that police found \$800,000 in cash in his Santa Monica apartment. As his trial will likely last many months and the legal fees will be enormous, how destitute does a person have to be to be eligible for court-appointed counsel?

John Martin
Norfolk, Virginia

A judge ruled Bulger to be indigent after authorities seized all his assets, saying they had been earned through illegal activity.

THE DARK SIDE

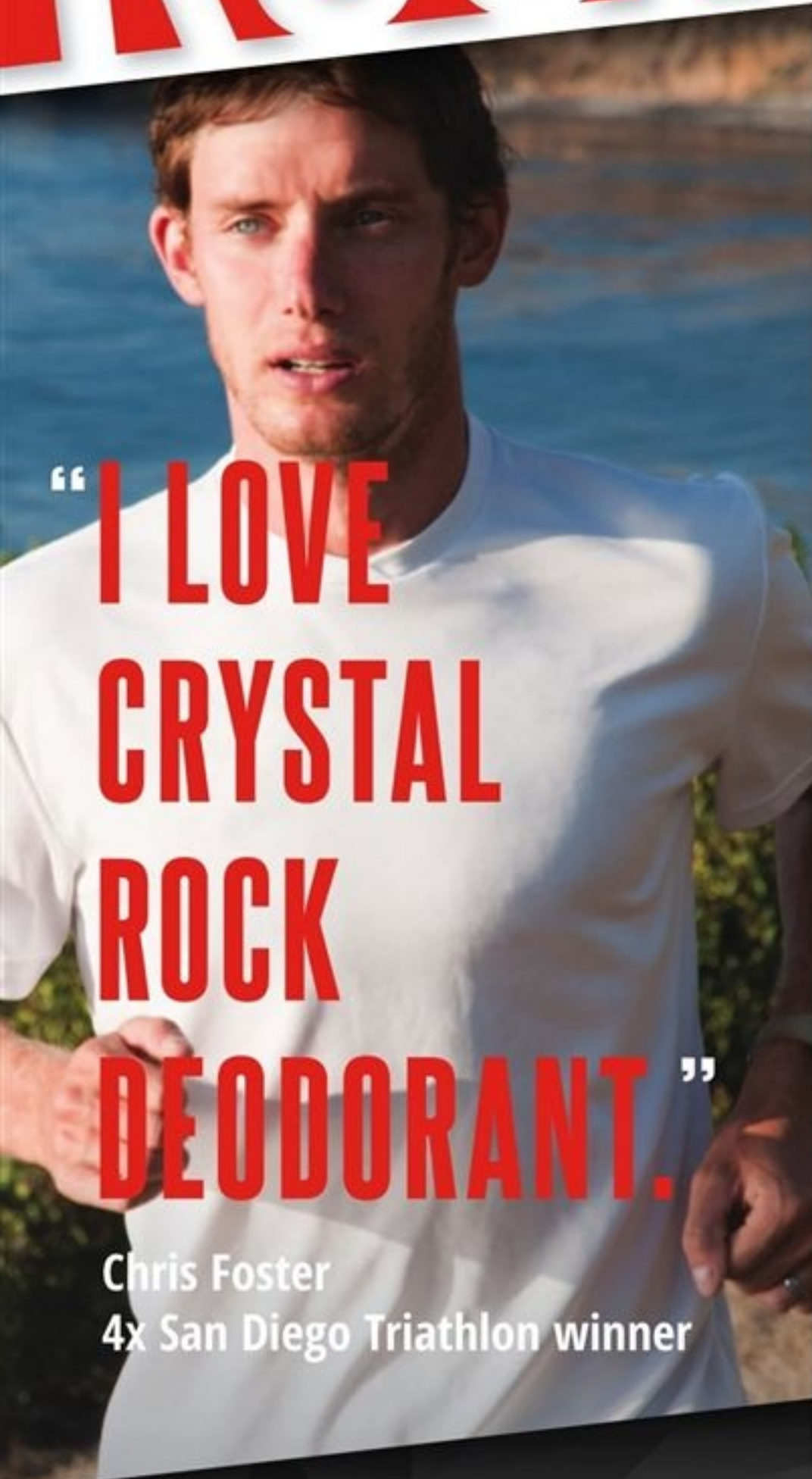
I know Hef prefers blondes, but have you ever noticed the women who bring powerful men to their knees usually have brown hair? Think Cleopatra, Josephine, Wallis Simpson, Monica Lewinsky, Sarah Palin and the sirens of Eliot Spitzer and General Petraeus. In fact, the only lady love of Hef's who he stated was "trouble, but I was smitten" was raven-haired Carrie Leigh (*Hef's Girlfriends*, November). Well-behaved blondes may have more fun and stand by their man, but we brunettes seem to be making history, headaches and headlines.

Regina Carter
South Attleboro, Massachusetts

BONDING OVER BOND

The 1970s and 1980s were not the best time for James Bond fans (*Being Bond*, November). For those of us reared

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on Ian Fleming's novels and/or the early Bonds of Sean Connery, the film series took a turn for the silly. Yet after each new release fans convinced themselves the producers would fulfill their promise to return the series to its roots. (To this day, several Fleming plots have never been adapted.) I was a film journalist at the time, so four to six months before each new movie I would get a chance to look over hundreds of photos taken during filming. If your subconscious was steeped in the work of Fleming and early Bond director Terence Young, as mine was, you could easily envision the latest movie as a worthy continuation of the series' most thrilling entries. The best part of the job may well have been the 007 films that played only in my brain.

James Burns
Valley Stream, New York

INSPIRING STORIES

Michael Fleming has interviewed director Quentin Tarantino twice for the *Playboy Interview*—in November 2003 and December 2012—but both times neglected to ask (or Tarantino neglected to answer) the holy grail of movie-geek questions: Which came first, Ringo Lam's *City on Fire* or Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs*?

Michael Vronsky
Clairton, Pennsylvania
Tougher question: Which is better?

CURVE APPEAL

PLAYBOY has featured many beautiful women; however, lately most of them are tall and slender. What happened to women with curves, such as Rosemarie Hillcrest, Cynthia Myers and Janet Lupo?

Martin Roberts
Richmond Hill, Georgia

All Hef's girlfriends are beautiful, but PMOY 1976 Lillian Müller is amazing.

Richard Rowland
Polo, Illinois

I stumbled across the November 1972 issue of PLAYBOY and was blown away by Playmate Lenna Sjöblom. In this age of plastic surgery, it's always nice to see true beauty in its natural form.

Trevor Coffee
Portland, Oregon

HOT TALK

I mixed my own hot sauce ("DIY Hot Sauce," *After Hours*, January/February) and now all my friends want a bottle. If I don't let the jar sit overnight, will that change the flavor? How long will the sauce last in the fridge? And why is it necessary to seed the chilies?

Courtney Smith
Birmingham, Alabama

Letting the chilies luxuriate in salt overnight kills other bacteria that might compete with lactobacilli, the flavorful friends of fermenters. We wouldn't go much over a month

in a properly calibrated (i.e., 38 degrees Fahrenheit) fridge. Remove the seeds because they can be bitter and their heat may overwhelm the flavor of the chilies.

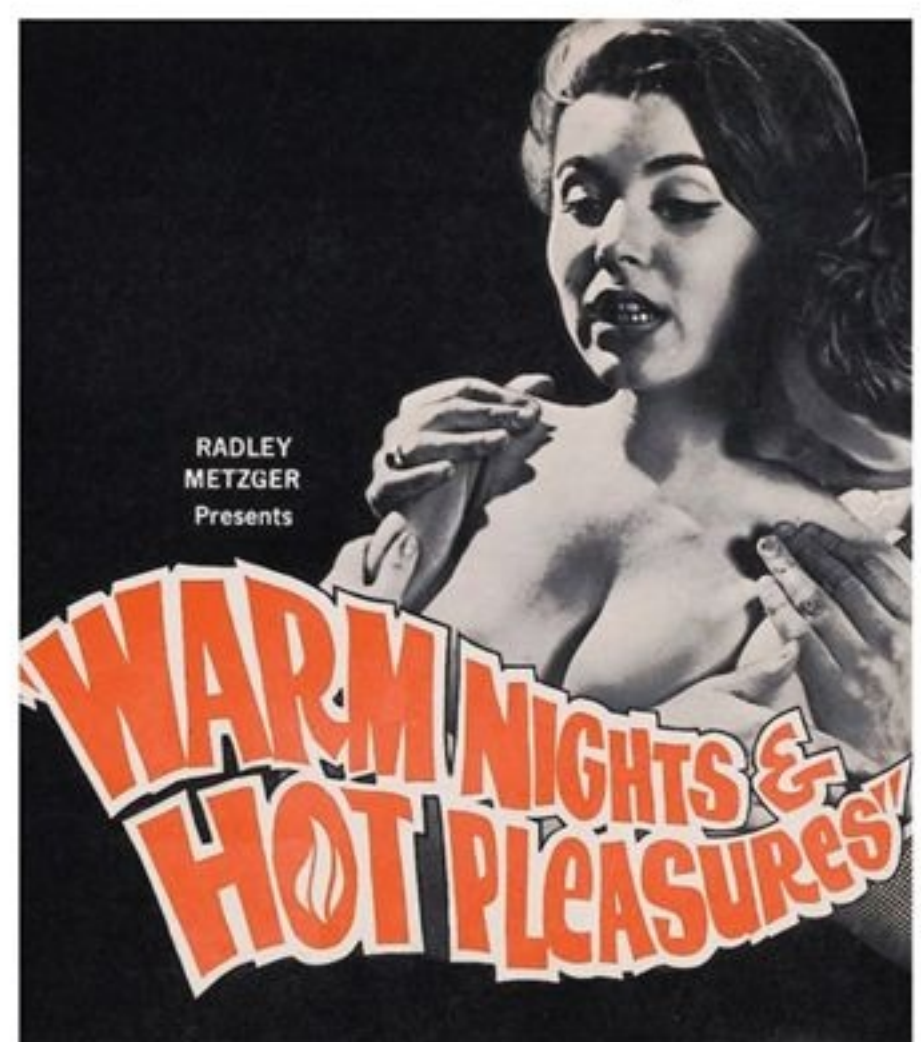
Although you call them buffalo wings ("Haute Wings," *After Hours*, January/February), the *b* is always capitalized. Buffaloes don't have wings.

Bob Silvestri
Buffalo, New York

According to Mr. Webster, buffalo wings now belong to all mankind, though he does cite their origin in Buffalo. As the story goes, they were first prepared in 1964 at the city's landmark Anchor Bar.

CLASSIC SCHLOCK

How can you discuss sexploitation films without mentioning Joseph W. Sarno, whom many consider the father of the genre ("Labor of Lust," *After Hours*, December)? As Sarno said, "When I make movies, they're made with the story built around the sex, unlike today's movies,



This 1964 Sarno epic failed to win an Oscar.

with the sex built around the story." If you haven't seen his work, I recommend *All the Sins of Sodom* (1968).

Larry Steck
Council Grove, Kansas

BIG EASY LIVING

I'm a new subscriber, and "Uptown New Orleans" (*After Hours*, January/February) is a perfect start. Your fresh look at eating and drinking outside the French Quarter makes me itch to go back.

Will Franklin
Wilmington, North Carolina

SHE'S AN EIGHT

Despite the constant negative comments about Octomom Nadya Suleman, she is a very sexy woman (*The Year in Sex*, January/February), as are the Colombian party girls who got those Secret Service agents in trouble. Who can blame them?

James Donis
Riverside, California





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FOLLOW

THE BUNNY

WHO'S BEEN

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(AND REMOVING)

BUTTONS

SINCE 1953



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PLAYBOY

Afterhours

- APRIL -
2013

BECOMING ATTRACTION

SANDRA VERGARA

• "COLOMBIAN women are just different," says Hollywood's latest import, the fiery Sandra Vergara, actress (*Nip/Tuck*, *Fright Night*) and cousin of *Modern Family*'s Sofia Vergara. "It's not the accent or the way we move. We're taught to embrace and love ourselves. Sexy is good, but I have more to offer." Sandra recently starred on *CSI* as a pop star caught in a murder case. "I sang and threw in some dance moves," she says. "I could be a triple threat." Gentlemen, you've been warned.



ROCK RELIC

WHO KILLED THE GUITAR GOD, AND WHY DIDN'T ANYONE NOTICE?

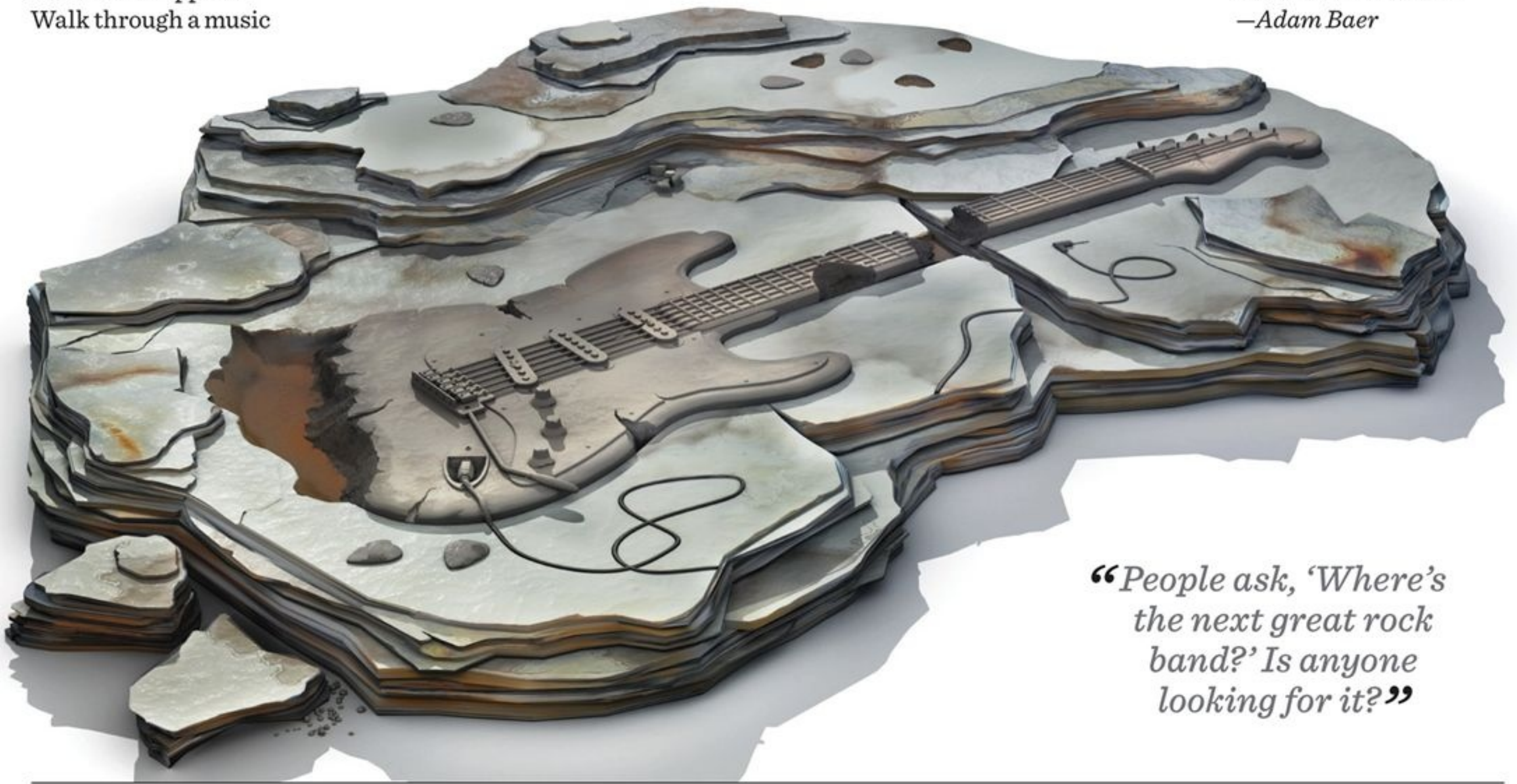
• Slash is 47, Tom Morello is 48, and Jack White is 37 (older than two college freshmen combined)—and they're the young ones. It's no secret that the virtuoso rock guitar god is dying. Revising Page or Hendrix is now a rarefied activity attractive only to a niche audience. How did it happen? Walk through a music

store. You'll see fewer guitar wonks noodling Strats than kids playing with sequencers and mixing boards to reprocess sounds tapped on tablets. Today an act like Radiohead, which boasts talented instrumentalists but is mostly electronic,

represents the anti-model of "band." Sure, there's a small craft-guitar subculture. Bon Iver designed an old-timey acoustic as an advertising stunt with Bushmills. But it's more decoration than music-making tool: a sign that people would rather hang a guitar on the wall than wail a solo. "Guitar Center's research shows that kids aren't picking up physical instruments," says Nic Harcourt, a tastemaking DJ who hosts DirecTV's *Guitar Center Sessions*, as well

as online and terrestrial radio shows. "You can make music on a computer now, so why pick up a guitar?" Fewer are, which has left Fender fretting financially as budget cuts decimate school music programs. But there's a bright B-side. The structure of bands has evolved. Ukés, MacBooks, banjos and horns are playing together better, creating new layers of sound. "It's an exciting time to be a young musician; it just may not be exciting to be a middle-aged music lover," says Harcourt. "People ask, 'Where's the next great

rock band?' Is anyone looking for it?" The real question is: Do your preferences grow, or do you stop exploring music as you get older? The truly open-minded listener is exposed to more musical styles online than ever before. You just have to want to hear them. So while Van Halen-esque shredders may not be breeding as they once did, new musical models are being tested. The guitar hero could well be laid to rest, but maybe we're seeing the rise of a new musical paradigm that will make us feel the way we felt when we first heard Hendrix. —Adam Baer



“People ask, ‘Where’s the next great rock band?’ Is anyone looking for it?”



Sasha Grey

STIMULATING READ

EROTIC PHOTOGRAPHY HITS A NEW WAVE



→ We never tire of looking at beautiful women. Lucky for us, photographers never stop finding exciting new ways to capture their images. *The New Erotic Photography 2* (\$60, taschen.com) collects 50 of today's most intriguing sexy shooters, from the sensual art of

Switzerland's Cyril Torrent to the raw power of the Czech Republic's Jan Hronsky, as well as photographers in Japan, Spain, Russia and elsewhere. Women photographers make the most exciting contributions to this volume, particularly the porn-star-at-rest work of adult actress Kimberly Kane and the California vibes of Los Angeles photographer Magdalena Wosinska. One eye-catcher: Celebrated lowbrow street artist Coop makes his debut with shots of curvaceous models. Credit editor Dian Hanson for curating a mix of styles ranging from elaborate to stripped down to simply stripped. We appreciate them all.



THAT'S THE SPIRIT

WHY RIGHT NOW IS THE PERFECT TIME TO START YOUR OWN LIQUOR COMPANY

• By day, Ron Dolin is an engineer at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico. After hours, however, he toys with a sweeter science. With his wife, Olha, Dolin runs the Don Quixote Distillery, making blue-corn bourbon and vodka and selling it on his website (dqdistillery.com). Licensed in 2004, Dolin became New Mexico's first legal distiller.

Paul Hletko, a lawyer by trade, now makes drinks for a living. Hletko opened FEW Distillery (fewspirits.com) in Evanston, Illinois in 2011. He hawks fine bourbons and gins in 11 states, two Canadian provinces and throughout Europe. His is the first legal distillery in Evanston.

Thirsty for a job change? Consider this: Small craft distillers such as Dolin and Hletko are behind the hottest movement in liquor. "From 24 craft

distillers in 2001, there are now easily more than 250," says Frank Coleman of the Distilled Spirits Council, a D.C.-based advocacy group.

If you want to thank someone for this river of booze, send a card to your state representative. For the past 20 years small distillers have lobbied to change liquor laws left over from Prohibition. Colorado, New Mexico, Illinois and New York now allow people like you to apply for a license and brew strong stuff that you can sell directly to consumers.

How to get started? "First, look at the laws—federal, state and local," says Hletko. A commercial still can run you upward of \$150,000. Finally, "have a plan for what you're going to make and how you're going to make it," advises Hletko. Just think: All those years you spent drinking in the name of research can finally pay off.

LAW & ZOMBIES

THE APOCALYPSE DOESN'T START UNTIL THE COURT SAYS SO

→ When *The Walking Dead's* Rick Grimes guns down zombies, is he enforcing the law or breaking it? That depends on the zombie, says James Daily, an attorney at Stanford University's Hoover Institution and co-author of *The Law of Superheroes*. "If a zombie presents an immediate danger and lethal force is necessary, then the zombie could be killed," says Daily. "In some jurisdictions—particularly those

without so-called stand your ground laws—one might have an obligation to retreat instead of using lethal force if it could be done safely. With slow-moving, mindless zombies, that might mean a lot of running and not much shooting." If a cure is found, zombie hunters like Grimes could be arrested. "Since there's no statute of limitations on murder, it could be prosecuted long after the zombie apocalypse was over."



REBIRTH OF THE MIXTAPE

TECHNOLOGY REVIVES ONE OF ROMANCE'S GREATEST WEAPONS

→ The digital-music age destroyed many things—the CD, the record store, heck, the music industry—but we miss the mixtape the most. Crafting a track list and handing it off to a crush was a rite of passage children of the digital age didn't get to enjoy. Until now. Thanks to 3-D printing, a technology that builds shapes by layering plastic or other materials, MakerBot has created the MakerBot Mixtape, a two-gigabyte device that can be connected to a computer or headphones. Buy one for \$39, or make your own with a MakerBot 3-D printer (\$1,749–\$2,799) and Mixtape Kit (\$25).



HOT TROPIC

RAIN FORESTS, BEACHES AND PIRATE-WORTHY RUM—IT'S TIME TO BELIEVE IN BELIZE



• We're thrilled the Mayans were dead wrong about the world ending last year, but there would have been worse places to experience Armageddon than this Central American hedonist retreat. Belize's Pantone-blue seas and sandy beaches are still largely untouched by the rush of plus-size

tourists slowly souring "hip" Costa Rica, but as the cruise-ship industry threatens to muscle further in... *tick tock.*

Fly into Belize City and hop a puddle jumper to San Ignacio, near the Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve—a hangout for jaguars, toucans and howler monkeys. Then drive on dirt "roads" to the Actun Tunichil Muknal Cave, which the Mayans believed was a portal to the under-

world. The Mayans also believed in a spirit called the Melon Lady, who smothered men to death in their sleep—with her breasts.

You're in the jungle, baby, but that doesn't mean roughing it. The thatched-roof cabanas at the just-renovated **Gaia Riverlodge** or the luxe villas at Francis Ford Coppola's **Blancaneaux Lodge** (1) are welcome places to unplug. Be warned: Cell service is

so minimal, the iPhone should just display an icon of a middle finger.

Hit the Caribbean coastline and easygoing Placencia, a hippie fishing village known for deep-sea diving on the largest coral reef in the western hemisphere. It helps that English is the national language. (Belize was a British colony until 1981.) Did we mention Vicodin and Ambien are available at the pharmacy,



usually without a prescription?

Book a room at the rustic-cool **Turtle Inn** (where Charlie Sheen hid out during his recent meltdown) or at **Chabil Mar** (for AC and flatscreen TVs). Speedboat to Silk Cayes (2), a trio of micro-

islands where your guide will grill fresh snapper while you sip Belikin beer. On your way out, pick up a bottle of Marie Sharp's local hot sauce. The "mild" will raise an eyebrow. The "hot" will burn as beautifully as your tan. —Mickey Rapkin

Francis Ford Coppola's Secret Rum Stash



When Coppola came to Belize in 1981 he fell in love with the local rum. "I bought two barrels of a 20-year-old rum made from molasses and put it in old oak chardonnay barrels," says the director. He aged the rum for another 16 years, and the result is as smooth as a sunset. Ask nicely and the bartender at Coppola's Turtle Inn may just dig up a glass.

ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERT HARKNESS

GO PUBBING IN PLACENCIA

A LAID-BACK FISHING VILLAGE GOES MENTAL AT NIGHT

RUMFISH Y VINO

→ Order a potent habanero rum fizz and a plate of barracuda tacos at the bar. Repeat.

BAREFOOT BAR

→ At this open-air cantina (left) women dance like jaguars. Locals call all that grinding *punta*.

TIPSY TUNA

→ The endless rum drinks and courtyard drum circle are what boozy beachside nightlife is all about.





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PLEASE DRINK RESPONSIBLY.
CROWN ROYAL Maple Flavored Whisky. 40% Alc/Vol.
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SOLE POWER

DRESS SHOES GET DANDY WITH VIVIDLY COLORED SOLES

• It was only a matter of time before the sartorial craze for all things saturated (flashy pocket squares, electric blue jeans) made its way to our shoes. And we have to say it's kind of cool to be able to brighten up the workday with a pumped-up buck or wingtip. If Carl Perkins were alive today he just might have written "lay off of my blue-soled shoes."



**COLE HAAN
GREAT JONES
SADDLE SHOES**
\$198

→ Swap out the blue laces with brown ones to turn down the intensity on the flash.



**WOLVERINE
NO. 1883 HORACE
WINGTIP BROGUES**
\$125

→ Leave it to American work-boot company Wolverine to put hazard yellow on a wingtip.



**ALDO STIREWALT
BUCKS**
\$115

→ Few men can get away with blue suede shoes, and even fewer with blue suede *and* red soles. Go boldly.



SPREAD 'EM

→ Get a shirt with a flattering semi-spread collar. A spread collar can make your face look round; a point collar can make you look horsey.

HAVE KNOTS

→ A baseball-size Windsor knot can overwhelm an outfit. A four-in-hand is just right.

THE NEW DRESS SHIRT

IT'S LESS DRESSY. IT FITS BETTER. HERE'S WHAT TO LOOK FOR AND HOW TO WEAR IT

• Unless you're a politician or a Hollywood agent, chances are you don't need to dress textbook white collar. And you likely don't have to wear a blazer or suit jacket all day long. Enter the new slimmer-cut, less-dressy dress shirt. Often tricked out with bright colors and subtle graphic patterns, it looks good enough to wear all on its own. With Brooks Brothers, Thomas Pink, J. Crew and others offering more slim-cut options, you'll have no excuse if you still look like a Fed on casual Fridays.

HIGH FIDELITY

→ Look for dress shirts with high arm holes. They make you look skinnier and more buff, no gym membership required. Who can argue with that?

RAISE THE BAR

→ With a white shirt, a tie bar can make you look like a Don Draper wannabe, but with a colorful or patterned slim-cut shirt it looks smart.

DRESS OUTSIDE THE BOX

→ Boxy, square-cut shirts can make you look, well, boxy and square. A well-cut dress shirt tapers in at the waist and cuts a more dashing line.



Ringrose check slim-fit shirt, \$185, Hutchinson skinny tie, \$135, tie bar, \$80, all by Thomas Pink.

Get Over the Undershirt

• If you wear a lumpy white tee under a dress shirt, you're undoing everything the slim-fit style is designed to achieve. Save the T-shirt for the weekend.





NICE RACK

CHEF JOSÉ ANDRÉS SCHOOLS US ON HOW TO MAKE SPRING LAMB SING

• Of all the cuts of meat available to modern man, lamb chops reign supreme. The intense wild flavor is a reminder of a time when man had to take to the woods to find dinner, the bone an invitation to eat in a kingly manner, with no cutting implements but your teeth. To maximize this traditional spring ingredient we turned to José Andrés, chef-owner of Jaleo and other lauded restaurants and host of PBS's *Made in Spain*, to give us his best Iberian spin on lamb. "Lamb ribs can be both juicy and crispy if you do it right," he says. Andrés slow roasts them in his restaurants; here we offer a quicker alternative. Serve the ribs with his Catalonian romesco sauce and it's game on.—Adam Baer

Romesco Sauce

Makes two cups

- ½ cup Spanish extra virgin olive oil
- 1 red bell pepper
- 6 plum tomatoes
- 1 head garlic, halved
- 1 Spanish onion
- 3 dried ancho chili peppers
- ½ cup almonds
- 1 slice white bread
- 1 tbsp. sherry vinegar
- 1 tsp. *pimentón dulce* (Spanish sweet paprika)
- Salt to taste

1. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Brush a thin film of olive oil over the bell pepper, tomatoes, garlic and onion. Roast for 40 minutes in a medium-size roasting pan. Remove from oven and allow to cool before peeling off skins of the pepper, tomatoes, garlic and onion.
2. While the vegetables roast, soak ancho chilies in a bowl of hot water for 15 minutes. Strain and remove seeds. Puree chilies in a blender until smooth; pass the puree through a fine-mesh sieve and set aside.
3. Heat one tablespoon olive oil in a frying pan over a low flame; add almonds and toast about one minute. Remove

- almonds and set aside.
4. Raise heat to medium; place bread slice in pan. Toast about 30 seconds on each side or until brown. Remove from pan and set aside.
5. Pour ancho puree into frying pan and cook for 30 seconds; remove from heat.
6. Place roasted vegetables in blender, along with almonds, bread, ancho puree, vinegar, *pimentón* and the remaining oil. Blend into a thick sauce; add salt to taste. Serve with lamb chops.

Crispy Lamb Chops

Serves two

- 1 rack of lamb, ribs cut into individual chops
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- Kosher salt

1. Heat a skillet over medium-high heat. Add

- olive oil; it should smoke.
2. Pat chops dry, sprinkle with salt and sear until well browned, crisp and medium rare (two to three minutes per side).
3. Serve with romesco sauce.





CHOP TO IT

Lamb rib racks are sold whole, so you'll have to play butcher. A classic cleaver is hefty enough to cut through bone and connective tissue.

FOOD STYLING BY VICTORIA GRANOF AT STOCKLAND MARTEL
ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERT HARKNESS



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THE WORLD'S ONLY SELF CHILLING ENERGY DRINK

WESTCOASTCHILL.COM



RUSSIAN REDUX

THE ORIGINAL VODKA MAKES A COMEBACK

• In the face of the ongoing boutique-vodka boom, Russian distillers are responding with homegrown high-end offerings. (Legend has it Russian vodka was first distilled as early as 1430, in a monastery laboratory by an imprisoned monk hoping to lull his captors to sleep.) Join the revolution like a purist and drink your vodka ice-cold and neat, or make this traditional lemon-infused concoction from New York's Russian Samovar restaurant. —*Nicholas Tamarin*

A TROIKA TO TRY



RUSSIAN STANDARD \$21

This classic bargain bottling has the slightest hint of winter wheat grown on the Russian steppes.



ELIT \$60

Stolichnaya's top-shelf offering tastes of toasted wheat with notes of sweet aniseed and pepper.



BELUGA NOBLE \$39

Distilled in Siberia, this pleasantly piney vodka gets additional flavor from honey and milk-thistle extract.



Moscow on the Hudson

1. Place 10 quartered lemons in a glass jar large enough to also hold two liters of vodka.
2. Top lemons with two cups of brown sugar. Cover and refrigerate for two weeks.
3. Wipe excess sugar off the lemons and add two liters of vodka; cover.
4. Store in a cool, dry place, approximately 65 degrees, for two more weeks.
5. Strain vodka through cheesecloth into a clean glass jar.

THE PLAYBOY PARTY

presented by



The Playboy Party presented by Crown Royal brought New Orleans swagger to Jackson Brewery Bistro Bar on Friday, February 1st for the biggest weekend in pro football. The MINI Main Line parade kicked off the evening's festivities, delivering Bunnies to the red carpet in style.

Once inside, guests donned Mardi Gras masks as they sipped Crown Royal cocktails, had their palms read in the MINI Cooper S Countryman, spiced up the night with delicious hors d'oeuvres seasoned with Tabasco Original Red Sauce, from celebrity chef John Besh, kept cool on the dance floor with AQUAhydrate water, and snapped pics with over 20 Playboy Playmates. Celebrities and athletes also stuffed bags for the troops by participating in The Crown Royal Heroes Project. DJs Devin Lucien and Jesse Marco commanded the DJ booth and special performances by Trombone Shorty and B.o.B fueled the night.



B.o.B. headlines The Playboy Party presented by Crown Royal



Serving up cocktails in style



Snoop Dogg



Warren Sapp with Playmates Heather Rae Young & Shelby Chesnes



Bunnies in the Big Easy



Neil Patrick Harris with Playmates Heather Rae Young & Shelby Chesnes



Adrian Peterson with Playmates Jessa Hinton & Amy Leigh Andrews



Playmates Amanda Cerny & Tiffany Toth



Jeremy Shockey



David Arquette



Geoff Stults with Playmates Pilar Lastra & Nikki Leigh



Playmate Raquel Pomplun



Playmates Pilar Lastra & Kimberly Phillips



Playmate Hiromi Oshima

MOVIE OF THE MONTH

THE INCREDIBLE BURT WONDERSTONE

By Stephen Rebell

• Steve Carell's new comedy casts him as a vain Las Vegas magician whose Siegfried and Roy-style swagger, mile-high back-comb, sequin-studded velour jumpsuits and massive ego are seriously threatened by a rock star street magician played by Jim Carrey. Co-starring Steve Buscemi, Alan Arkin, James Gandolfini and Olivia Wilde, the flick should work its magic on Carell fans who prefer him clowning in, say, *The 40-Year-Old Virgin* mode rather than in *Crazy, Stupid, Love* mode. "I just wanted to do something that was fun, funny and really silly," Carell has said about *Wonderstone*. Although the movie hits a wide range of satiric targets thanks to director Don Scardino (*30 Rock*)



and screenwriters Jonathan Goldstein and John Francis Daley (*Horrible Bosses*), real-life illusionists are spared the dirty tricks. In fact, David

Copperfield acted as technical advisor and contributed a jaw-dropping stage illusion that, according to Scardino, "looks phenomenal on the screen."

A CUP OF JOE

Director Jon M. Chu leaves the world of music (he directed *Step Up 3D* and Justin Bieber's *Never Say Never*) to try his hand in the action arena with *G.I. Joe: Retaliation*, the sequel to 2009's *Rise of the Cobra*.

Q: Why leave the familiar world of music? What was special about this film?

A: I'm a huge G.I. Joe fan, and I know the mythology. I recently found all my toys from when I was a kid; they were scuffed up, beaten up, arms torn off. I wanted that badass feeling.

Q: You're working with action stars including Channing Tatum, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson and Bruce Willis. Which of them gave you the most crap for having directed Justin Bieber?

A: All of them. The Rock was the worst. He and Channing were sitting on a couch, and the Rock goes, "Come on over and sit between us and grab that pink ball over there." I did it without even thinking about it, and suddenly there's this Instagram pic of them looking tough and me looking like the world's biggest dweeb.

Q: Which of your stars would you bet on in a cage match?

A: It's hard to deny the Rock. He approaches a movie the same way he approaches anything he does, whether it's wrestling or football back in the day. He trains. He's focused.

Q: Is Channing Tatum in the movie much, or is he too big a star now?

A: He's in the movie. What happens to his character is something I don't want to spoil, but it's very cool.

Dwayne Johnson



TEASE FRAME

Diane Kruger

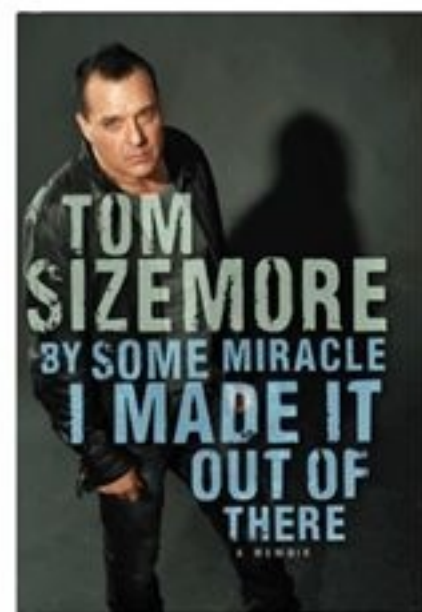


The director's cut of *Troy* shows why the world went to war over Helen, played by Diane Kruger (pictured). Kruger is out of this world in *The Host*, in theaters now.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

AN ACTOR TELLS ALL

By Paul Krassner



• In *By Some Miracle I Made It Out of There*, his memoir about recovering from his days as a drug addict, Tom Sizemore blurs the line between lust and love ("My whole body got hard—not just my dick"), and he's murky about the distinction between reporting and boasting ("Robert De Niro said, 'Do you know what a wonderful actor you are?'"). Some might complain that he tells too much—he's led a gritty life and spares nobody, including familiar names—but no one can accuse him of holding back. **AAA**



GAME OF THE MONTH

TOMB RAIDER

By Jason Buhmester

• After years of video games populated by generic buzz-cut and muscle-bound heroes, the original *Tomb Raider* blessed us with gaming's first badass heroine and a reason for Angelina Jolie to squeeze into a pair of skintight cargo shorts. So even though it's been

three years since the last escapade with Lara Croft, any mention of a new *Tomb Raider* gets gamers excited. The newest in the series, simply titled *Tomb Raider* (360, PC, PS3), explores Croft's origins, beginning with the new college graduate shipwrecked and stranded on

a jungle island off the coast of Japan. Gamers guide Croft, surrounded by dangerous wildlife and pursued by violent militia members, on a journey of survival in which she must scrounge for food and weapons. A new upgrade system improves Croft's abilities and gear, including pistols,

a bow and a savage climbing ax. She'll need these tools to solve challenging puzzles, escape traps set by the men hunting her and traverse tightropes, zip lines and other dangers as she transforms into a hardened and beloved adventurer capable, one day, of surviving treacherous tombs.

ACTION PACK

CYBORG NINJAS, SPACE ZOMBIES AND MORE IN SPRING'S WILDEST GAMES



1 *Crysis 3* (360, PC, PS3)

> New York City in 2047 is a jungle encased in a dome; players don powerful nanosuits and seek revenge on an evil corporation.



2 *Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance* (360, PS3)

> A deadly soldier equipped with a cyborg ninja suit and a high-tech katana faces a robot takeover.



3 *Dead Space 3* (360, PC, PS3)

> Astronauts stranded on a frozen planet find themselves hunted by intergalactic undead. Blood, guts and zero gravity are involved.



DVD OF THE MONTH

LIFE OF PI

By Bryan Reesman

• Yann Martel's mystical tale of how a young Indian man and a Bengal tiger share a lifeboat at sea in order to survive gets a dazzling visual rendering from director Ang Lee. This Oscar-nominated drama takes viewers on a surreal journey that emphasizes the wonders of the world and the resilience of the human spirit. Even in 2-D, Lee's triumph is breathtaking. **Best extras:** The Blu-ray 3D has five deleted scenes and two VFX progressions. **★★★★½**

MUST-WATCH TV

BATES MOTEL

By Josef Adalian

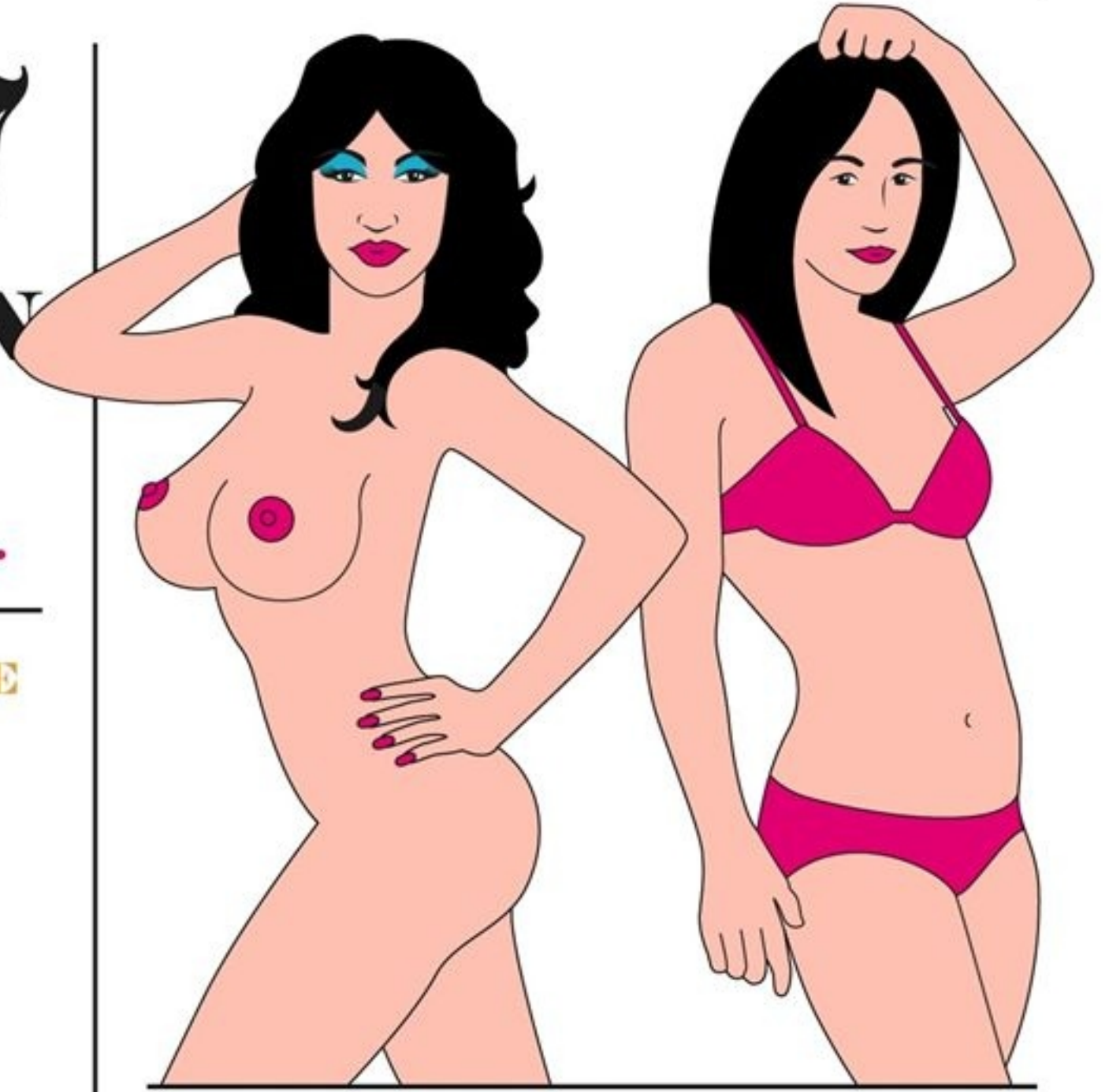
• The world wasn't clamoring for a prequel to *Psycho*, yet A&E's *Bates Motel*, about how young Norman Bates (Freddie Highmore) got so fucked-up, is more promising than pathetic. Producers (including *Lost*'s Carlton Cuse) smartly set the show in the present day, helping it step out of Hitchcock's enormous shadow. They also give equal time to Vera Farmiga, whose chilling performance as Norman's smothering mess of a mom is reason enough to keep watching as you try to solve the riddle of Norman: Did Mom make him a psycho, or was he born that way? **★★★★**





\$2.7 BILLION

Amount *Seinfeld* has earned since going off the air, an average of **\$14 MILLION PER EPISODE.**



PORN STARS

VS.

OTHER WOMEN

3

OUT OF

4

world leaders are on Twitter.

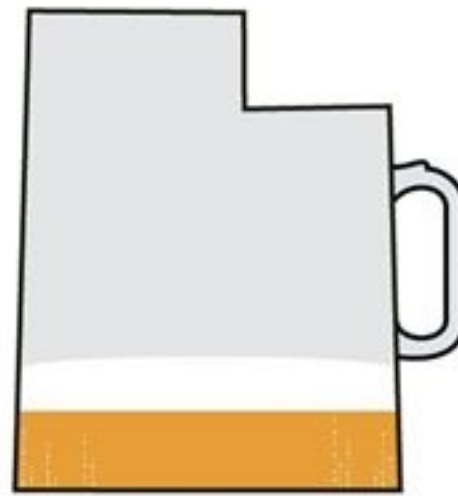
Gallons of beer consumed in the U.S. in one year:

1ST PLACE



NEW HAMPSHIRE
(43 gallons per person)

LAST PLACE



UTAH
(19.2 gallons per person)

6.3 BILLION

Studies find that office workers get sidetracked and distracted about

ONCE EVERY 3 MINUTES

Getting back on track can take about

3 1/2 MINUTES



In a survey of 500 financial services professionals

39%

reported their competitors were likely to have engaged in unethical or illegal activity in order to succeed.

26%

reported they had observed or had firsthand knowledge of such activity.

15.1

1
Average age at first intercourse:

17.3

74.8

2
Average total sex partners:

5.1

9.6

3
Average number of sex partners in past year:

1.4

69%

4
Greatly enjoy sex:

33%

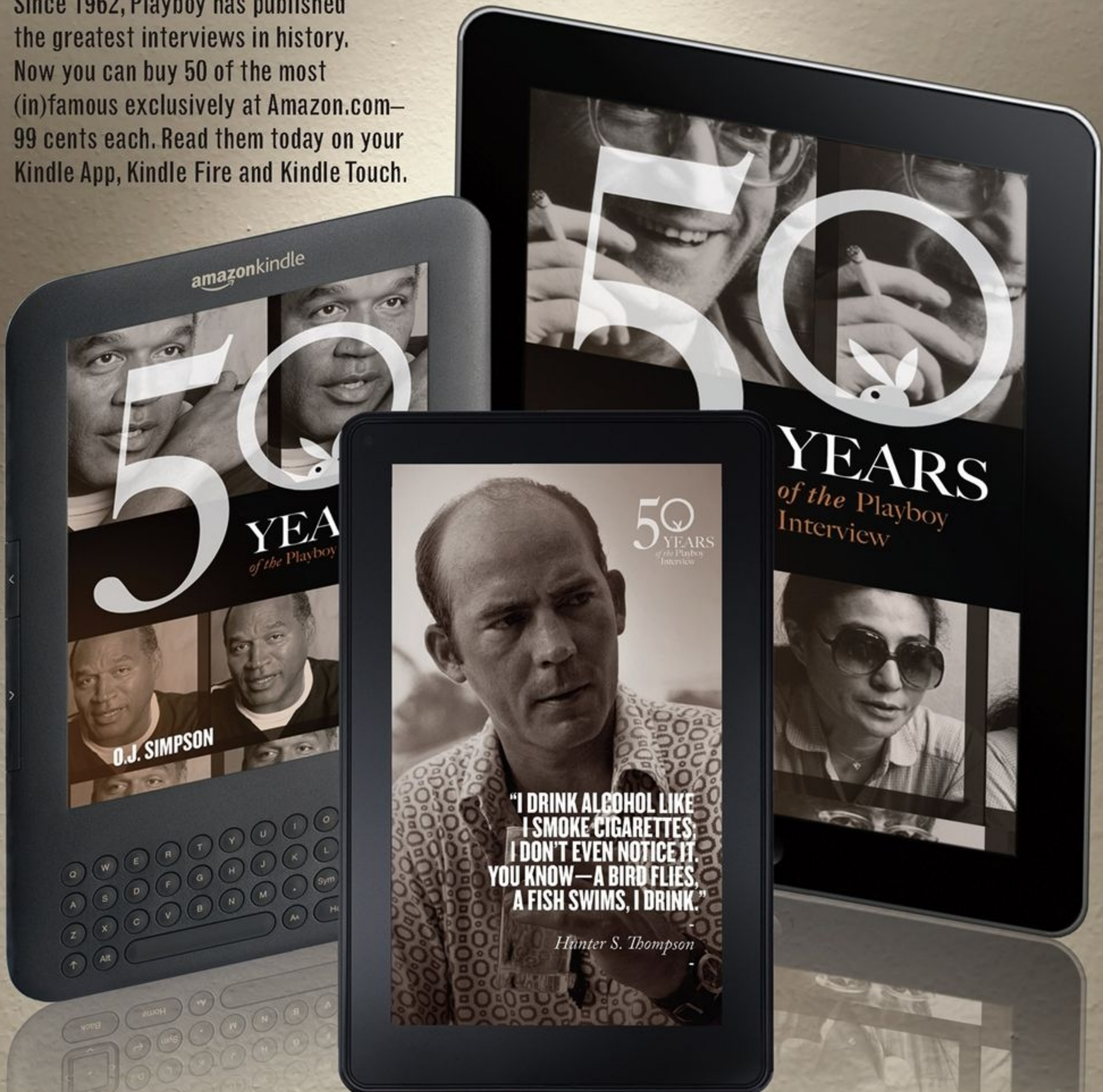
1 IN 3

Americans has gone online to diagnose a medical condition, according to a Pew Research study.

PLAYBOY 50 years of

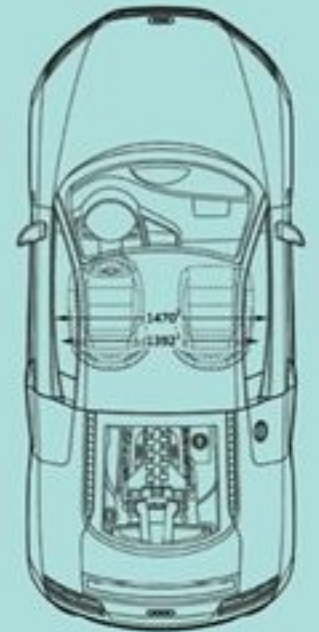
PLAYBOY INTERVIEWS

Since 1962, Playboy has published the greatest interviews in history. Now you can buy 50 of the most (in)famous exclusively at Amazon.com—99 cents each. Read them today on your Kindle App, Kindle Fire and Kindle Touch.





R8



AUDI R8 V10 PLUS

- Engine: 5.2-liter V10
- Horsepower: 550
- Zero to 60: 3.5 seconds
- MPG: TBA
- Tag: TBA



LORD OF THE RINGS

AUDI'S REBORN R8 SUPERCAR TAKES AMERICA BY STORM

• Fifty years from now, autophiles will look back on our generation of rides and point to Audi's R8 as an era-defining model. Launched in 2006, it set a styling benchmark, with performance to match: a mid-engine all-wheel-drive two-seat rocket. Even the door handles were beautifully

designed. The bodywork? It belonged in MOMA. This month, the R8 returns to our shores reborn, a fresh iteration that's quicker, lighter and cosmetically nuanced. Designers reworked the front and rear ends and added slick new headlights. But the real news is under the skin: a dual-clutch S tronic seven-speed paddle-shift transmission that cuts about a quarter second off acceleration sprints. Like last year, there's a 4.2-liter V8 (\$115,000) and a 5.2-liter V10 (price TBA), but new is the 550 hp, near-200 mph V10 Plus (stats above). And yes, those gorgeous door handles come standard.

TECH SPIN

NEW DRIVING VOODOO YOU'LL ENCOUNTER DOWN THE ROAD



• In the past decade, drivers have enjoyed an auto-technology renaissance. Your average new car can practically split atoms. Traction control has saved innumerable lives; navigation systems have saved even more marriages. Engine cylinder deactivators, voice commands—what's next, *Jetsons*-style jet packs? Actually, yes. Here's some transportation tech you'll see more of soon.



HYBRID SUPERCARS
→ The batteries aren't to save fuel; they're for added power. Google the Porsche 918 and Audi e-tron. Whoa!



PHONE INTEGRATION
→ Soon your cell phone will unlock your car, start it, tell it where to go and more.



TOUCHSCREEN
→ Tesla's new Model S features a touchscreen dash; the instrument panel is like a big iPad. That's the future.



DRIVERLESS CAR
→ Cars will drive themselves using lasers, cameras and radar.



ADVANCED NAV
→ Soon cars will talk not just to the driver but to one another, immensely improving real-time traffic data.



JET PACKS
→ The first usable jet pack has arrived, thanks to Swiss inventor Yves "Jetman" Rossy.

1

PAINT YOUR WAGON

ONCE THE BLACK SHEEP OF THE HIGHWAYS, THE STATION WAGON MAKES A COMEBACK

• Who doesn't have a fond memory of a station wagon? It was like the family dog—tireless, always up for an adventure. Ten years ago, the minivan and SUV made the wagon passé. Now it's making a comeback. Below are our picks of the litter. At the top of the list: the trusty all-wheel-drive (optional) Volvo XC70. Affordable, with just enough luxury that you don't mind getting it muddy, it will haul five pals and a keg across a mountain range, then beg for more. It should come with a standard month's vacation so you can hit the road heading anywhere.



VOLVO XC70

Engine: 3.2-liter I-6

Horsepower: 240

Zero to 60: 7.1 seconds

MPG: 19 city/25 hwy

Tag: \$33,600



AMERICAN ICON

THE ALL-NEW SEVENTH-GEN CORVETTE

→ When the tarp was pulled off the car, photographers swarmed. You would have thought Scarlett Johansson was onstage, revealing her glorious money-maker. The scene: the global unveiling of the seventh-generation Chevy Corvette in Detroit. Standing nearby was the man responsible for the car's performance, chief engineer Tadge Juechter. "The 2014 Corvette delivers the fastest acceleration," he says, "the most cornering grip, the most track capability, the best braking performance and what we expect to be the best fuel economy ever for a standard Corvette." Bold words. To back them up, Chevy has branded this Vette a Stingray, a moniker given only to "special" generations. Under the hood: an all-new 450 hp, 6.2-liter V8. Price: in the neighborhood of \$55,000. Look for yours in showrooms this fall.

2



PORSCHE PANAMERA SPORT TURISMO

• "There is no contradiction between sportiness and functionality," says Porsche design chief Michael Mauer. Case in point: his estate car (as wagons are called in Europe), which debuted as a concept in 2012 and will likely make it to U.S. showrooms. Price: TBA.

3



CADILLAC CTS-V WAGON

• When Caddy unleashed the 556 hp CTS-V in 2010, the sheer power amazed. Then the company dressed up that same V8 engine in wagon garb. There you have it: a family truckster that has more power than a Lamborghini Gallardo and can hit nearly 200 mph. Price: \$64,515.

4



FERRARI FF

• Technically this car, which went into production in 2011, is a "shooting brake," a kind of two-door wagon. "FF" stands for four seats and four-wheel drive. At 208 mph, it's the fastest four-seater in the world and the only four-wheel drive Ferrari has ever made. Price: about \$300,000.

Doctor Detroit
Tadge Juechter
Corvette chief engineer



THAT'S A WRAP

→ Protect your hands with an old-school wrap. "There's really no wrong or right way to wrap your hands," Quillin says. "Go online and watch some videos, and then just do what works for you."

GLOVE UP

→ "Heavy gloves are more of a muscle builder; lighter gloves are for working on speed." Quillin spars in 16-ounce gloves but hits the bag with 10-ouncers to simulate what he'll wear in a fight.

10 ounces

JUMP AROUND

→ Decades have passed and boxers still jump rope, "sometimes up to 30 minutes, no stopping," says Quillin. "It helps you cut weight and get warmed up, and it's also a good cooldown."

30 minutes

POWER SHOT

→ With the heavy bag, "try to think of it as a person and move around it realistically, punching correctly," Quillin advises. As for the speed bag and the double-end bag, "take your time and be willing to learn," he says. "If you don't have the patience to develop a rhythm, all you'll get out of it is frustration."

45°

SOLED OUT

→ Float like a butterfly? Not in thick-soled running shoes. Boxing shoes have thin soles that grip the canvas. "I like feeling almost bare-footed. I like to be like an animal," says Quillin.

No running shoes

THE SWEAT SCIENCE

HARD-HITTING ADVICE FROM BOXER PETER QUILLIN

• "I train hard to make the fight easy," explains Peter "Kid Chocolate" Quillin, the reigning World Boxing Organization middleweight champion. The fight isn't always easy, as anyone who saw Quillin's recent six-knockdown brawl with Hassan N'dam can attest, but training hard certainly makes it easier. And even for those with no intention of throwing down in the professional prize ring, training in a boxing gym is an amazing way to tone up—and work on some self-defense savvy in the process. Quillin, undefeated through 28 pro fights with 20 knockouts, offers his advice to get you started down the *Rocky* road.—Eric Raskin



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METAL HEADS

**THESE WILL,
THESE WILL
ROCK YOU**

• With hip-hop fans flocking to buy Beats by Dr. Dre headphones, it was only a matter of time before hard-rocking audio engineers cranked out designs fine-tuned for blasting loud guitars instead of thumping beats. Behold three pairs of headphones built to rock your world.

MOTÖRHEAD

→ "Everything louder than everyone else" is Motörhead's slogan, and these Motörizers (\$129, motorheadphones.com) prove it.

MARSHALL AMPS

→ Where would rock be without Marshall amps? The company packs its expertise into the Marshall Monitors (\$200, marshallheadphones.com), which feature vintage amp styling.

AC/DC

→ These AC/DC headphones (\$99, onearz.com) include the booming drivers you'd expect from a band with the word *rock* in more than a dozen song titles.





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FRANCOFILE

Talking With Sam Raimi

by James Franco

*From cult horror films including *The Evil Dead* to his blockbuster *Spider-Man* trilogy, Sam Raimi is a filmmaker who is hard to pigeonhole. His horror films are simultaneously vicious and humorous, and he invents entire grandiose worlds from his imagination—for example, *Oz the Great and Powerful*, which stars the great and powerful PLAYBOY Contributing Editor James Franco in the title role. The two recently got together to chat about what went on behind the scenes of *Spider-Man* and how the director's messy style of filmmaking has turned into a huge advantage.*

FRANCO: What does a director do when faced with developing effects and a story on the scale of *Spider-Man* or *Oz*? How do you figure it out?

RAIMI: Experiment, research, talk to experts. You try to explain to artists what you see. The process of directing is one of communication, explaining to the writer and cinematographer how it's supposed to feel. You communicate with actors about what they want and why. They then lend insight to the characters, because they're living them inside out. Your vision gradually becomes clearer.

FRANCO: I was a supporting character in all three of your *Spider-Man* films, and we've just finished *Oz*, in which I play the lead. I felt you gave Tobey Maguire so much attention during *Spider-Man* because of your feelings for his character, Peter Parker, that I didn't get as much of your love as he did. On *Oz*, for the first time I felt your full love as a director.

RAIMI: Yeah, I felt our communication went deeper with this picture.

FRANCO: There was one moment at the end of *Spider-Man* when we were in a cemetery in New York.

RAIMI: You always mention this.

FRANCO: Maybe I'm wrong about it. It was the last shot of the film, when the characters are burying Norman Osborn, my character's father. You wanted me to try a couple of different lines.

RAIMI: I'll have to check the film.

FRANCO: You said, "Say to Parker, 'You'll help me avenge my father; we'll do it together.'" It's not a bad line, but it sounded weird, so I didn't say it.

RAIMI: That's a mild way of putting it. You said, "I'm not saying that stupid line!"

FRANCO: In front of everybody.

RAIMI: But it's fine. I thought to myself, He knows who this character is. Maybe he realizes he would have more self-control than that and wouldn't make such a dramatic gesture. I never know why people say the things they do on set, but if an actor I respect doesn't want to do something, I try to find the truth behind it. You see that as a moment of disrespect, but I see it as being in touch with something. It was an emotional place. You were suffering, feeling anger toward your father, and you weren't about to say, "Sam, I don't know why, but this feels wrong." And that's okay.

FRANCO: Tobey and Kirsten Dunst became a couple around that time. I had a crush on Kirsten, and I think I was upset about that as well.

RAIMI: Oh, I didn't know that. Gee, that's just like the movie.

FRANCO: Exactly. Tobey was mad at me for a while. By the second film we were cool, but that's another reason I felt hurt, with you giving Tobey all the attention.

RAIMI: And he was getting Kirsten, like the script said he should.

FRANCO: Yes. You were the father who wouldn't give me the love I needed.

RAIMI: Maybe I had to play Norman, the father, a bit. And you had to play your character, without that father.

FRANCO: Yeah, that's weird. Let's talk about *Oz*. When you were given the script, what did you think you needed to accomplish?

RAIMI: I thought, How does this carnival magician, this charlatan, become great? What seeds are here? I boiled it down to the story of a selfish man who becomes a selfless man and therefore a great wizard, someone who starts caring about other people more than himself. Then I knew how to handle it. I found what I loved about the movie and then enhanced the drama in every scene I could. On set I'd say, "James, how can we keep this struggle of selfishness versus selflessness alive?" How can we keep it realistic and do what the story asks, then go to that next level and keep his conscience alive so the ultimate moment is one the audience has been wrestling with, in the big and small, throughout the journey? If you can do that, it works for me. It's in the fabric of everything.

FRANCO: I've found your working style is free-flowing, at least with actors. But there's another side of you that's incredibly meticulous. How do you balance those different approaches?

RAIMI: The best performances happen when you let actors follow their instincts, which is absolutely counter to my job as a director to tell a concise story. I'm always at odds with myself. I need the brilliance of actors without constraints, but I need the formal structure of a well-told narrative. When actors run wild, it yields great performances but destroys structure. What I'm left with is a beautiful thing that needs help. I have to repair that structure afterward, usually more than most directors, because I let it get crazier on set than most. But I'm not afraid of outrageous expressions from actors anymore. It's the seed of greatness. And I don't want to see how brilliant that performance will be ahead of time. I want it to be more brilliant than I could ever imagine. ■



Promotion

THE NEXT NEW CONCEPT
BY

Azuñia

TEQUILA

LAUNCH PARTY

Playboy, special guests Sunny Garcia (Surfing World Champion) and Bill Walton (NBA Legend), and Playmates Pilar Lastra, Nikki Leigh, and Raquel Pomplun gathered to host an exclusive new bottle launch party for Jim Riley, CEO of Azuñia Tequila, at Beso in Hollywood, CA on January 16th. DJ Stellar set the stage for an unforgettable evening as guests indulged in world-class hors d'oeuvres, sipped on specialty cocktails by mixologist Joe Valdovinos, and mingled with Playmates.



You Are What You Eat

There was no way I was going to mess with that prissy, leather-bound wine list. I was having dinner with a guy I've known since high school—and I went to high school in New Jersey. But since we weren't eating hot wings and our waitress wasn't wearing polyester shorts, I figured instead of getting beer I'd just tell our server to bring us a bottle of something cheap and interesting, as long as it wasn't New World. My friend looked at me and said, "Don't ever fucking say that again." Say what? "*New World*. Or I'll punch you. In your old testicles."

This was just a few months after I was invited to a friend's house for pizza and poker and brought a bottle of simple Sicilian primitivo. I was mocked so hard for bringing wine instead of beer that I wound up drinking most of it myself, then having a tall glass of rye to prove something that only a guy drunk on primitivo would understand. As far as I know, they stopped having poker games after that. At least I didn't hear about them anymore.

None of this is my fault. I live in a time when people are invited to *Top Chef* viewing parties, meet girls at farmers markets and go on dates to cooking classes. A time when I can't go to a restaurant without seeing at least one dude carefully arranging his appetizer so he can shoot it for his food blog. When I know the names of 15 current world leaders, six artists, four poets, two philosophers and more than 100 chefs. When men make time to eat long meals *while in Las Vegas*.

I know that this is not the way a man should act. I know that the only time I should think of eating as entertainment is



when the word *contest* is involved. That I should not be able to identify field greens unless I made it to Eagle Scout. I know these are descriptors that should not be important to me: "organic," "local," "artisanal," "grass-fed," "heirloom." I know these are descriptors that should be: "fried," "smoked," "bacon-y," "cool ranch" and "ass-in-the-tub hot."

And yet I keep choosing food over life. I go out to long dinners, which means I never have time for a movie after. I cook elaborate meals for friends and then sit around talking about the elaborate meal I cooked. Those really expensive, supposedly romantic *prix-fixe* meals I've been to? It turns out nothing makes a woman want to have sex less than 16 courses and 3,500 calories. My odds were 20 times better with dorm food and frat punch.

But I'm not the only man who has given up so much for *bottarga*. Baseball games—where for generations men got peanuts,

By Joel Stein

hot dogs, beer and, if they were feeling culinarily adventurous, Cracker Jacks—are now mini-Vegases with food courts where chefs' names are more prominent than middle relievers'. When I went to AT&T Park last season to see the world champion Giants play, I didn't want to eat a fresh Dungeness crab sandwich served on warm slices of garlic-butter-brushed sourdough, but it was right there. So was the organic strawberry shortcake. And if I had found the California wine cart before the Gordon Biersch beer stand, I might have been an even worse role model for my friend's 11-year-old son.

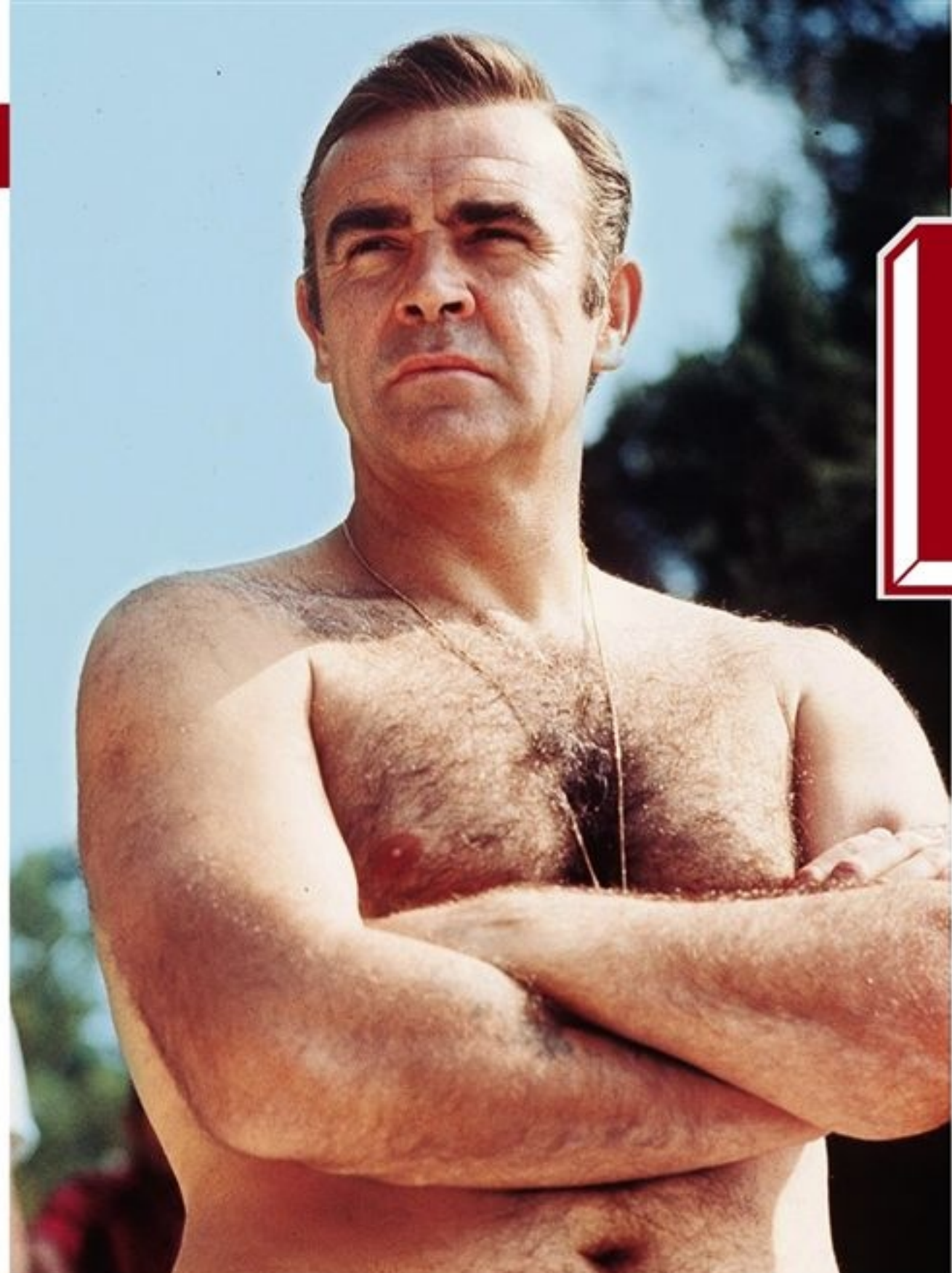
But it is too late to go back. In the globalized information age, a man who

eats just meat and potatoes is no longer rugged but fearful. A man now has to have a bit of Anthony Bourdain and a dash of Andrew Zimmern, daring to eat fermented shark, fertilized duck egg or salted tuna sperm. A man has to take the bull by the balls, fry them, dip them in cocktail sauce and pretend to like them. Eating disgusting food is yet one more area where we cannot afford to keep getting beaten by the Chinese.

Women are impressed with guys' knowledge of northern versus southern Thai cuisine, as long as we don't talk too much about history. Our worldliness, even though it's restricted to restaurant meals, makes us look sophisticated and daring, which makes us more likely to get away with doing weird sex stuff with them. It's the same logic that led us to name all the good sex acts with French words. If I'm willing to eat salted tuna sperm, she should be willing to try going down on her friend in front of me. If I eat only hot dogs, well, you can see how her argument might go. Men who don't know about food will be viewed as not being sensual enough. As they say, jerky eaters are often jerky doers.

It helps to be able to cook too. I spent a 24-hour shift in a firehouse once, and I couldn't believe how seriously those guys took food. Men were valorized for their chimichangas nearly as much as for saving lives. And flouting every stereotype of masculinity ever promulgated, they ate dessert. Chocolate dessert.

So I'm going to keep bringing my rustic, Old World wines to card games. I'm dropping truffle salt on my popcorn at the next Super Bowl party. I'll put Gruyère, onion confit and bacon jam on my burger. And far more manly, when I see you I'll bore you with every tiny detail I've researched about each of those dishes. ■



MAN

THE CASE AGAINST SKINNY JEANS,
EXFOLIATING AND BEING A "DUVA"

UP!

I, Lisa Lampanelli, am a life-long fan of men. Ever since I was a sophomore in high school and found myself wishing Peter Frampton was fingering me like he fingered his Les Paul, I have loved the male gender. So I'm sure you'll understand why I am worried about a current trend—a trend more disturbing than hipsters, TLC's programming and Juggalos combined. I am, of course, referring to the demasculinization of the American male.

Men, I hate to be the one to tell you this, but you've turned into women. How? You now have style, and that needs to change. Style used to be the exclusive domain of women and gays. Go into any men's store today and you'll see rows of skinny jeans, shelf after shelf of ornate, shiny accessories and racks full of shirts so brightly colored and form-fitting that Richard Simmons wouldn't be caught dead in them. Even worse, look behind the counters and you'll see enough facial scrubs, body lotions and hair products to make Charles Bronson rise from the dead and beat his own ass with a sock full of quarters in disgust.

How, oh how, did we get here? Men who used to barely scrub the dirt from under their fingernails now buy scrubs to cleanse their pores. Eyebrow shaping, exfoliating, capri pants—really, gentlemen? You "guys" may as well walk around wearing a scrunchie and a maxipad.

Body hair, like Mel Gibson, has somehow become the enemy. A man's hairy chest used to be a turn-on. In the 1970s Burt Reynolds was the ultimate sex symbol, with his shirt unbuttoned and that

little tuft of hair sticking out. Now guys shave their chests so much, every time you touch one, it has more tiny pricks than the continent of Asia.

I, for one, don't like it. I don't want a man who's prettier than I am any more than I want a personal trainer with a saggier ass or a pet dog with better breath.

Perhaps this feminization of men has its roots in the rise of "gym culture." Once guys started obsessing over how every inch of their body looked, vanity began running rampant, and the diva dude—the "duva," if you will—was born.

You've all seen that guy at the gym, dressed in his color-coordinated designer spandex workout clothes that

BY LISA LAMPANELLI

are tighter than Bruce Jenner's face. He gazes at himself in the mirror, and by that enamored look on his freshly facialed mug, you can just tell he's dreaming of the day when science perfects cloning so he can put a roofie in his own drink and fuck himself silly.

Even worse are the guys with the skin-tight yoga pants. If you wear yoga pants, you may not be gay, but you're definitely on the waiting list.

Maybe that's what upsets me about these guys. They're straight, but they dress and groom like gay men. It seems dishonest. What you're seeing is not what you're getting. It's like putting a nun's habit on Lindsay Lohan. It's like putting running shoes on Stephen Hawking. It's like putting a football uniform on Mark Sanchez.

I like a guy who's low maintenance. One of the perks of living with a man is

that when we're getting dressed to go to a party, he can be ready in three minutes.

But duvas need hours to get ready, and worse yet, they need an abundance of bathroom counter space. Beauty products for men are a lot like banjo music: A little goes a long way. And the last thing I need when I'm trying to put on mascara is to get elbowed by a duva trying to remove his exfoliating mask without ruining his manicure.

This isn't to say there's no happy medium when it comes to grooming. Do ladies want guys to keep themselves up a little better? Of course we do. Do we want a guy who looks like Nick Nolte's mug shot? Of course we don't. Certain grooming habits are essential. Definitely wax your back and trim your balls—I do. Seriously, if you pull down your pants and it looks like Troy Polamalu is stuck between your legs, we've got a problem. But don't go too far. Nobody needs bald junk. Your penis already looks like it belongs to a baby.

And, guys, please dress like a man. Your jeans should not be so tight I know your religion, and they shouldn't cost more than a laptop. If it's not snowing, you should not be wearing a scarf. It's not 1963 and you're not Art Garfunkel. Also, if you must wear a bracelet, make sure it's made out of a precious metal. Rubber bracelets went out with Lance Armstrong's Tour de France victories, and thread bracelets are for girls going to a Dave Matthews concert.

So cancel your subscription to *Details*, throw away your Nair for Men and kick those mandals to the curb. We need to get back to the days of manly men. Now, if you'll excuse me I have to go pluck my husband Jimmy's eyebrows. I don't want the neighbors to think I'm having an affair with Sam Donaldson.



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PLAYBOY ADVISOR

My girlfriend and I are Christians, and we've grown together in our faith. However, we understandably have reservations about premarital sex. She in particular feels super guilty after we have intercourse or oral sex. She wants us to be "pure" in the eyes of God if we get married. She also told me she rarely masturbates, even though I bought her a vibrator. I told her I understand the faith thing but that she will need to embrace her sexuality at some point. I worry she's not a sexual person. What should I do?—R.M., Tulsa, Oklahoma

There aren't many people who wouldn't benefit from more masturbation, but don't lay a guilt trip of your own by assigning your girlfriend some phantom sexual dysfunction. Her guilt is unfortunate; if God judges a person to be impure for having sex in a committed relationship, there's no pleasing the guy. You're asking us to predict if she would somehow blossom once the two of you got married. Who knows? The fact that she considers premarital sex to be sinful may make it the hottest action you'll ever get. Or she may cast off her chains and suck you dry. Sex works in mysterious ways.

I notice PLAYBOY has great articles on wines and spirits and even has a wine club. I'm partial to scotch, but few are available in sample packages (20 milliliters or so) and there are few local tastings. It's an expensive passion. Trying a scotch means rolling the dice and buying a bottle. Macallan 12-year-old sherry oak is a great deal for under \$100, but I didn't care for Glenlivet 18 and was stuck with a pricey bottle. Maybe PLAYBOY could start a scotch club. I'd serve on the selection committee at no charge.—K.L., Anchorage, Alaska

We appreciate the offer. You'll like Master of Malt, a U.K. retailer that addresses this issue by offering sample-size 30-milliliter bottles for \$5 to \$10 each. It accepts orders from North America online at masterofmalt.com or toll free at 866-569-5053. It also offers dram bottles of rum, vodka, mezcal and gin, each with handmade paper labels and wax seals. Samples allow you to experiment, but you can narrow your choices by considering your taste profile. For example, Macallan is a Speyside malt, meaning it comes from the area around the River Spey. Whiskeys from this region are known for their smoothness and balance, as opposed to, say, Island malts, which are known for their smoky flavor. If you like Macallan, you'll probably also enjoy other Speysides such as Cragganmore and the Glenrothes. Then

try an Islay (super smoky), and if you like it, dive deeper into that family (Lagavulin, Laphroaig, etc.). Eventually you'll run out of choices, though perhaps not in this life.

My husband was invited to a co-worker's wedding. I thought it was odd that the save-the-date card was addressed only to him but figured the bride didn't know he was married. (Neither of us has met her.) But the invitation was also addressed only to him, and the response card was already filled out with his name



My wife is amazing in bed, but she doesn't like the lights on during sex. Our bedroom gets pitch-black, and I have a hard time staying aroused. Is this normal? What can I do?—B.F., Springfield, Missouri

Men spend their days imagining what women look like naked; to turn off the lights when we finally have a nude woman within reach is a crime against our nature. Continue to reassure her that you find her ravishing, but also suggest a practical compromise. Place a book light on a nightstand, a low-watt colored bulb in a bedroom lamp or a dimmable bulb in an overhead light, ideally with a remote she can control (but, by mutual agreement, not turn off). You may never enjoy sex at high noon, but after your wife sees your reaction to seeing her, she may have a moment of enlightenment. If she still insists on complete darkness, provide it. Dim the lights, blindfold her and keep her guessing what comes next.

Before my girlfriend and I started dating, we would just mess around. Around this time one of her guy friends crashed at her apartment. According to her he tried to sneak into her bed. She mentioned recently that he had started texting her. Curious, I went through her phone. In one message she told him she had wanted to fuck him that night but he was drunk and had startled her. Since this happened about a year ago, am I getting upset over nothing? I want to ask her about it, but then she would know I

and the number 1. Would it be horrible to draw attention to this infraction by sending an etiquette book as a wedding gift? My husband has known the groom for several years and wants to attend the wedding. What do you think?—A.B., Arlington, Virginia

We would be far more gracious. Ideally they should invite couples, but maybe they hit a limit. You don't know her and the groom is not a mutual friend, so why take it personally?

Who invented belly dancing? I find it incredibly stimulating.—M.C., San Francisco, California

Hard to say. It's an ancient art that, according to the International Academy of Middle Eastern Dance, was not performed in the U.S. until the late 19th century and not popular here until a Turkish dancer stole the show in a 1954 Broadway production. The most entertaining hypothesis we could find about its origins comes from the anthropologist Desmond Morris, who claims in one of his many books that it began when members of harems performed pelvic thrusts on masters who had grown too fat to thrust. The women would insert their master's penis into their vaginas and "undulate and jolt their pelvises to stimulate it to climax." We don't believe a word of it, but we have a great idea for some kinky role-playing. Where can we get those little cymbals?

My wife and I were talking about having a threesome. She said she wants to feel two cocks inside her, with one a lot bigger than mine. And she wants to pick the guy. What do I say?—W.T., Paterson, New Jersey

Ouch—talk about deflating a trial balloon. We appreciate your wife's honesty, but she could have said she wanted to pick the guy and left it at that. You now have reason for suspicion if she selects a co-worker or friend—she'll have to explain how she knows so much. We suggest you explore this fantasy initially with a dildo. She can pick that out.

45

went through her phone. She says she loves me, but if she wanted to fuck him I doubt anything has changed. What should I do?—M.M., Iowa City, Iowa

Find out what's going on. It's not strange that she wanted to have sex with him, but it is strange to tell him that a year later, when she's dating someone else. Your relationship is already damaged, and you'll damage it more by revealing your betrayal, but you need to hash out whether you're wasting each other's time. Better than to find out this friend spent the night at her place when he was sober.

I read with interest the letter in November from a college student who likes to carry a polished gold cigarette case. My wife uses a 1930s sterling silver engraved case she inherited from her mother to pack her driver's license, a credit card and a little cash for parties. I can easily carry it in my pocket, and I never mind showing it off.—C.E., Lafayette, Louisiana

It beats holding her purse.

Your answer in December to a reader who asked how to prepare his car for a road trip is right on target. My wife and I have traveled for many years, and we've had some of the best times in small, overlooked towns. Meandering is the best way to understand the greatness of our country and its people. You can learn a lot about an area's unwritten history at a corner bar, especially if you buy a round.—R.R., Fort Worth, Texas

Thanks for writing. Everybody in a small town loves to tell their story to visitors, because everybody else in town has already heard it.

I started a new job, and my wife came to the office to have lunch. We were in line to pay when someone I work with but barely know said hello and asked some questions. I didn't care for the conversation and brushed him off. My wife was offended that I hadn't introduced her. I feel it's necessary to make introductions only to people who influence my life—family, friends, bosses, co-workers and the like. What is your take?—A.M., Albuquerque, New Mexico

Don't you want to show her off?

I am about to purchase an engagement ring for my girlfriend. Is there any difference between EGL and GIA certifications?—F.L., Akron, Ohio

The nonprofit Gemological Institute of America is thought to be stricter and more uniform in its judgments, so GIA gems tend to cost more. One jeweler says you should expect the rival European Gemological Laboratory to rate a diamond two color grades and one clarity grade higher than what the GIA would assign. The EGL is a franchise, with different owners at each location, so its grading can also vary by city and country. Does certification matter to your girlfriend? Probably not. She may prefer a larger EGL-certified rock. But you can ask her when you're shopping for

the ring, because of course you've discussed marriage with her. The only surprise should be when you pop the question.

My wife wants to have sex in a semi-public place. I'm in the Navy, and a public indecency charge could have lasting effects on my career. If I'm going to do this, I want to make sure I find a balance between risk and security. I've been with several women who had this fantasy. In one case, we had sex in a movie theater. What do you think the appeal is for the woman? Is it the thrill of getting caught?—M.T., Norfolk, Virginia

That's part of it. There's also the idea that you are so out of your mind with lust you can't control yourself, even on the subway or in a restaurant. Or simply that strangers are watching. Or some combo. In this situation, the compromise is a one-way mirror. Hire a limo to drive you around town.

My wife has never been good at giving head. Now, all of a sudden, she has tremendous technique. I have to wonder if she had this skill all along and was withholding from me. What gives?—A.J., Cleveland, Ohio

*You suspect a blow-job conspiracy? So do we. It's more likely your wife has been reading, listening, watching or wandering. Given the number of books with oral-sex tips (*Lip Service*, *Tickle His Pickle*, *The Ultimate Guide to Fellatio*, etc.), the preponderance of chatty girlfriends and the ease with which one can study professional cocksuckers online, we wouldn't jump to any conclusions. You could tell her how much you enjoy her newfound enthusiasm, but it's probably apparent. Does she have any complaints about your technique?*

I have noticed there are different styles of pussies. One is a slit, the other is what I call a duck bill. Is there an official term for it? The duck bill is particularly sexy.—D.P., Dallas, Texas

You're talking about the labia minora, or inner lips. They come in all shapes and sizes, all of which are normal. In part because so many women (and their lovers) don't realize this and women sometimes resort to "corrective" surgery, in 2005 a team of female scientists took careful measurements of the genitalia of 50 British women ages 18 to 50. They found incredible variation. For instance, the length of the labia minora in this small sample ranged from just under an inch to nearly four inches, and the vaginal opening from 2.5 to five inches. Make sure a woman knows how beautiful her vulva is; she may not have heard it before.

I'm almost certain I have an unattractive face. Would cheek implants make me more appealing? You folks are in the business of attraction and nearly always provide sound advice.—R.C., Little Rock, Arkansas

Nearly always? You don't need new cheekbones. You need patience. If you're judging your face by a universal standard, measuring angles and symmetry, you probably fall short. Most

people do. Specialists in "facialmetrics" say the most alluring faces are balanced, which our brains interpret as a sign of good genes. Others have concluded it's perfectly "average" faces that catch our eye—no parts too big or small. Or perhaps it's those that deviate slightly from average, still comfortable but unique. In experiments, women go for rugged features such as a square jaw, especially when they're ovulating. Other times they choose rounder, softer faces. So who knows? The point is, science can't predict with accuracy what an individual will find appealing; there are too many variables. That's why you are as likely to meet someone after an instant spark as with the long burn. Consider this in your own life: The better you get to know and like a woman, the more attractive she becomes.

How do I ask my wife if she would be interested in swinging? She has always been accommodating, so my fear is that she would agree just to please me. If she's not totally into it, I don't want to do it.—H.S., Honolulu, Hawaii

Ask if she has any interest in attending a party if you both agree not to do anything but observe. (Visit nasca.com to find a club.) Watch her body language and interactions. You know her well enough to read how she's feeling. If you have doubts, let her suggest a return visit. Once she realizes women hold all the power in the lifestyle, you may be the one accommodating her.

A girlfriend told me she vajazzled herself and her boyfriend loved it. What is she talking about?—H.D., Orlando, Florida

*She applied stick-on Swarovski crystals to create a pattern—for example, a heart shape—on her mons pubis, just above the vulva. The pattern is most easily applied using a stencil after the hair has been waxed or shaved. While promoting her book *The Day I Shot Cupid*, Jennifer Love Hewitt revealed that a girlfriend had vajazzled her and "it shined like a disco ball!" If you want to be helpful, apply an arrow pointing down.*

Why does pulling a woman's hair while entering her from behind excite her? Does the same explanation apply to spanking?—J.O., Fayetteville, Arkansas

We can't speak for women who like to have their hair firmly held during doggy style (though we'll ask the next time we have the chance), but it likely has to do with the idea that they are being "taken." Spanking doesn't have that dynamic; in that case, the woman has been naughty. Regardless, we fulfill all such requests without questions.

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. Write the Playboy Advisor, 9346 Civic Center Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90210, or send e-mail to advisor@playboy.com. For updates, follow @playboyadvisor on Twitter.



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PLAY EVERY DECADE

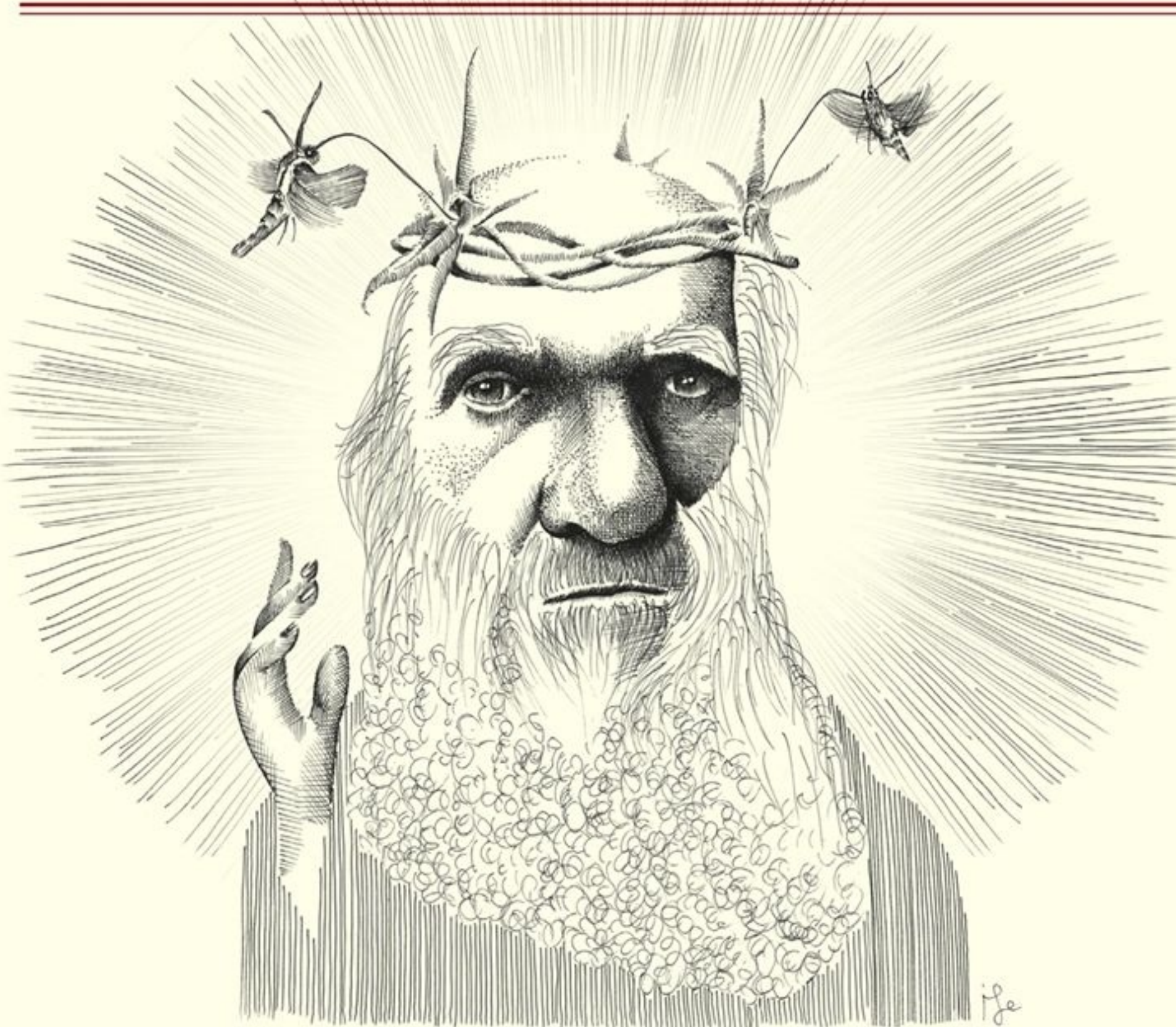


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Darwinism Atheism Scientism



ATHEISM WARS

There's little reason to think our world would be a better place if no one believed in God

BY JOHN GRAY

When in 1931 the popular historian of philosophy Will Durant sent a number of famous contemporaries a letter asking about the meaning of life, H.L. Mencken replied, "What the meaning of human life may be I don't know: I incline to suspect that it has none. All I know about it is that, to me at least, it is very amusing while it lasts.... When I die I shall be content to vanish into nothingness. No show, however good, could conceivably be good forever."

A lifelong unbeliever, Mencken mocked religion in all its forms as a vice of weak minds. Atheists such as Chris-

topher Hitchens have attacked religion as an enemy of democracy and equality and cited Mencken in support of their attacks. Yet for Mencken the modern faith in human equality was as much a delusion as any religion. He rejected religion as an insult to reason, but he never imagined human beings could be rational. Convinced of the irredeemable stupidity of the mass of humankind, he expected nothing of the species apart from the endless entertainment it gives an impartial observer of human folly.

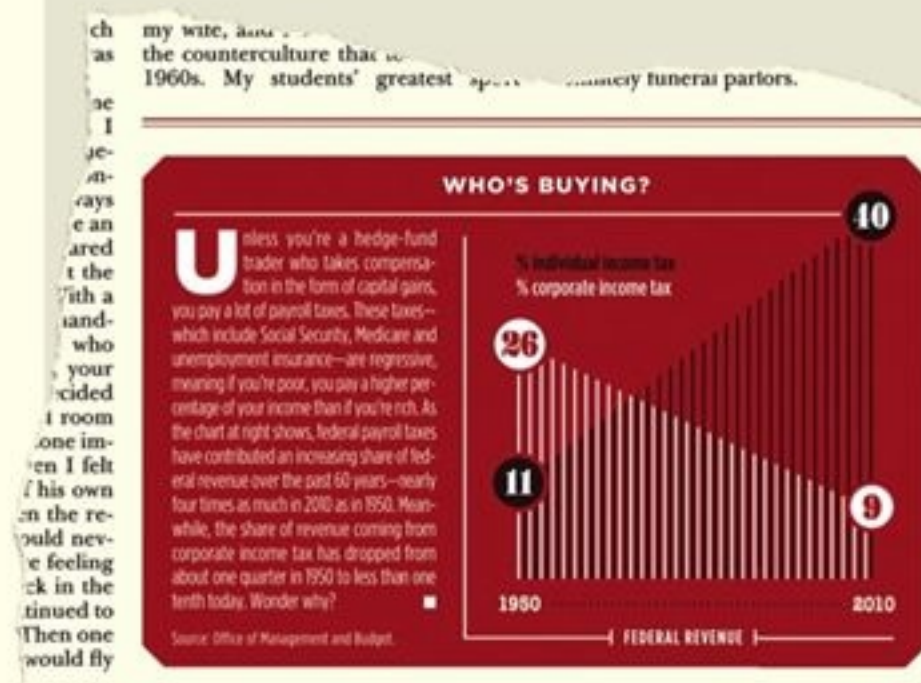
It would be hard to find any echo of Mencken's cavalier atheism among today's evangelical unbelievers. Twenty-first century irreligion comes in several

Mencken never imagined humans could be rational.

READER RESPONSE

TAXING ARGUMENTS

Your chart "Who's Buying?" (December), which compares individual and corporate income tax rates since 1950, is misleading. After noting the share of revenue from corporate taxes has dropped from 26 percent to less than 10 percent today, you ask rhetorically, "Wonder why?" Here's why: Subchapter S corporations, introduced in 1958, allow business owners to move from a combined individual-corporate tax bracket of what was effectively 96 percent to a somewhat manageable single taxation of 35 percent. This has encouraged the creation of millions of small businesses. Because S corporation owners now pay only individual taxes and



no federal corporate taxes (i.e., they're no longer subject to double taxation), the percentage of revenue collected from individuals has risen. Owners of limited-liability corporations are taxed in the same way. Playboy Enterprises is a limited partnership, which is a corporation that gives distributions to partners, so they pay individual but not corporate taxes. Your lack of an explanation paints corporations as the evil rich.

Spencer Atkins
Pelham, Alabama



READER RESPONSE

Brian Cook claims Apple is not only indifferent to the well-being of its American employees but also displays contempt by “avoiding billions in taxes each year” via domiciling a U.S. office in Nevada and incorporating in foreign countries with lower tax rates (“How Apple Rules America,” October). Cook either is misguided or lacks an understanding of the shareholder model. As Milton Friedman has written, “There is one and only one social responsibility of business—to use its resources and



engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it... engages in open and free competition, without deception or fraud.” Apple’s loyalty is not to the U.S. public but to the company’s global shareholders. To believe that a company should pay excessively high taxes out of some false sense of loyalty to a particular state or based on a nation’s “need” is naive at best. A more profitable company produces greater returns, which in turn enhances the wealth of shareholders, who will then have more cash to spend to stimulate the economy.

Mark Lazar
Sandy, Utah

Socially conscious investment funds in the U.S. and the U.K. are beginning to exclude from their portfolios companies with overly aggressive tax-reduction policies.

In the 1960s you published an article suggesting the nation’s financial burden could be eased if we taxed three entities. I

varieties, each engaged in furious controversy with the rest, but these sects have one thing in common: They are all made up of missionaries. “I like to think that most of my ideas have been sound ones,” Mencken wrote in his reply to Durant, “but I really don’t care. The world may take them or leave them. I have had my fun hatching them.” In contrast, atheism is nowadays essentially a project of conversion. Universal unbelief, today’s atheists are unshakably convinced, will bring about a new world of rationality and progress. There the consensus ends, however. For just as most of the world’s religions have fought over the central tenets of their faith, so these evangelists for godlessness are locked in contention as to what atheism means for ethics and politics. Now, as in the past, unbelievers are as much at war with one another as they are with believers.

At present the most influential atheists are liberal humanists. It would no more occur to Richard Dawkins that an atheist would reject liberal values of freedom and equality than that he or she would take up witchcraft. A world that had abandoned religion would be far from perfect, he would admit, but it would surely realize liberal ideals more fully than the one we live in. For Dawkins, as for most well-known unbelievers today, atheism and liberal humanism are sides of a single coin.

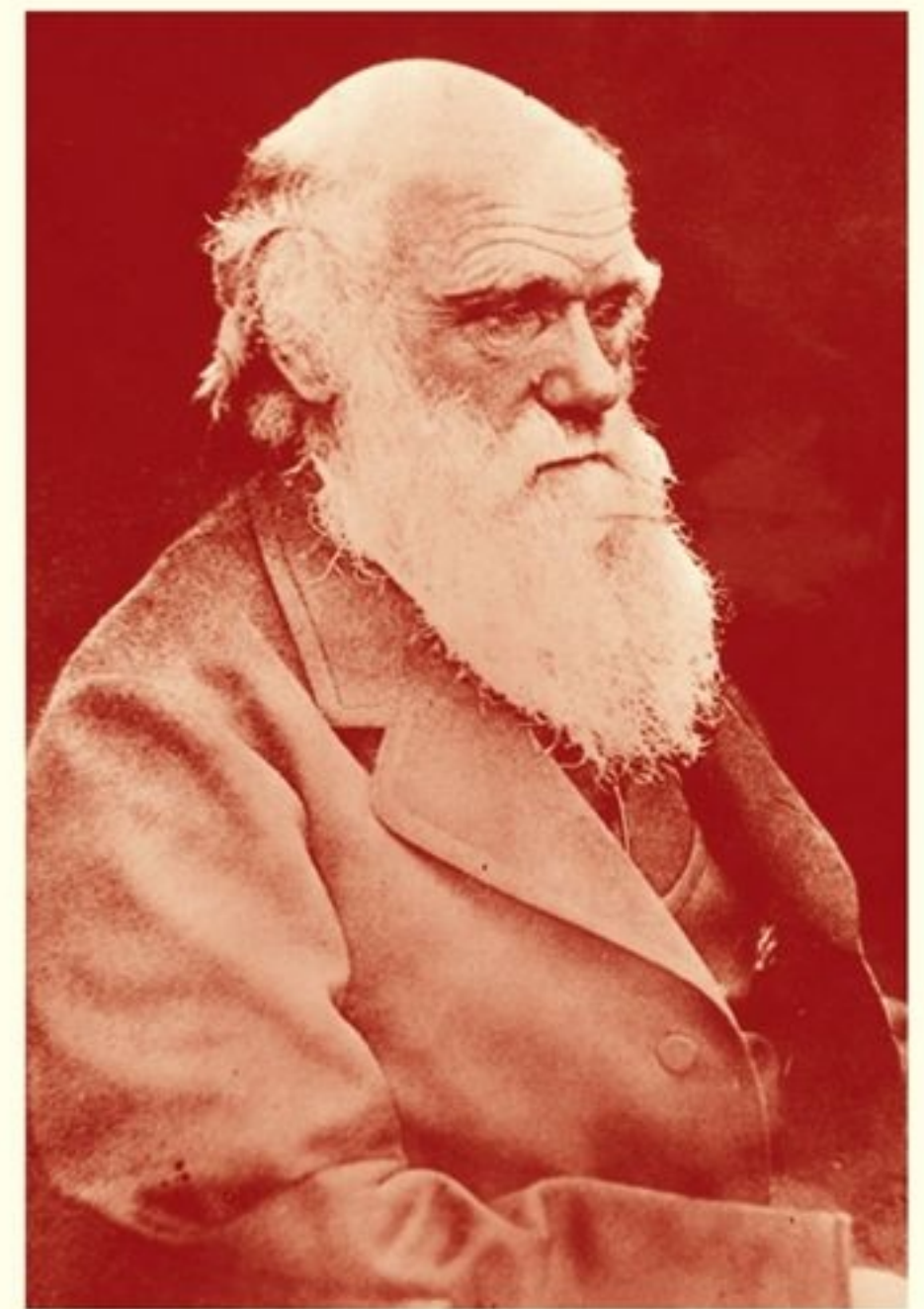
In historical terms this is an extremely parochial view. Many atheist thinkers have been critics or outright opponents of liberal values, while a campaigning form of atheism was an integral part of some of the last century’s most despotic regimes. In believing that religion could be relegated to the past, Lenin and Trotsky were unquestionably secular humanists; they were also virulently anti-liberal. An incessant war against religion has been integral to communist regimes everywhere in the world. The intellectual founder of French fascism, Charles Maurras, was a convinced atheist, but he also favored the church as a buttress of state power. Most of the leading Nazis—atheists whose worldview was shaped by a vulgarized version of Friedrich Nietzsche’s ideas and a distorted form of Darwinism—looked to a future in which Christianity and Judaism would be exterminated and replaced by a revamped version of paganism. If fascism and Nazism had triumphed in Europe, any religion that remained would have done so only as a state cult. In much of the past century, it was militant atheism and totalitarianism that were sides of the same coin.

Evangelists for godlessness are locked in contention as to what atheism means for ethics and politics.

Evangelical atheism’s links with illiberal values are not only a matter of history. Today in America, an atheist faction has joined forces with Christian fundamentalists in the Tea Party. The churchgoing habits of libertarian former congressman

Ron Paul did not stop him from professing his admiration for the rabidly atheist novelist Ayn Rand. In an improbable-looking alliance with Christian evangelicals, Rand’s disciples have promoted a fantastical vision of the free market. Happily, there is as much prospect that laissez-faire capitalism will ever come into being as there is of realizing Lenin’s hideous utopia. For the most part, the

free market invoked by Rand is a mythic version of an American past that never existed. After all, the American economy was founded on federal subsidy, protectionism and, for a time, slavery—not the free market. Even so the appeal of Rand’s ideas will persist, since, like many supposedly secular belief systems,



CHARLES DARWIN SHORTLY BEFORE HIS DEATH IN 1882; HIS THEORIES DON'T PROVIDE THE ONLY RATIONAL VIEW OF THE WORLD.

Rand’s philosophy offers the comforts of faith while insisting it is based on reason.

Atheism today is mostly a cult of science. For Dawkins and others who attack religion, science—particularly Darwin’s theory of evolution—provides the only rational view of the world. Scientific inquiry is not for these atheists simply the most reliable tool humans have invented for getting to know the world; it is a means to salvation, the only way through



BELIEVERS AND ATHEISTS AT THE REASON RALLY IN WASHINGTON, D.C.: DO ATHEISTS NEED TO BE SO INTOLERANT?

which humankind can find deliverance from immemorial evils of ignorance and unreason. There have been many variants of this kind of atheism, but in each case a type of pseudoscience was used to give intellectual legitimacy to a political program—a development rightly described as scientism. A version of evolutionary theory shaped the thinking of Ernst Haeckel, the “German Darwin.” Giving scientific authority to the idea of racial hierarchy and founding a new, anti-Christian and anti-Semitic religion of monism that attracted a significant following in German-speaking central Europe, Haeckel was one of the thinkers who formed the intellectual climate from which Nazi “scientific racism” developed. Aiming at a new world of another kind, Soviet “scientific atheism” exemplified a similar pattern of thinking. Though its adherents profess liberal values, the “new” Darwinian atheism is not much more than a recycled version of 19th century scientism.

Rand was unusual in basing her system on an ersatz brand of philosophy rather than pseudoscience, but she too recycled the ideas of an earlier time. Growing up in Russia, from which she emigrated in 1926 at the age of 20, she (like many other young Russians) was steeped in the writings of Nietzsche. In the first edition of her earliest published novel, *We the Living* (1936), the heroine—a stand-in for Rand herself—tells her Bolshevik

lover that the masses are nothing but “mud to be ground underfoot, fuel to be burned.” These and similar passages were prudently removed from later editions of the book, but there can be no doubt that they illustrate a Nietzschean strand in Rand (even if it was a crudely simplified version of Nietzsche’s thinking that she drew on). What Rand did was Americanize Nietzsche’s *Übermensch*, turning the German thinker’s fantasy into an embodiment of intransigent capitalism. In a bold exercise in syncretism, a superhuman elite became the heroic entrepreneurs of right-wing folklore. If he could have known what was to become of the myth he had created, Nietzsche—who, along with nearly all German intellectuals of the period, hated capitalism—would have turned in his grave.

Yet there is nothing new in the fusion of atheism with worship of the market. The idea of “the survival of the fittest” originates not with Darwin but with the Victorian sociologist Herbert Spencer, who used it to promote laissez-faire capitalism.

Rand’s thought has no serious intellectual content, but that has not prevented it from being taken seriously by people ignorant of the history of ideas. Famously, former chair of the Federal Reserve Alan Greenspan was a youthful devotee. In later years he strayed from the faith, but he never lost Rand’s certainty that free market capitalism is the only rational economic system. While the economy over which he presided for nearly 20 years could never have matched that dream, he seemed to have been genuinely

There is nothing new in the fusion of atheism with worship of the market.



READER RESPONSE

remember two—oil companies and churches. What was the third?

Michael Marder
Suffern, New York

Organized crime. The article was “How to Abolish the Personal Income Tax” (April 1967).

PLAYBOY ON THE PLANE

I read the letters in December from readers who had been asked on Southwest flights to put away their PLAYBOYS. I had the same experience in 2006 on a Delta flight from Atlanta to Seattle. An hour into the flight an attendant knelt beside me



in the front row and politely said, “The lady in row three is bothered by your reading material.” After a moment’s thought, I replied, “As long as the First Amendment is in force, tell her I will continue to read my magazine.” The attendant whispered, “I agree.” Soon after, I went to the lavatory and caught sight of what the woman was reading—the *National Enquirer*! I would love to see airline lawyers convince a jury that reading a magazine somehow interferes with a flight crew.

Mark Merchant
Snellville, Georgia

KEYNESIAN PUSHBACK

I thought a near-trillion-dollar giveaway—a.k.a. “stimulus package”—plus a trillion dollars a year in welfare payments that led to a trillion-dollar-a-year deficit was Keynesian economics (“We’re All Animals,” November). Deficit spending can stimulate the economy, but spending that does not create jobs is futile. Strong business is required for all these humanitarian programs to exist.

Mike Stevens
Dayton, Ohio

CUTTING THE FAT

I applaud Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s efforts to ban supersize sodas



READER RESPONSE

in New York City (“Hands Off My Big Gulp,” October). As someone who exercises and doesn’t smoke or consume soda and fast food, I don’t appreciate having my tax



dollars pay the medical bills of the physically irresponsible. To eat well can be costly, and that is where I would like to see efforts focused—on healthy food that’s affordable. Bloomberg’s proposal is a first step toward reeling in portion sizes. Now if he would just impose restrictions on the size of SUV gas tanks.

Lesley Merkle
Hudson, Massachusetts

FLEEING THE BURBS

Eric Klinenberg, in his analysis of the sprawl of the U.S. over the past 60 years (“The Suburbs Are Dead,” January/February), notes there will be a huge surplus of “large-lot” houses, which he defines as those built on a sixth of an acre or more. But the definition varies; some say a “large lot” is an acre or more, the minimum needed for a septic system. “Urban” development does not occur until you have about 12 dwellings per acre, which is when there is enough ridership to support public transit. Thus, the detached single-family home is the father of suburbia because it increases dependence on autos. Young people today may start families later, but when they do, they will want single-family homes. The suburbs will continue to grow, just slightly closer together.

Jeremiah Yeksavich
Vernon Hills, Illinois

baffled when the system came close to collapse in the financial crisis.

The meltdown helps explain the alliance of Christian evangelicals and militant atheists on the American right. The apocalyptic mood that many have observed on the Republican right expresses a crisis of faith. Whatever its flaws, the American capitalism that melted down in the crash of 2007–2009 was for these true believers—religious and secular—a model that would ultimately be adopted everywhere. Leaving the U.S. just one country among many struggling to adapt to the bursting of a global debt

opera—accurately encapsulated his outlook. It is only Hayek’s disciples who are fanatics for minimum government.

A devout Catholic, Ryan would have been even more horrified had he known Hayek’s views on religion. Much influenced by the physicist and philosopher Ernst Mach, a supporter of Haeckel’s monism who believed science to be the only source of human knowledge, Hayek viewed religion in quasi-Darwinian terms. Holding to a theory of group evolution that has more in common with Spencer than with anything Darwin proposed, Hayek speculated that there



bubble, the crisis shattered this view of the world. In the disorientation that followed, opposed ideas and beliefs came together in some curious mixes.

Republican vice presidential candidate Paul Ryan’s flirtation with Friedrich Hayek is a case in point. Unlike Rand, Hayek was a serious thinker; he produced the most compelling account of why central economic planning fails. However, when Ryan claimed to have imbibed Hayek’s ideas and handed out copies of *The Road to Serfdom* to staffers, he cannot have known what the Austrian thinker believed about the role of government. Certainly, as his polemical tract attests, Hayek was a strong critic of the postwar expansion of government. But, as his fiery writing shows, he also favored a state-funded welfare system that Ryan and his Tea Party followers would regard with horror. A product of the final years of the Habsburg Empire, Hayek, a Nobel Prize-winning economist, was no doctrinaire antistatist. Talking with Hayek at length when I knew him in the 1980s, I found that a common joke about him—that for him minimum government meant the army, the justice system and the state

might be something akin to natural selection among religions, in which those that advocated social order prevailed over the rest. Far from supposing with Dawkins that science renders religion redundant, Hayek believed science could show religion to be humanly indispensable. Whatever the merits of Hayek’s theory, it is an important insight. “Darwinian” atheists imagine that evolution and religion are bound to be at odds because they think of religion as a primitive kind of scientific theory. But if you think of it as a set of human practices, religion must itself have an evolutionary function and explanation. Recognizing this did not make Hayek any kind of believer, since rather than showing religion to be true, his account renders the idea of any divine power redundant.

Though their alignment in the Tea Party may seem anomalous, evangelical Christians and militant atheists have more in common than appears at first glance. In the context of the contemporary American right, both are versions of fundamentalism. The fundamentalist mind-set is not confined to those who obey what they regard as the divine

*“Darwinian”
atheists think
of religion as a
primitive kind
of scientific
theory.*

authority of scripture. It shows itself wherever human beings seek safety in a text or a doctrine. Fundamentalist atheism and evangelical religion are alike in offering the peace of mind that goes with freedom from thought.

In fact, atheism has little to offer anybody. Contemporary unbelief is a hollowed-out version of monotheism—a cult of human deliverance lacking the beauty and flashes of wisdom of traditional faiths. Yet defined properly, atheism is an entirely negative position. An atheist is anyone who has no use for the concepts and doctrines of theism—and there have always been people who fit that description without wanting to turn unbelief into a missionary enterprise. Atheism is one thing, secular humanism another. Some atheists, such as Mencken, reject religion with contempt while having little interest in persuading others to adopt their view of things. Others, such as the sadly little-read Spanish American philosopher and novelist George Santayana, have been notably friendly to religion, whose symbols and images they see as composing a kind of transcendent poetry—an at-

Imagining that rationalism could change human nature is the height of unreason.

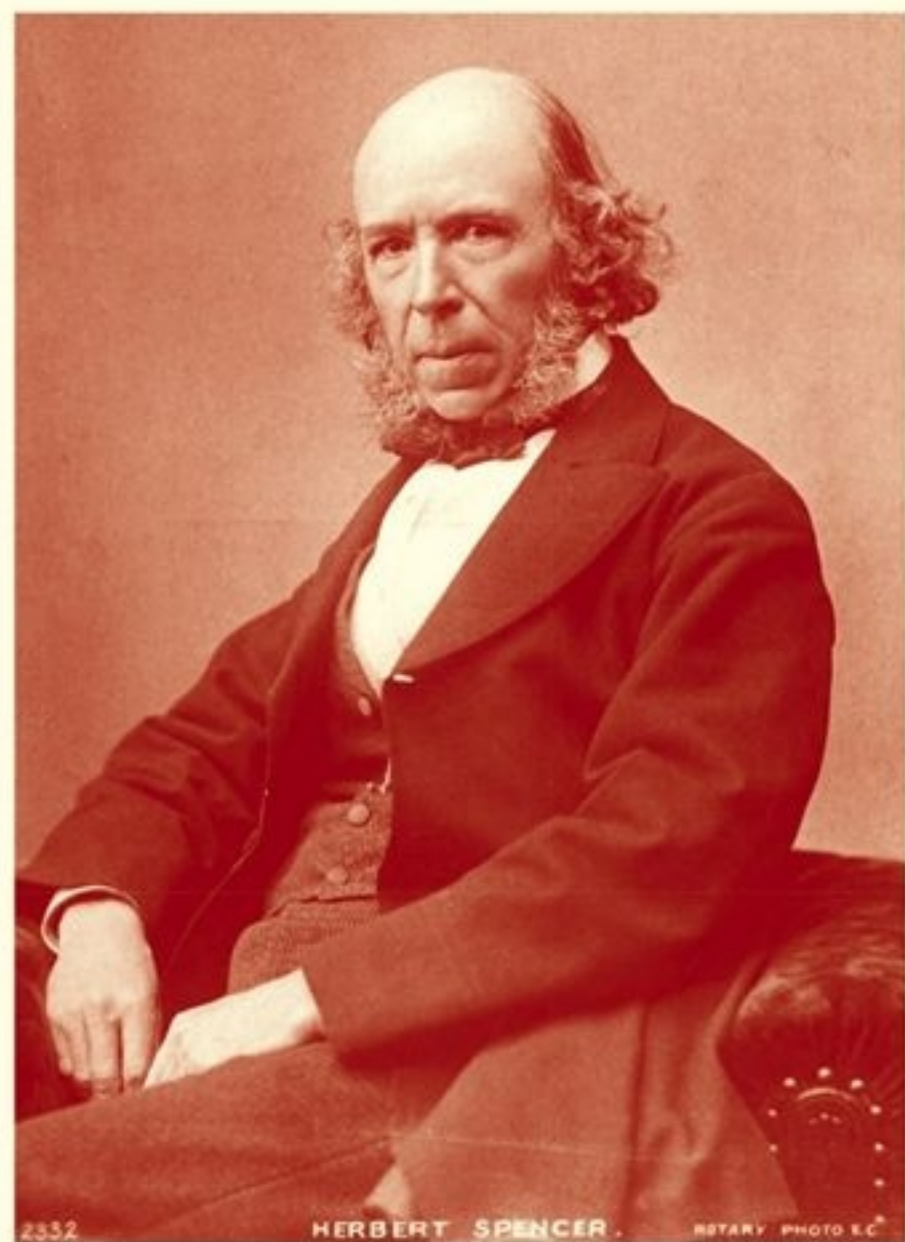
The confusion that results when this fact isn't grasped is illustrated in "Atheism Plus," a recent internet-based movement that seeks to align evangelical unbelievers with strong liberal positions on issues of sex and justice. Despite the aura of political correctness that surrounds the movement, these are mostly good causes, but they have nothing to do with atheism. Religious believers have often been homophobic, but there are gays who are believers and believers who are not gay who actively reject discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation. Again, religious believers have often been misogynistic, but the churches are divided today because significant numbers of believers reject past misogyny. It is only a willful simplicity of mind that turns these

many-sided conflicts into contests between belief and unbelief.

Fleeting ripples on the surface of events, each of the currently contending versions of proselytizing atheism has come and gone many times in the past. Even where they have gained control of government and wreaked immense destruction they have in the end left religion as strong as it has always been, as can be seen in postcommunist Russia. More than any in the past, the current generation of atheists is ignorant of history. But their lack of knowledge is the result not only of an inadequate education; like the invincible ignorance described by medieval theologians, their disregard of the past is an act of will. If they allowed themselves a sense of history, their lives would be emptied of meaning.

Unwittingly, evangelical atheists demonstrate the enduring power of faith. Imagining that a new wave of rationalism could change the nature of human beings is the height of unreason. More than the passing beliefs through which humankind seeks to escape its insignificance, it is unchanging needs—for food and water, security and power—that are the chief drivers of human conflict. In thinking that a shift of belief systems could transform the human scene, these atheists are possessed by a myth. Yet there need be nothing dispiriting in their stilted poses of righteous rationality. The pretense of reason is part of the human comedy, and for those who understand and accept this fact the spectacle will evoke a smile. The atheist wars will pass and soon be forgotten. As long as they last, however, they are absurdly amusing. ■

John Gray is professor emeritus at the London School of Economics and author of The Silence of Animals: On Progress and Other Modern Myths.



HERBERT SPENCER: HIS "SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST" PROVED CONVENIENT TO THOSE WHO WANTED A LAISSEZ-FAIRE SOCIETY.

titude that, as an atheist myself in the proper meaning of the term, I admire and share. Atheists have loved democracy and despised it; some atheists excoriate the free market, while others adore it. The fact is that nothing much follows—either historically or as a matter of logic—from rejecting theism.

 **READER RESPONSE**

While the poverty rate may have grown faster in the suburbs than in the cities, there are far fewer people in the suburbs, so the overall number of poor people there is still far smaller than in urban areas. Klinenberg uses derogatory language and analogies to describe suburbia and its vacant office parks, implying that corporations are fleeing to the cities. In fact, a lot of office space is not needed because we have become telecommuters. In addition, cities are offering corporations sweetheart deals to relocate, yet most corporations still eschew the cities. Klinenberg asserts the only salvation for the suburbs is to be incorporated. He should have simply



said he would like the wealth of the suburbs redistributed to bolster the dwindling tax base of the cities. Instead he demands that readers feel guilty about being anything other than urbanites.

Michael Morran
Tampa, Florida

Population growth is going to drive the integration of the suburbs. Soon enough, living in a "rural" community may mean living in the burbs of a megacity-center complex. I have yet to see a vision of a futuristic city that isn't littered with businesses mixed with housing. Personally, I'll take the suburbs.

Cain Sands
Concord, California

E-mail letters@playboy.com. Or write 9346 Civic Center Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90210.

A black and white photograph of a man with a beard and mustache, wearing a denim jacket, looking thoughtfully to the side. He is holding a blue-tipped electronic cigarette in his mouth. The background is dark and slightly out of focus.

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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: CLIVE DAVIS

A candid conversation with music's most successful exec about Whitney Houston's death, Janis Joplin's come-on and teaching Bruce Springsteen to dance

When the first CD was released in 1982, it wasn't named after Clive Davis, but it wouldn't be surprising if it had been. Davis is the most influential and successful record company executive in the history of the music business. It's difficult to think of a megastar or band he hasn't worked with. He discovered, nurtured, produced and/or promoted Janis Joplin, Bruce Springsteen, the Grateful Dead, Billy Joel, Simon & Garfunkel, Santana, Alicia Keys, Rod Stewart, Barry Manilow, Puff Daddy, Loggins and Messina, Pink Floyd, Kenny G, Christina Aguilera, Harry Connick Jr., Patti Smith, American Idol singers Clay Aiken and Kelly Clarkson, Foo Fighters, Dave Matthews Band, the Kinks, Luther Vandross and many others. Whitney Houston, one of the stars with whom he was closest, called him her industry father.

Davis grew up in a middle-class family in Brooklyn. His parents died when he was a teenager. Orphaned and poor, he went on to receive full scholarships to NYU and then Harvard Law School. After graduating he became an attorney at CBS, which owned Columbia Records. Before long, he was running the label. The first act he acquired for Columbia was the legendary Janis Joplin, who, after the deal was signed, famously propositioned him, "You and I are connected.... We are an intimate part of

each other's life now." And, as Davis once put it, "she used the common four-letter street term for us to get together more intimately than the signing of a contract."

Over the years, other prominent music-business executives fell by the wayside as the industry went through seismic changes—LPs, eight-track tapes, cassettes, CDs, iTunes and the internet. Piracy cut into sales, and companies merged, bought one another and, often, disappeared. Davis, however, thrived. He ran Columbia, founded Arista and J Records, partnered with Puff Daddy on Bad Boy Records, collected four Grammys and two honorary awards from the Recording Academy, was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and endowed the Clive Davis Institute of Recorded Music at NYU. Each year for almost 40 years, Davis, who has four children, has thrown a now-legendary pre-Grammy Awards party, which almost every name star has attended. This year he released his second autobiography, *The Soundtrack of My Life*. In an industry that would seem to be a young man's game, 80-year-old Davis is chief creative officer of Sony Music, which is producing new albums by Jennifer Hudson, Aretha Franklin and X Factor winner Melanie Amaro, among others. He's also working on a Broadway revival of *My Fair Lady*.

Contributing Editor **David Sheff**, who has conducted *Playboy Interviews* with musicians including John Lennon, Sting, Frank Zappa and Billy Joel, met Davis at his penthouse office in the Manhattan Sony building. Sheff reports: "At 80, Davis seems in better shape than the music business, which is struggling to reinvent itself in the era of iTunes, Spotify and profligate illegal downloading. Though he's worked with countless artists—the biggest names of our time—he clearly had a particularly close relationship with Houston. When he spoke about her, he became wistful."

PLAYBOY: By all accounts you were more than colleagues with Whitney Houston. You were friends. Where were you when you heard that she'd died?

DAVIS: I was in Los Angeles. It was before the Grammys and my annual party.

PLAYBOY: Were you blindsided?

DAVIS: It was a complete shock, shattering.

PLAYBOY: In 2009 Houston appeared on *Oprah* and admitted she had a drug problem—she was addicted to marijuana and freebase cocaine—but she'd gone through rehab and was clean. When you saw her prior to the Grammys, did you detect that she was using again?

DAVIS: I've read there was behavior that



"I've always been bothered by the image of the record executive as the gold-chain-wearing, finger-snapping, almost shady character. The real leaders of the music industry have been incredibly bright, talented minds."



"I am very clear on this. Piracy is illegal, and whatever is needed to protect our creative artists must be done. In no way is anyone entitled to someone else's creativity for free. It's not fair. It's not right."



"With fewer rock stations, how do you find the next Dylan? Where is the next Springsteen? The artists who broke in the past few years came out of the singles world—out of electronic dance music—and they don't show the artistry of a Dylan."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID ROSE

hinted there was a problem, but she was quite coherent with me that whole week. Her spirits were great. She was very much looking forward to coming to the party. There was no indication of drugs.

PLAYBOY: Were there no red flags at all?

DAVIS: As I said, she was coherent and there was no indication of drugs, but of course she did have a problem with cigarettes. We were trying to get her to stop smoking. We were working with her on that.

PLAYBOY: Cigarettes would seem to be a trivial concern for someone with a history of serious drug problems.

DAVIS: It was a serious problem because it affected her singing—the upper range of her singing. She would say, “I kicked the drug habit, but this is more difficult.” She had cut back on cigarettes, but the week she died she came to my bungalow and said, “I understand I can’t just cut back. I’ve got to stop. I promise I will.”

PLAYBOY: Earlier, when she admitted her addiction, had you been aware of the extent of her drug use?

DAVIS: I signed her in 1983 but only became aware of any problem in maybe the mid-1990s. By that time we had quite a successful collaboration going. We were very close. Many artists come with their songs, and you might steer them, help them find a producer, suggest songs, but when you’re more involved, producing the albums, supervising them, and you spend much more time on the firing line with them, it does lead to a close relationship. In spite of that, I didn’t know she was in trouble. I didn’t know how bad her problem was. It was after a Michael Jackson concert at Madison Square Garden in the late 1990s when I knew. She showed up ghastly thin. I met with her. I did what I could.

PLAYBOY: Which was?

DAVIS: She called me her industry father, and I felt like that. We talked about the drugs she was using, but that doesn’t mean she could respond to my concerns, because you can’t deal with drugs in a logical way—you can’t just talk to a person and ask them to stop. It doesn’t work that way. A person has to get an awareness of their problem.

PLAYBOY: Was she aware?

DAVIS: Not then, or maybe she didn’t want to admit it to me. They say a person has to sink to the bottom. Whether they do or not, I don’t know. But I tried to help her. I tried to work with the family to help her. She did better for a long time, at least as far as I knew.

PLAYBOY: Your annual Grammy party was scheduled to begin hours after you learned that she’d died. Did you consider canceling it?

DAVIS: It didn’t occur to me. She loved that evening. She had come to the party every year for I don’t know how long. She performed or was a guest at it. An evening devoted to music was something she loved.

PLAYBOY: Was it difficult for you to fulfill your role as host?

DAVIS: Yes. The challenge for me as MC was to muster the energy to do what I had to do. I was stunned, but I had to do it. I knew everything had changed, of course. We turned the evening into a tribute to her. And it went on. The show must go on, right? You’ve got to do what’s appropriate in her memory, and that is what we did.

PLAYBOY: Houston is one of many performers who died young, many of them because of drugs. In fact, the first act you signed, Janis Joplin, overdosed and died. Were you aware of her drug and alcohol problems?

DAVIS: No. That degree of closeness was never there with Janis. I knew she drank Jack Daniel’s, but it never dawned on me that there was a serious drug problem. I think the only artist during that era whose problem I knew about was Sly [of Sly and the Family Stone]. I knew him as an industrious, energetic guy who called me at home on weekends, and when he’d make plans to go to the studio, he wouldn’t show up. But

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I was so green when it came to drugs. I didn’t really know about them then. When people visit the head of a record company, they’re usually on their best behavior, even artists. They would keep that away from me, so I never saw that side. There was nothing in my relationship with Janis or with Sly that prepared me for the severity of her death or for his ultimate involuntary retirement.

PLAYBOY: More recently, Michael Jackson and Amy Winehouse both died because of substance abuse. Earlier there was Keith Moon, Jimi Hendrix and many others. Is there a particular kind of pressure in the music business that has led so many stars to self-destruct? Is it the fame or the scrutiny they’re under? Is it a false sense of invulnerability? Entitlement? Or are artists in general more sensitive and therefore more prone to use drugs to cope?

DAVIS: I don’t know if it’s harder for people in the music business than in any other business. I don’t know what the statistics would show. Do more people in this business struggle in life? Do they have more problems with drugs? I don’t

know. Yes, there are people who died, but there are many who live long lives and have careers that extend over their lives. People like Bruce Springsteen. There are many. I don’t think the music business has more casualties compared with film or TV. I’m reading these stories about Macaulay Culkin. There was Judy Garland, Marilyn Monroe. What about writers? There are certainly great writers who had alcohol problems—Eugene O’Neill and Tennessee Williams.

PLAYBOY: Do some stars have a harder time handling fame than others?

DAVIS: Yes, and I have seen the extra pressure that comes with fame, which can be seductive and corrupting. If fame is added to the equation, maybe it becomes difficult for some people to cope.

PLAYBOY: There are many stories about fame and rock stars—their excesses, and not only in relation to drugs. They’ve famously destroyed hotel rooms. Some insist on only red M&M’s in their dressing rooms. Have you had to deal with that kind of behavior?

DAVIS: My experience with all the hotel-room stuff is limited to what I read in the magazines. The biggest argument I had was probably with Ray Davies and his brother of the Kinks. I’m not trying to be lily-white. I just didn’t see it. Maybe I was lucky with the artists I worked with. Patti Smith would occasionally urinate onstage, though never when I was there. I don’t know exactly how she pulled it off or what it meant.

PLAYBOY: Was it sometimes hard to get artists to take the business side seriously? Rock stars are often portrayed as treating the business executives—the “suits,” as they refer to them—dismissively.

DAVIS: If you’re saying they’re disdainful of the business side, I would take issue with that. It might not have been fashionable for them to admit that business entered their thinking, but the major artists always made sure they had the best lawyers and the best business negotiators to get the best deals possible. They all did think about it. Most of the artists I’ve worked with were very astute.

PLAYBOY: It takes more than a good business sense for someone to discover artists of the caliber of the musicians with whom you’ve worked. Do you attribute your track record to an ear for hits?

DAVIS: I was unaware at first that I might have an ear for music. I never thought about it. But just trusting my instinct, I started signing. It’s common sense, knowing a hit.

PLAYBOY: How do you know a hit?

DAVIS: Part of it is hard work. I still to this day take home tapes of all the hits in every genre to listen to, because music keeps changing. Many of my peers, and many artists, will deliver songs that could have been a hit five or 10 years ago, but they’re not at all aware that music has changed. So a lot of it is preparation. It’s hard work. I study what people

are listening to. I've always listened to every hit in the Top 40—to every record that makes the chart, whether it's a hit or not. I don't mean the top 10 hits of the Top 40. I always listen to the new entries and R&B, hip-hop and rock so I keep my ears current.

PLAYBOY: But listening to a lot of music isn't enough. If it were, there would be countless successes in your business, when in fact there are few.

DAVIS: I didn't necessarily have an ear, but I think I developed one. Whether there was a natural ear that was triggered, I don't know the answer to that. But when you see a Joplin or a Springsteen, you know. And the statistics start mounting and give you confidence. You think, My God, yeah, I did say yes to Santana.

PLAYBOY: Did you listen to music when you were growing up?

DAVIS: I didn't collect records, but I listened to the radio. I always listened to [1940s and 1950s DJ] Martin Block. I would listen, but I was not an avid music fan to the point that there was any sign music was going to become the passion of my life. It was not a calling I knew existed within me. It was something I discovered later.

PLAYBOY: Did you become a fan of any particular artist?

DAVIS: Sinatra was one. At first he just seemed like a pop craze—women screaming and the teenyboppers and bobby-soxers—but it became clear that he was unique. He combined pop music and jazz. He crossed every barrier. Beyond him, my background was much more in the theatrical tradition. I was bowled over when I saw *Oklahoma!* and *Carousel*. My respect for songwriting came from the tradition of Rodgers and Hammerstein, Rodgers and Hart, and Cole Porter. I think America's greatest contribution to music has been, alongside jazz, the great American songwriters in the theatrical tradition.

PLAYBOY: When did you first begin to think about signing musicians?

DAVIS: I had finished my freshman year of college and lost both parents within 10 months of each other. I had a support group with a sister and an aunt with whom I was close, but that was a tough time. I was in a Jewish family and grew up in the public school system of New York, and there was a work ethic that I was left with that said the way you rise above your station is to become either a doctor or a lawyer. I never loved science, but I did love politics and government, so I became an attorney. By some accident, the company I worked for owned a record company. Soon I was running it. That's when I went to the Monterey Pop Festival. It was the 1960s and the time of Haight-Ashbury, but I had no idea what awaited me. I thought the Monterey Pop Festival was a social event where I would see Simon & Garfunkel and the Mamas

and the Papas and be with my friend [the producer] Lou Adler. My life changed there. I sensed a total social, cultural, musical revolution, and my peers in the music business had no idea. They didn't see it; they just were not there. That's probably the epiphany that changed my life. Janis Joplin was performing there, and I went on to sign her.

PLAYBOY: There's a legendary story that Janis Joplin propositioned you. What happened?

DAVIS: She volunteered. Let's just say that.

PLAYBOY: And?

DAVIS: I declined. But in spite of that, I knew she was brilliant. When she sang you just felt something. It's hard to describe it when you hear it, but you know. It happened with Whitney, Patti Smith. There are the clichés—yes, you feel a tingle in your spine.

PLAYBOY: Did you feel it when you first heard Bruce Springsteen?

DAVIS: The Bruce Springsteen we know now isn't the one I saw that first time. I was impressed by his lyrics but not by him as a performer. I never knew Springsteen would develop into a rock-

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and-roll performer second to none. He started out as a folksinger standing quietly onstage, singing his songs.

In 1971, when Bill Graham closed the Fillmore East and Fillmore West, journalists were saying, "Is this the death of rock and roll?" Of course it wasn't. In 1973 I decided to take over the Ahmanson Theater in Los Angeles for seven consecutive nights. Every night I put on shows that paired artists, mixing and matching classical, rock, pop and jazz. I put on Miles Davis, Mahavishnu Orchestra, New Riders of the Purple Sage, Bruce Springsteen, Johnny Mathis, Loudon Wainwright. I did it to show the vitality and variation of rock. Three acts each night. It became clear the music was not dead.

For one of these shows, Bruce performed. His career had just begun. He gets on the stage with his guitar and just stands there. He plays and sings his songs and does nothing else. Emboldened by the confidence I was gaining from my signings, afterward I said to him, "Bruce, when you're onstage like that you can't just stand there. You've

got to move." He was listening, but I didn't think he was really absorbing what I was saying. Two years later, still before he had broken big, he was playing the Bottom Line in New York. It had maybe 500 seats. I'd started Arista Records by then. I'd signed Bruce when I was still at Columbia, so I wasn't working with him at the time, but his manager, Jon Landau, said, "You've got to come. Bruce very badly wants you to come."

I went down to the Bottom Line and was astonished. This was not the Bruce Springsteen I had signed. He was not sitting quietly on the stage. He was not walking around the stage. He was jumping on tables, literally jumping off the stage. After the concert I went backstage, and he looked up and said, "Did I move around enough for you?" He became a great performer, one of the best. But that's not why I had signed him. I signed him for his lyrics.

PLAYBOY: How do you sell an artist to the public based on his lyrics?

DAVIS: I went on closed-circuit TV to speak to all the Columbia branches. The employees were in their offices, and I read every lyric to every song on the album. I said, "This is not another Bob Dylan." There were too many of those. If you ask me who American music's poet laureate for these past decades has been, it would be very tough to decide whether it's Dylan or Springsteen. The two of them are in a rarefied category together, but they're very different. I was trying to show that this new artist's imagery was like nothing anyone had ever heard before. But even though I knew he was a brilliant songwriter, at that time I didn't know where he was going as a live performer.

PLAYBOY: Was there a particular Springsteen song that sold you on him as a songwriter?

DAVIS: When Bruce sent me what was to be *Greetings From Asbury Park, N.J.*, I said, "You know, the quality of what you're doing is great, and I love it, but let me just draw your attention to the fact that we need, in my opinion, one or two more songs for this to have a commercial impact." I said, "You've got to be very careful when you do those. You are capable of writing great melodies as well as lyrics, but would you consider doing one or two additional songs that might be more radio-friendly, because we're going to need them to help spread the word about you?" He took it in the right spirit. He immediately went back to the drawing board and came up with "Blinded by the Light" and "Spirit in the Night." I vividly remember listening to those two songs and being thrilled that they were being added to the album.

PLAYBOY: What artists did you have the greatest influence on as they developed?

DAVIS: Barry Manilow is one. I had just formed Arista Records when he was brought to my attention. Barry was

unknown. He'd had one album that might have sold 10,000 copies. He was mainly an arranger and a piano player for Bette Midler. My appraisal of him came when he was opening for Dionne Warwick in Central Park. He was a gifted entertainer. I could see that. A gifted showman. I signed him because I thought he was unusual in his charisma and in his delivery. My plan was that I would find songs for him to record—hit songs. What I didn't know was that the most important thing for him was songwriting. Since he considered himself a songwriter, he didn't necessarily want to hear "You write good songs, but they aren't hits, and you need hits—a continuity of hits."

PLAYBOY: How did you convince him to record songs he hadn't written?

DAVIS: He was resistant, but I was head of this brand-new company, and he had the insecurity of not knowing whether his contract would be picked up. And so he agreed.

PLAYBOY: Who else besides Manilow did you choose songs for?

DAVIS: I found so many songs that Barry couldn't use them all. I thought, I've got to look for a female singer. I found Melissa Manchester. I gave her hit songs, but like Barry she also considered herself a songwriter. Her resistance to my advice led to her separating from Arista. Next I signed Dionne Warwick. That led to Aretha, and Aretha led to Whitney.

PLAYBOY: How did you begin working with Houston?

DAVIS: I signed Whitney nine years after I'd started Arista Records. She and I formed a creative partnership. I'd find 20 songs and bring them to her and together we'd narrow them down to 12 or so that she would record. From the beginning we worked like that. When you're involved like that, you work very closely and become close—it's an intimate relationship. I would pick the producers, supervise the albums.

PLAYBOY: As trends changed—folk rock, rock, disco, hip-hop, whatever it was—did you look for specific genres of music?

DAVIS: You follow what's happening. You are constantly trying to determine what's radio-friendly.

PLAYBOY: What's the most radio-friendly music today?

DAVIS: You don't have to be a rocket scientist to know that today's Top 40 is dominated by electronic dance music.

PLAYBOY: It's followed years when hip-hop and rap emerged. What did you think when you first heard them?

DAVIS: I knew hip-hop was coming and that urban music was changing. I signed Gil Scott-Heron, who was very influential on rap. I started LaFace Records with L.A. Reid and Babyface [Kenneth Edmonds], who wrote for TLC, Usher and Outkast, which became a real hip-hop breakthrough.

PLAYBOY: You had LaFace, so why did

you next enter into a relationship with Sean Combs, forming a new rap label, Bad Boy Records?

DAVIS: His mission was really to develop the creative hip-hop revolution, and he did that. When we met, all of what he played for me was unique and special. He had Craig Mack's single "Flava in Ya Ear" that he played for me, and he had about four or five cuts from the Notorious B.I.G. He also had this vision for hip-hop to become the music of our time. I like ambition. I liked the largeness of his perspective. I was working with someone who was close to the streets, far closer than I was and closer than anything I had as part of my arsenal. Both L.A. and I knew we needed to get to the streets, and partnering with Puffy was the best way to do that.

PLAYBOY: As violence broke out between the East Coast label Bad Boy Records and the West Coast-based Death Row Records, were you ever threatened? There were casualties on both sides, including Tupac Shakur and Notorious B.I.G.

DAVIS: The tragedy of the killings and the violence were horrifying. But I

I never spent any time in the technological world. I've concentrated only on the music. The format didn't matter. You can't fight change, nor should you. You embrace it.

never had a bodyguard. Looking back, it shocks me that I was not aware of any lurking danger.

PLAYBOY: Whether at Columbia, Arista, J Records—another label you created—and then Sony, though you kept on top of new music, you continued to work with older stars such as Aretha Franklin, Rod Stewart and Barry Manilow. Was it for nostalgia's sake?

DAVIS: Aretha is a national treasure and has the greatest voice in the world. Some talents transcend a given moment. Why shouldn't Aretha continue on the radio? Radio was not hospitable to a song like "Respect," but I was able to extend her many, many years, and we're now working on an album. You find a way to do something different with them to make them relevant. It happened with Rod Stewart and Santana too.

PLAYBOY: You've managed to keep some older artists relevant but not necessarily the older technology. When you started out, music was on vinyl. Vinyl is making a minor retro comeback, but it was essentially pushed aside by eight-track tapes, cassette tapes, CDs and then

digital music. How do you stay ahead of these evolving technologies, and how do you know which ones to bet on?

DAVIS: I never spent any time in the technological world. I've concentrated only on the music. The demand had to be there for your music. The format didn't matter.

PLAYBOY: When Apple launched iTunes, some record companies wouldn't sign on at first. It was years before the Beatles allowed their music to be sold on iTunes. Were you resistant when it launched?

DAVIS: No, because you can't fight change, nor should you. You embrace it.

PLAYBOY: How concerned are you about illegal downloading of records? The industry has fought pirating since it went after and eventually shut down Napster, yet people download billions of dollars worth of music a year.

DAVIS: It's damaging. There's a public perception that you should get music for free. That perception is tremendously threatening. I just read that even with the availability of iTunes, more music than ever is pirated. *The New York Times* said there's more piracy through file-sharing networks than what is sold legitimately. That is scary, a major concern.

PLAYBOY: Is it stoppable?

DAVIS: We've made progress. In 2011 we ended up selling more digital, CDs and records combined than we had the previous year. Last year it was level. One hopes the decline is over and that we're now overcoming it.

PLAYBOY: Should kids be arrested if they pirate music?

DAVIS: I am very clear on this. Piracy is illegal, and whatever is needed to protect our creative artists must be done. In no way is anyone entitled to someone else's creativity for free. It's like going to the theater and feeling you should be able to see *A Streetcar Named Desire* for nothing. We must all protect our musicians. It's terrible that technology has allowed a segment of the public to feel they should get music free. It's not fair. It's not right. We have to legally enforce these laws. Are you going to accept it if a 17-year-old robs a bank? If a person is not law-abiding at 15, 16, 17—whatever age—they have to be, and should be, held accountable. Creativity must be protected, and people should not be allowed to steal music any more than they should be allowed to steal anything else.

PLAYBOY: Is the solution to shut down file-sharing sites and prosecute those who illegally download, or is it to convince kids and others that piracy is stealing and they should pay for music?

DAVIS: It requires all of that.

PLAYBOY: But if, after years of attempting to solve the problem, more music is pirated than sold, the efforts aren't working.

DAVIS: New technology may help. Some of what is changing is the way people get music, so maybe they'll be less inclined to download *(continued on page 129)*

Truly Unique

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Time travel at the speed of a 1935 Speedster?

The 1930s brought unprecedented innovation in machine-age technology and materials. Industrial designers from the auto industry translated the principles of aerodynamics and streamlining into everyday objects like radios and toasters. It was also a decade when an unequalled variety of watch cases and movements came into being. In lieu of hands to tell time, one such complication, called a jumping mechanism, utilized numerals on a disc viewed through a window. With its striking resemblance to the dashboard gauges and radio dials of the decade, the jump hour watch was indeed "in tune" with the times!

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Sean Smith lived a double life—one as an American envoy at the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya and another in a cult online fantasy world peopled by real spies, hackers and government agents, where he was known as **Vile Rat**. On September 11, 2012, when terrorists attacked the consulate, Smith's two worlds converged in one final, harrowing moment

S



Sean leaves behind a loving wife, Heather, two young children, Samantha and Nathan, and scores of grieving family, friends and colleagues. And that's just in this world. Because online, in the virtual worlds that Sean helped create, he is also being mourned by countless competitors, collaborators and gamers who shared his passion.—Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, September 14, 2012

Sean Smith lived in two worlds, but he died in one. His death came in the world where he worked. It was September 11, 2012, and Smith was inside

FOR SMITH, THIS WASN'T ABOUT DIPLOMACY ANYMORE. IT WAS A STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL.

the United States Special Mission Compound in Benghazi, Libya. A scruffy, bald 34-year-old with a warm smile and dark wit, Smith had spent the past decade as a globe-trotting operative for the U.S. Department of State, with stints in Montreal, Pretoria, Baghdad and, most recently, the Hague, where his wife and children awaited his return.

As a foreign service information management officer, Smith was the consulate's one-man geek squad, ensuring the electronics ran smoothly and securely. When he wasn't fixing modems, he



1. AN ARMED MAN INSIDE THE U.S. CONSULATE COMPOUND IN BENGHAZI, LIBYA ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2012. 2. INSIDE THE CONSULATE TWO DAYS LATER. 3. U.S. ENVOY SEAN SMITH, WHO PERISHED IN THE ATTACK. 4. SMITH'S AVATAR IN THE ONLINE WORLD EVE. 5. THE BODIES OF SMITH AND U.S. AMBASSADOR J. CHRISTOPHER STEVENS RETURN HOME. 6. A SCENE FROM INSIDE EVE, WHERE SMITH LIVED A SECOND LIFE AS A SPACE DIPLOMAT.

would help manage staff and deal with locals. But like most wartime operatives, he was prohibited from revealing any more details of his job to friends and family. When his mother, Pat, asked him what he did, he'd joke, "Mom, if I told you, I'd have to shoot you."

The State Department had been in Benghazi since April 2011 as part of its diplomatic mission in a country in the throes of civil war. Tensions and violence grew in the wake of Muammar el-Qaddafi's death in October of that year, and the U.S. took to upgrading security at the compound where the American diplomats lived. The outer wall had been extended to 12 feet high and lined with

barbed wire and razor wire. A steel gate and drop-bar traffic barriers reinforced entrances to the complex, and large concrete blocks were placed farther outside to keep cars from ramming their way in. Five armed security agents patrolled outside. Some windows were covered with grilles and doubled as escape hatches.

For Smith, who had arrived at the compound about a week before it was attacked, being in such a hostile environment was a necessary but unsettling part of his career. "He wasn't happy in those stressful situations," his friend Kristoffer Touborg recalls. "He wanted to go back to his wife and kids. He was uncomfortable. But he'd try to make light (continued on page 134)





Olivia
T. Johnson

“Would you like to go dancing, or what...?!”

2013



PHOTOGRAPHY BY TONY KELLY



Ladies and gentlemen, it is our distinct pleasure to present to you the evening's star attraction—an act so wild, so electrifying, it will surely be an experience the likes of which you shall never forget. Here they are, coming to you live one night only from our studios in Beverly Hills: the inimitable, the sensational **PLAYBOY Power Trio**. Please welcome Playmates **Britany Nola, Ciara Price and Raquel Pomplun.**





TURBO





TURBO










Props designed by Steve Halterman
Props built by Jet Sets
Makeup by Samuel Paul
for M.A.C. Cosmetics
Hair by Stephanie Hobgood for
Exclusive Artists using Guerlain
Wardrobe styling by Franck Chevalier

 *Playboy's* 2013

MUSIC GUIDE

SEX &
MUSIC
ISSUE
APRIL
2013

IT'S A
BOLD
NEW
WORLD.
HERE
ARE THE
ARTISTS,

TRENDS
AND
MORE
YOU'LL
BE
TALKING
ABOUT

By Rob Tannenbaum

▶ MAYA VIK **SHE'S GOT LEGS**

This glamorous, leggy Norwegian singer and bass player is somehow unknown in the U.S., which is odd because her best songs, including “Bummer Gun” and “On It (Kapow!),” have a funky electronic eccentricity that recalls the 1980s smashes Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis concocted for the S.O.S. Band, Alexander O’Neal and Janet Jackson. And Vik’s cover of Ready for the World’s “Oh Sheila” is so spot-on, it’s no wonder she has a Jheri curl.



▶ Vijay Iyer

KEY PLAYER

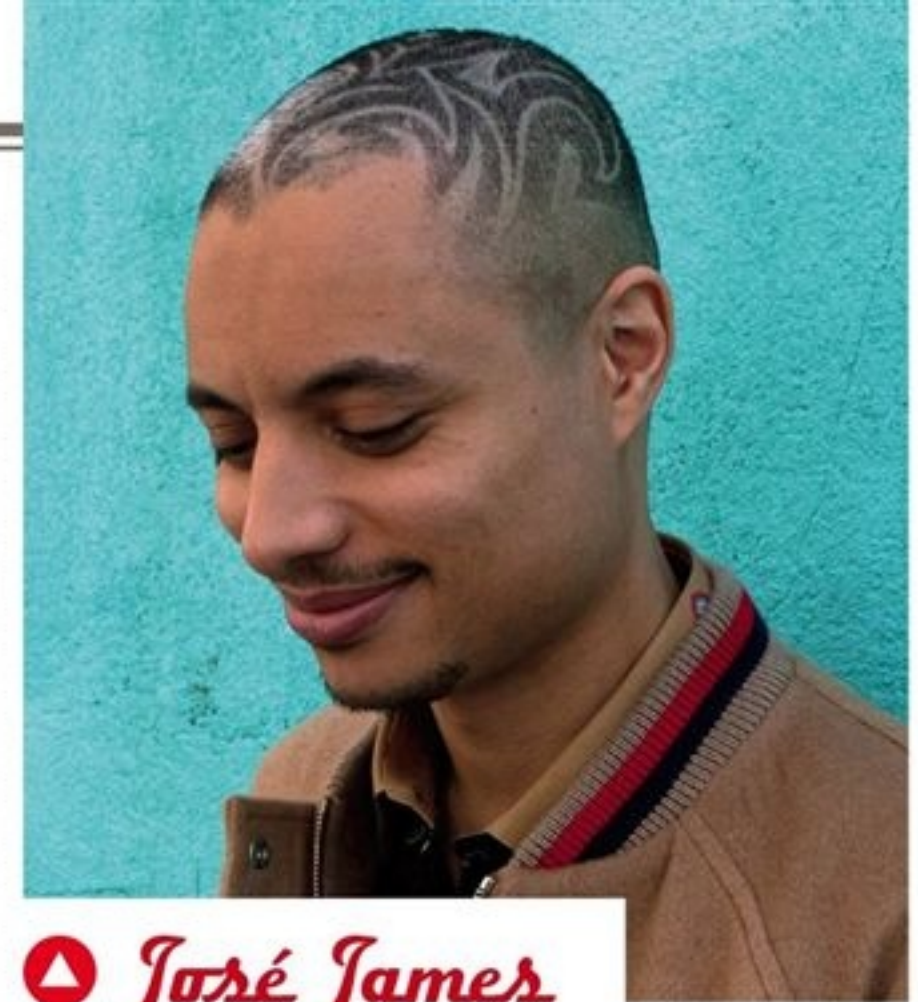
> It’s easy to admire the range of music and musicians this South Indian American pianist explores, including, on his wonderful recent album *Accelerando*, Michael Jackson and Duke Ellington. But what distinguishes him is his storming groove, which falls in rapid clusters of notes and gales of chords. Iyer plays as though he thinks his piano is a drum kit.



▶ MY BLOODY VALENTINE

GREATEST EXPECTATIONS

On the band’s Facebook page, a follower from Chicago recently likened being a My Bloody Valentine fan to rooting for the Cubs. That’s not fair: Cubs fans have been waiting since 1908, and MBV took a mere 22 years to follow up *Loveless*, a shimmering landmark of noise and overtones, a kind of *Sgt. Pepper’s* for hipsters. The new release, *m b v*, is small by comparison but still distorted and gorgeously mysterious. Another great development: The band has resumed touring, and its shows are not to be missed. The one time we saw MBV, the volume was so loud we had an auditory hallucination.



▶ José James

THE COOL REBORN

> Black music never sits still for long, so to call José James a traditionalist means he’s conversant with more than 50 years of influences, including dim-the-lights jazz, the minimalist funk of Gil Scott-Heron and the kind of soft-falling hip-hop beats used by D’Angelo and A Tribe Called Quest. It’s a rebirth of cool: On *No Beginning No End*, this son of a Panamanian sax player uses his voice like a horn, murmuring oblique lyrics about separation and desire.



▶ Caitlin Rose

COUNTRY ADJACENT

> Here’s the Nashville they don’t show you on *Nashville*. Caitlin Rose is the daughter of a successful country songwriter, but at the age of 16 she preferred the Ramones. Now 25, she writes graceful, tender songs at the outskirts of the country tradition—Patsy Cline never sang “Let’s move this fucking jet.” But it’s not the cursing (or the banjo and slide guitars) that elevates her second album, *The Stand-In*; it’s how Rose finds sensational new ways to describe loneliness and regret.



Any Major Dude With Half a Heart

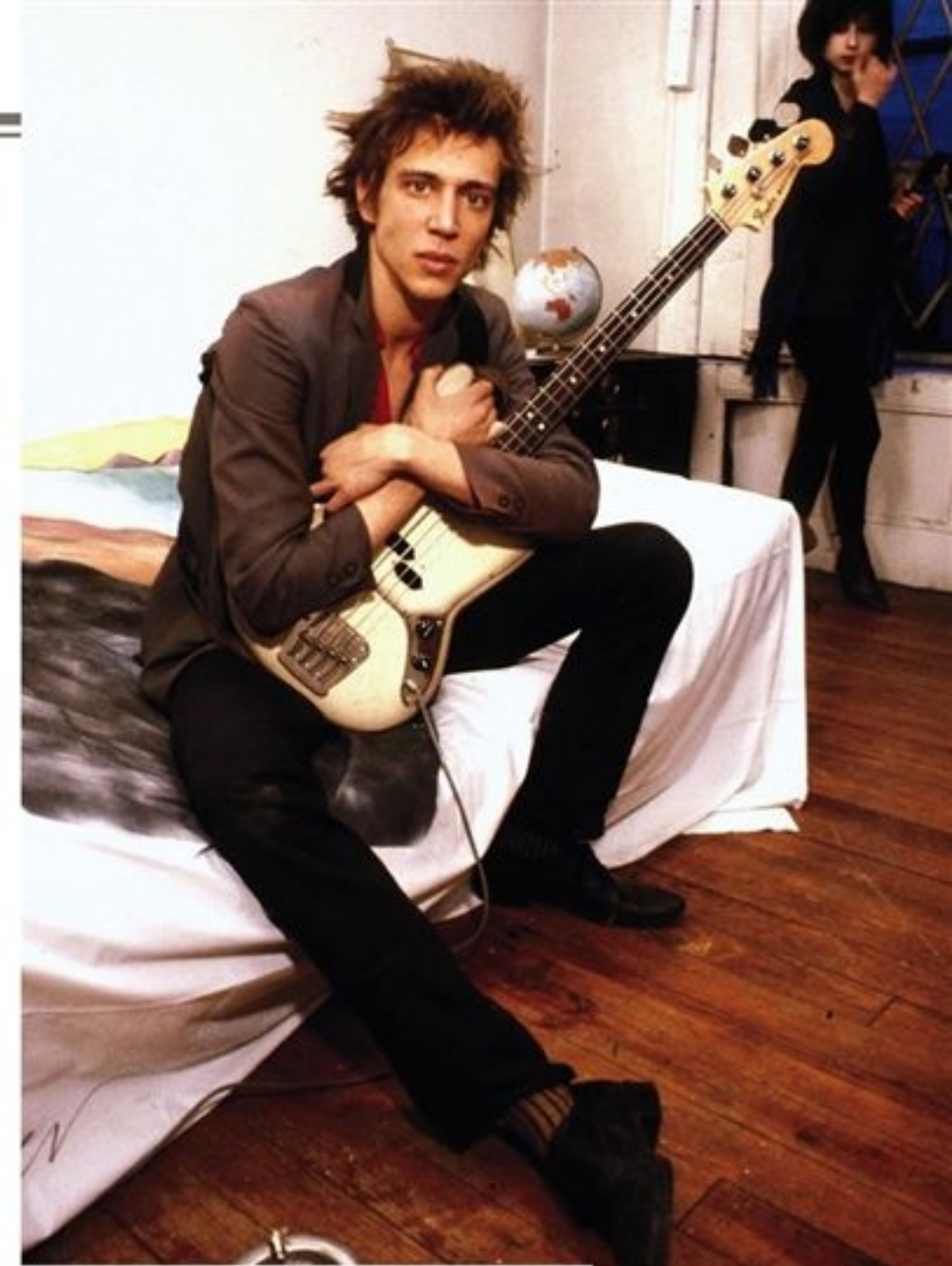
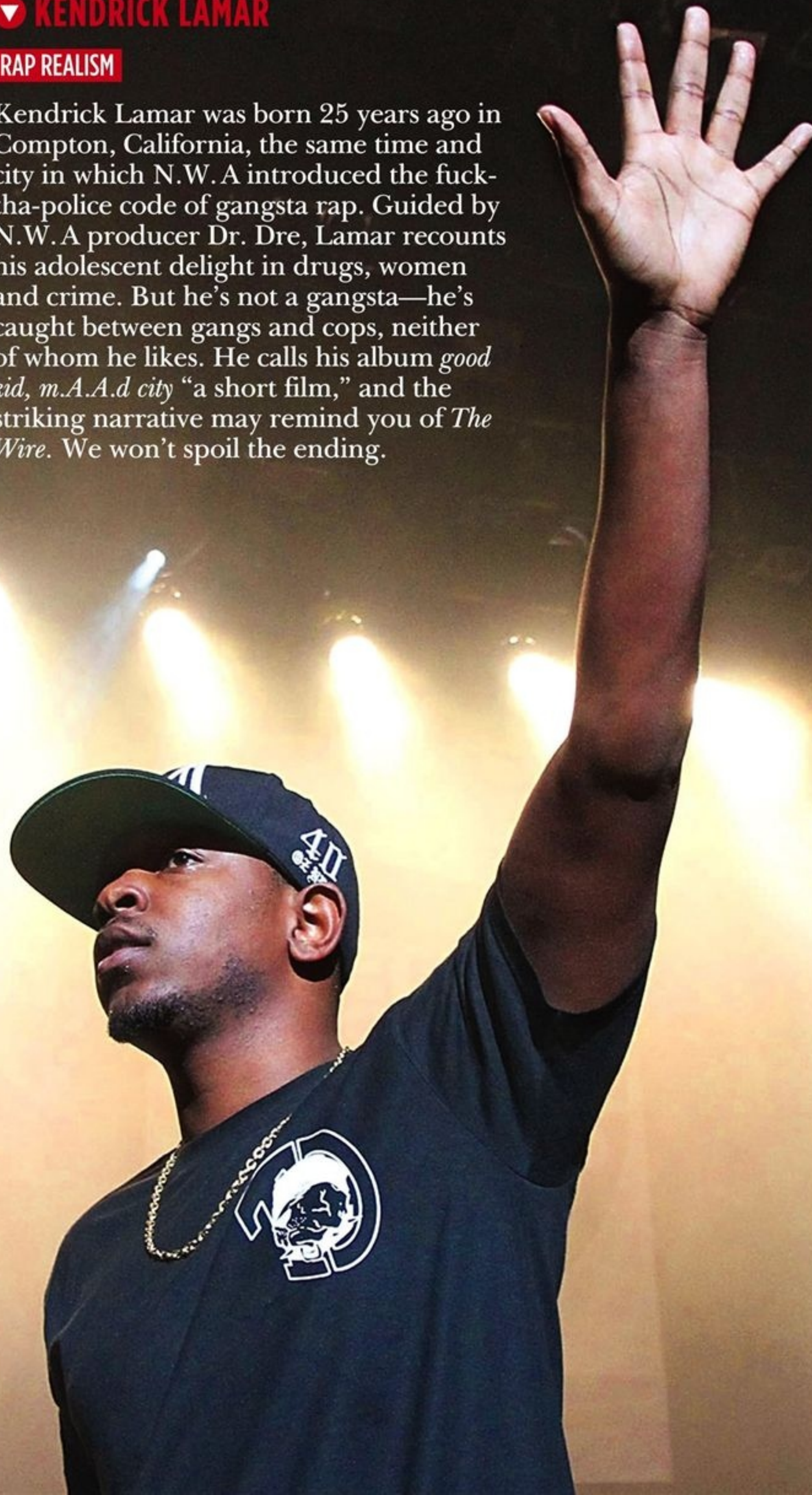
STREAM OF DREAMS

> All blogs have strong opinions, but few have the expertise and imagination of Any Major Dude With Half a Heart. A champion of the championless, the Dude puts together thematic MP3 playlists. The best posts at HalfheartedDude.com are the R&B compilations from the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, which resurrect great songs that should never have been forgotten.

KENDRICK LAMAR

RAP REALISM

Kendrick Lamar was born 25 years ago in Compton, California, the same time and city in which N.W.A introduced the fuck-tha-police code of gangsta rap. Guided by N.W.A producer Dr. Dre, Lamar recounts his adolescent delight in drugs, women and crime. But he's not a gangsta—he's caught between gangs and cops, neither of whom he likes. He calls his album *good kid, m.A.A.d city* "a short film," and the striking narrative may remind you of *The Wire*. We won't spoil the ending.



Richard Hell

PAPER TIGER

> Richard Hell (no, it's not his real name) was a founding member of three momentous mid-1970s New York bands: Television, the Heartbreakers, and Richard Hell and the Voidoids. His memoir *I Dreamed I Was a Very Clean Tramp* fearlessly recounts the social, musical and narcotic history of downtown culture and punk rock: poverty, ennui, safety pins, foreign films, misanthropes and a dead turtle Hell kept in a glass jar "as a sort of decoration or artwork."



Cloud Nothings

WHITE NOISE

> Lots of white boys in T-shirts can make a guitar ruckus, but these mangy Cleveland hair balls steer through the skids as they mix astringent guitars with bristling lyrics about postcollege frustration, harnessing mayhem to keep moving forward. Singer Dylan Baldi has said *Attack on Memory's* eight songs are "all sort of depressing," but depression is rarely this exhilarating.

▼ CHVRCHES

WE LOVE THE '80S

Eighties electro-pop hasn't sounded this great since, well, the 1980s. Amid chilly, stabbing synthesizers, Lauren Mayberry (half Natalie Portman, half Audrey Tautou) calmly coos lyrics such as "I'll be a thorn in your side till you die." With "Lies," "We Sink" and "The Mother We Share," this retro Glasgow trio became our favorite new band of 2013, as they would have been in 1983.



▲ Baroness

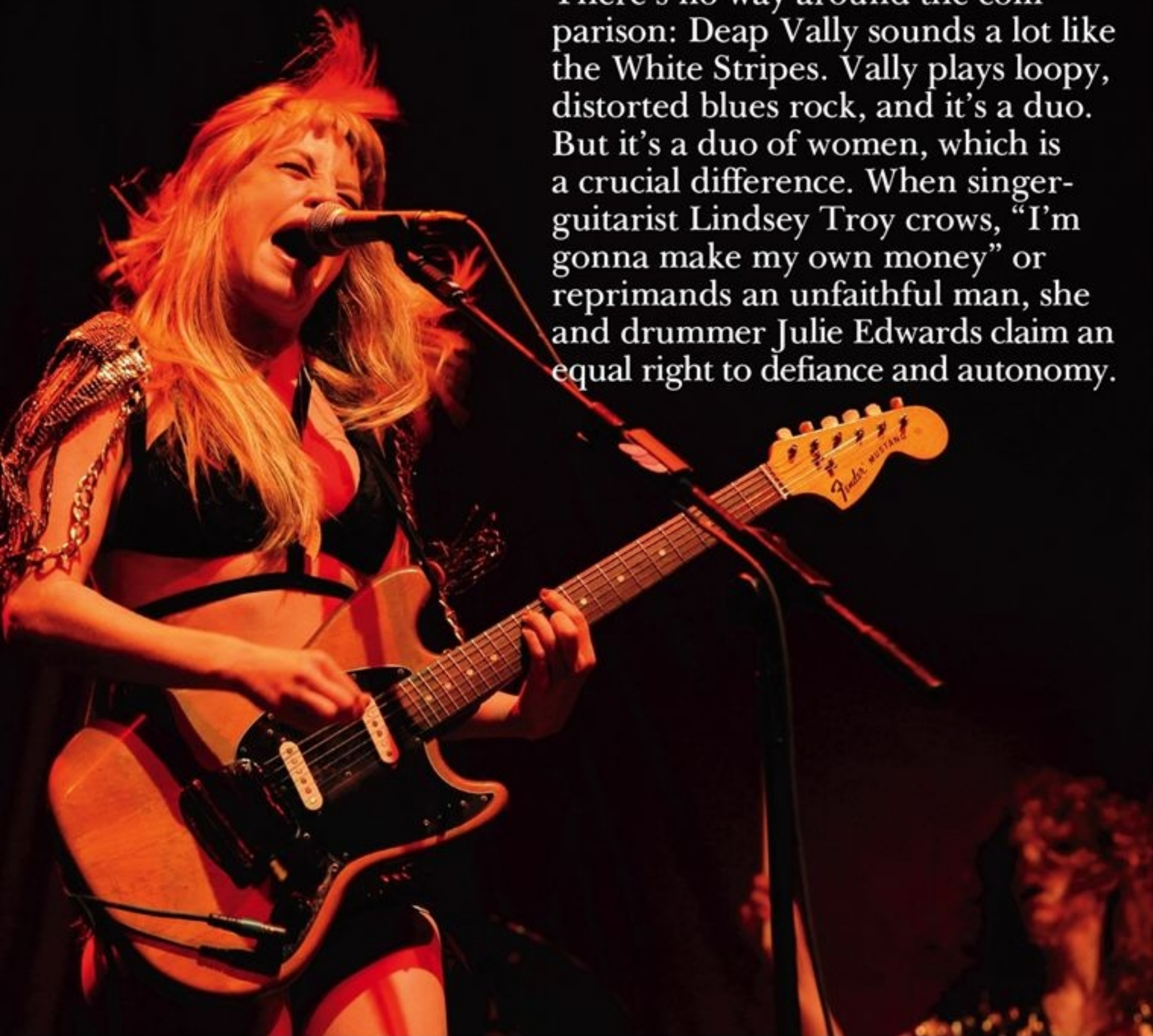
HAIR TODAY

> The traditions of AC/DC and Led Zeppelin have gone awry: It's more difficult than ever to find headbangers who don't sing about Satan's cock or howl as though they're surrounded by zombies. Baroness, a quartet out of Georgia, achieves twisted catharsis in heavy, complex ruminations that never sound ludicrous. The band has toured with Metallica, but its songs "Little Things" and "Cocainium" also show a curiosity about funk music.

▼ DEAP VALLY

WOMEN GONE WILD

There's no way around the comparison: Deap Vally sounds a lot like the White Stripes. Vally plays loopy, distorted blues rock, and it's a duo. But it's a duo of women, which is a crucial difference. When singer-guitarist Lindsey Troy crows, "I'm gonna make my own money" or reprimands an unfaithful man, she and drummer Julie Edwards claim an equal right to defiance and autonomy.



DOCUMENTARIES WORTH LISTENING TO

By incorporating interviews with musicians from Barry Manilow to punk-rock howler Lee Ving, Dave Grohl of Foo Fighters turns his documentary *Sound City* (1) into a poignant and funny recounting of the heyday of a dilapidated Van Nuys, California recording studio. It's on a par with our other favorite rock docs, which are now easy to find online or through pay-per-view: 1984's *Stop Making Sense* (2), a giddy and elegant concert film of Talking Heads' theatrical funk-rock; and 2010's *Who Is Harry Nilsson?* (3), which retraces the lovely art, grim childhood and mad-cap addictions of an American singer beloved by the Beatles.



Goat

OCCULT FOLLOWERS

> They look like they escaped from the pawnshop basement scene in *Pulp Fiction*. Masked, mysterious and often bare-chested, Goat claims a backstory that sounds like bunk: Supposedly the band lives in a commune in Korpi-lombolo, a small town in northern Sweden with an ancient history of voodoo worship. On *World Music*, Goat combines 1960s psychedelic guitars, tribal village percussion and organ drones with simple, ominous chants (“Boy, you better run to your mama now”). It’s an evil yet joyful din, like a pagan cult having an orgy under a solstice moon.



Richard Thompson

TRUE BRIT

> He has been making records since 1968 and has won a couple lifetime-achievement awards, yet 314 million Americans have never heard this sensational British rock guitarist. Thompson’s new album, *Electric*, adds plenty of ornery, braying solos to grimly funny songs about conflict and betrayal. The uninitiated could start with earlier records: *Amnesia*, *Hand of Kindness* or *Shoot Out the Lights*, about the collapse of a marriage.



Pi Recordings

THE LITTLE LABEL THAT COULD

> Launching a jazz label in the 21st century seems like an insane idea. Yet since it started in 2001, Pi Recordings has released vibrant, daring records, often dominating critics’ polls despite issuing only three to five releases a year. David Virelles, Henry Threadgill and other Pi artists all “aim for some edge that hasn’t been reached out to before,” says Yulun Wang, a former investment banker who runs the label with founder Seth Rosner.



ELLE VARNER

THE RHYTHM METHOD

R&B singers should do one song about sex for every two songs about love, and this personable NYU grad caught our ear with “Sound Proof Room,” a bouncy, commanding request for a noise-making tryst. Her debut album, *Perfectly Imperfect*, has a hint of throwback (classic-soul fans won’t be disappointed), as well as a winning sense of humor: “I can’t help being depressed/When I look down at my chest,” Varner sings amiably.



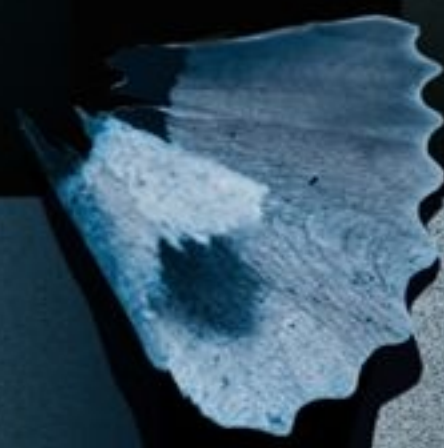
"I must say it's a pleasure showing my trophies to guests who really understand animals!"

GHOST

INTHE

MACE

HINE





SEX &
MUSIC
ISSUE

APRIL
2013

~~TRACY CURRY~~ THE D.O.C. HELPED BIRTH THE WEST COAST HIP-HOP SCENE
ALONGSIDE N.W.A AND EAZY-E. WHEN HIS CAREER WAS ~~OUT STAGE~~
DERAILED BY A TRAGIC ACCIDENT, HE ~~TURNOED~~ TRANSFORMED HIMSELF
INTO HIP-HOP'S MOST ~~RESPECTED AND~~ RESPECTED GHOSTWRITER,
POLISHING HITS FOR EVERYONE FROM DR. DRE TO SNOOP DOGG.
MEET THE ~~TROUBLED~~ GENIUS HIDDEN BEHIND THREE DECADES OF HITS

BY ALEX PAPPADEMAS / PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRENT HUMPHREYS



One of the few things you can be sure of in this world is that rapper-producer Dr. Dre is not finished with his third and possibly final solo album, *Detox*.

Dre has been working on it off and on for a decade. There are indications it may come out sometime soon—but then again, there always are. It happens over and over. Somebody from Dre's camp lets slip a speculative release date in the press, the anticipation starts up again, and then Dre sees his shadow and disappears back into the studio.

Detox has become one of those mythically unfinished records—like the third My Bloody Valentine album, which took more than 20 years to see release, or *Chinese Democracy* before Axl Rose finally deigned to crap it out into the world. The conundrum of its perpetual imminence is just something you live with as a fan of rap music. When the rising L.A. MC Schoolboy Q rapped, “Word to Dr. Dre/*Detox* is like a mix away” on his 2012 album *Habits & Contradictions*, he may as well have been stating a constant truth, a fact about the landscape: *Detox* is just a mix away. Crenshaw High School is 30 minutes from the Hollywood Hills. That mountain is 10,064 feet high.

And yet people haven't stopped caring. So last summer, when British hip-hop DJ Tim Westwood had Snoop Dogg on his BBC Radio show, he asked the question everybody asks people close to Dre, namely, “What's up with *Detox*? Is it ever coming out?” This time, though, instead of saying what Dre's associates usually say—that Dre's a genius who'll serve no wine before its time, but, man, is this record going to knock your fucking socks off when Dre's ready to let people hear it, which will be soon—Snoop said



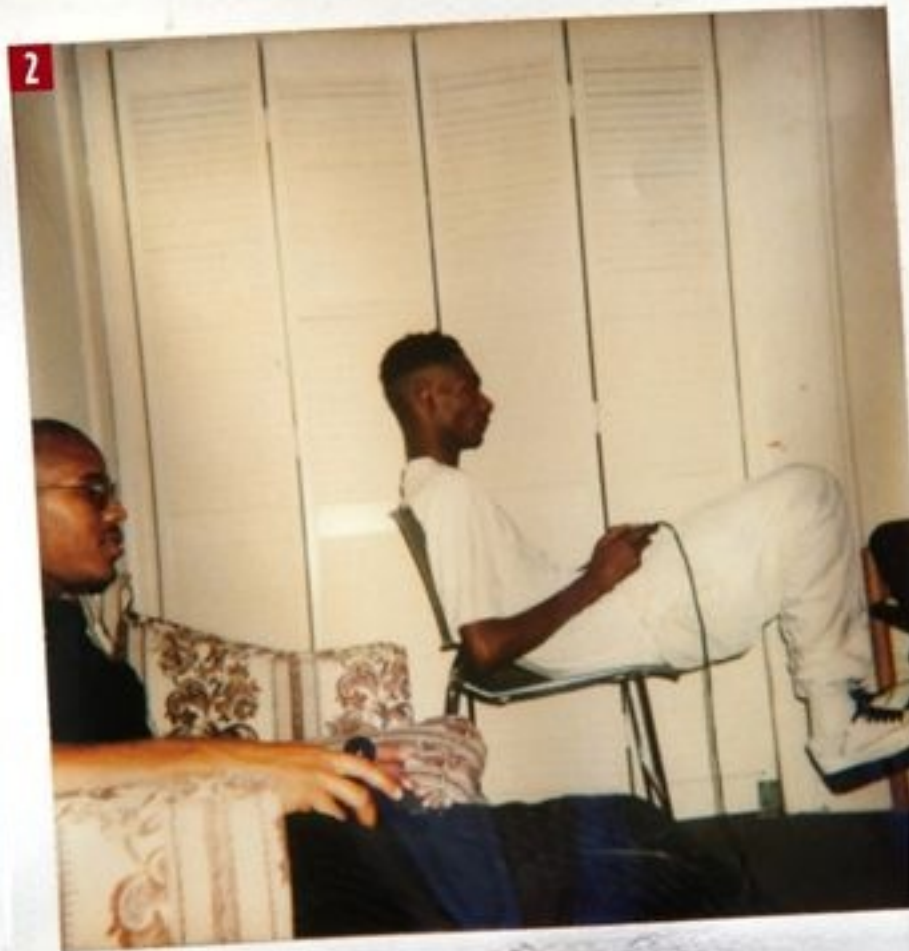
point-blank that *Detox* wouldn't get done until Dre called in two people to work on it: himself and the D.O.C.

“D.O.C. and Snoop Dogg is the backbone,” he told Westwood. “When you take them out of the equation, it's not gonna work.”

Uninformed hip-hop fans would have reason to ask, Who the hell is the D.O.C.? It's been nearly 25 years since the rapper released his astoundingly great debut album, *No One Can Do It Better*. It was produced by Dr. Dre when Dre was churning out hot product at an ironic-in-retrospect pace: In a single year Dre made the D.O.C.'s album, as well as N.W.A's *Straight Outta Compton* and N.W.A co-founder Eazy-E's solo debut, *Eazy-Duz-It*. The D.O.C. was a cocky, charismatic young rapper with a knotty, complex flow—his delivery had more bob-and-weave than your average West Coast rapper's, and he reminded people of East Coast guys like

Rakim. The kid with the golden voice, he called himself. Within three months he'd sold half a million records—until injuries to his vocal cords sustained in a car accident rendered him barely able to speak and totally unable to rap.

After that, the D.O.C. was a living ghost. He made two would-be comeback albums, but his real career existed behind the scenes. It became an open secret that he'd ghostwritten rhymes for Dre on *The Chronic* and 1999's *2001* and polished lines for Snoop Dogg's *Doggystyle*. The D.O.C. was a fixer, a problem solver, a hip-hop Winston Wolf. Once a breakout star, he now existed in hip-hop as a legend in the background of other people's rhymes. Dre shouted him out (“Like my nigga D.O.C., no one can do it better”) at the end of “Nuthin' but a G Thang,” the first single from *The Chronic*. More than 10 years later, so did Brooklyn-born Jay-Z on “Public Service Announcement”—“HOV,



SNOOP. EAST WOOD

“THE WHOLE WEST COAST HIP-HOP MOVEMENT CHANGED DIRECTION THE NIGHT I HAD THAT ACCIDENT.” —THE D.O.C.

not D.O.C./But similar to the letters, no one can do it better.”

Tips of the hat to a rapper’s rapper. But the Westwood thing was different. The Westwood thing was Snoop calling out Dr. Dre, telling him and the world that only the D.O.C. could save *Detox*. That yes, in fact, no one can do it better.

Late one Thursday night, in the control room of a recording studio in an

office park somewhere in South Dallas, the D.O.C.—whose real name is Tracy Curry, though his Dallas friends all call him Doc—pushes the talk-back button on the mixing console and addresses the kid on the other side of the glass.

Doc is 44 now, tall with a little weight on him, hair in twists. The kid on the other side of the glass is 24-year-old Dallas rapper Chad Bailey, whose rap name, I swear, is Plaboi. He’s just finished a run-through of a new song—a midtempo

1. THE D.O.C. (BACK RIGHT) WITH N.W.A. AT A 1989 TOUR STOP IN KANSAS CITY. 2. A YOUNG SNOOP DOGG RELAXES BETWEEN WRITING SESSIONS, IN A POLAROID FROM THE D.O.C.’S PRIVATE COLLECTION. 3. THE D.O.C. (LEFT) WITH WARREN G, WHO INTRODUCED THE PRODUCERS TO SNOOP DOGG. 4. PRODUCED BY DR. DRE, THE D.O.C.’S DEBUT ALBUM, *NO ONE CAN DO IT BETTER*, SOLD HALF A MILLION COPIES WHEN IT WAS RELEASED IN 1989. 5. TWO DOCTORS: THE D.O.C. (LEFT) WITH DR. DRE.

Rick Ross-style come-kick-it-with-a-boss jam called “So Amazing”—and now Doc is giving Plaboi some notes.

“You sounded like a 17-year-old guy who’s happy to get some pussy,” Doc says. “I want you to sound like a 30-year-old guy who likes to fuck.”

He’s been doing this with rappers for years. When he started out here in Dallas, with the Fila Fresh Crew, he would write all the lyrics, then teach his partner Curtis “Fresh-K” Benjamin how to say them. He did it with Eazy-E in the early days of N.W.A., with Dr. Dre, with Snoop Dogg. It’s not that these guys, on their own, didn’t have talent, presence and persona to burn—especially Snoop, Doc says; Snoop could rap his ass off. But Doc understood song structure. He had a feel for form; he knew how to make an artist think like a craftsman.

The first few lines of “So Amazing,” which Doc wrote, are “Let me paint you this picture./I got you naked, we rollin’ out by the Bonaventure./Couple shots of Patrón, so you know it’s official.” I can’t tell you how the rest of the song goes, because Doc spends the next 45 minutes making Plaboi—who has raw talent and takes constructive criticism like a champ but has clearly never been directed like this before—do the first few bars over and over, seldom letting him get past “Patrón” before cutting him off.

“It’s a conversation,” Doc tells him. “Don’t rap it. Just conversate. When a female hears this, (continued on page 137)



Dunham

The woman behind HBO's *Girls* tells the naked truth about making viewers squirm, her troubles with men and how porn screws up sex

Q1

Playboy: On one episode of *Girls* a guy tells Hannah's hot roommate, Marnie, "I want you to know, the first time I fuck you I might scare you a little, because I'm a man and I know how to do things." No doubt many would-be lotharios have added this come-on to their repertoires—but some of us still want to know what it means.

Dunham: Someone once said something like that to me—with the immediate caveat "I, uh, learned that from my friend who works at *Vice* magazine." That made the line a lot less sexy. American men always have to go for the laugh or the excuse. A Frenchman would say that with a straight face. I think the line is meant to be a warning, in the sense of "You can't have me right now, but when you do, it will take away any sense of you being a modern woman in control."

Q2

Playboy: Last summer *The New York Review of Books* ran an essay about you that described a now-notorious sex scene in episode two between your character,

Hannah, and Adam, the guy she likes, in which his sexual routine seems inspired by a porn scene and Hannah gamely tries to play along. The writer praised the scene's edgy emotional realism, saying, "So there you go: A dose of porn, judiciously applied by an extremely intelligent director, can save cinematic sex. I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't seen it on *Girls*." What were you trying to accomplish?

Dunham: My goal is to have a sexual verisimilitude that has heretofore not been seen on television. I did it because I felt that the depictions of sex I had seen on television weren't totally fair to young women trying to wrap their brains around this stuff. I didn't do it to be provocative. I did it to be educational. Personally, I've been lucky enough not to date the Porn Guy. There have been weirdos, but not him. I think you can identify the porny guys early on, based on their behavior: They try to force you into unnatural cinematic sexual positions, or they just seem to have learned a lot of their moves from people who do sex acts for a



living. A quick check of their browser history will reveal all you need to know.

Q3

Playboy: Can men just not stop themselves from behaving badly?

Dunham: I never chalk up anything to the gender divide and say, "Well, that's just a male thing." I hate the conventional wisdom that men are supposedly complete pieces of shit and it's our job as women to put up with them. Men are just as sensitive and easily victimized as women are, but there's not as much of an infrastructure for expressing it. That drives me nuts. We're all humans and doing human stuff. We'd have a better world if everyone had someone they could pay for talk therapy.

Q4

Playboy: How much do you enjoy making viewers uncomfortable?

Dunham: It's not interesting for me to make art about things we're all okay with. I make art to explore our darker areas. When what I'm doing begins to feel old and tired and socially acceptable, maybe I'll move on to other topics. Maybe future interviewers will ask me about "the time you made an action movie" or

"the time you explored Renaissance life." But right now I feel I could say something about women forever. Each stage of being female and human brings new fodder—and there are parallels to be drawn to the male experience.

Q5

Playboy: Male writers are often criticized for how they write female roles. How careful do you have to be about writing your men, Adam, Ray, Charlie and the rest?

Dunham: Just as careful as when writing female roles. Saying that women have been written as sassy best friends or slutty girlfriends since the beginning of time so now guys deserve whatever comes to them is not an acceptable excuse—even though it's amazing to me that Hollywood persists in writing these two-dimensional female characters who don't really exist. No wonder it's hard for actresses to find *(continued on page 146)*





"For future reference, think about spelling Lana backwards."

LARRY SENSED HIS LIFE
WAS ABOUT TO CHANGE,
BUT HE HAD NO IDEA
HOW PROFOUND THAT
CHANGE WOULD BE

THE HETEROPHANT

FICTION BY JAKE ARNOTT

ILLUSTRATION BY BRAD HOLLAND



THE MAÑANA LITERARY SOCIETY. THERE WAS AN impressive group of writers at Robert and Leslyn Heinlein's house in Laurel Canyon on that fateful night when Mary-Lou and I attended. Jack Williamson, my great idol, shy and diffident in person; Leigh Brackett, one of the few women writing SF back then and a great inspiration for Mary-Lou; Cleve Cartmill, a newspaperman crippled with polio who had just started writing for *Astounding*; Anthony Boucher, who was more of a mystery writer; and L. Ron Hubbard, a prodigious jack-of-all-trades of the pulps who, it was said, could write 2,000 words an hour without revisions. Looking back, I'm liable to put aside the sense of how starstruck I was in the presence of all this talent. Me, Larry Zagorski, a 19-year-old kid (continued on page 124)









Special OF THE Dary

A lunch date with delicious Miss April

.....

Oh me, oh my!" says Jaslyn Ome, sitting in a booth at a Los Angeles diner. You're sitting across from her, and she's describing how to pronounce her last name. *OH-me, oh my.* You get it. Jaslyn is a fantastically beautiful woman; that much you know instantly. Here's what else you learn about her over lunch: She is 21 years old, a mix of East Indian, black and Caucasian. She's a wild outdoorsy type who has been modeling professionally since she was a little girl. She has set her sights on an acting career; with a face like that and a brain to back it up, you have no doubt she'll make it. Though she's from a small northern California town, she currently lives in the Playboy Bunny House in Los Angeles. She's crazy about the beach—the ocean, the sea life, the tide pools. She's also an online shopaholic. "I have a problem with ordering things from Victoria's Secret," she confesses, smiling deviously. Sure, she likes swimsuits and lingerie. But Jaslyn loves to be naked too. "I'm always walking around my house nude," she says, "and cleaning my room naked. It feels so natural." So, she explains, she had no problem showing off in front of the camera and was thrilled to become Miss April 2013. It's all come as a wonderful surprise. "It's kind of surreal," she says. "A year ago I never would have believed I would be a Playmate. It's awesome. I love it. I'm coming into my own." Oh me, oh my!

.....

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **STEPHEN WAYDA**







See more of Miss April at playboy.com.

MISS APRIL

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH







Jaslyn Dme

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

NAME: Jaslyn Ome

BUST: 32C WAIST: 25" HIPS: 35"

HEIGHT: 5'5" WEIGHT: 110

BIRTH DATE: 7/21/91 BIRTHPLACE: Hayward, CA

AMBITIONS: To have a successful modeling and acting career, create my own beauty products and be a famous Playmate!

TURN-ONS: An intelligent MAN with a great sense of humor and smile. I LOVE surfers. Catch a wave and catch my heart!

TURNOFFS: Laziness, liars and cocky pretty boys who spend more time in front of the mirror than I do.

MY NICKNAME AND HOW I GOT IT: I lived on Folsom Lake and rode stand-up Jet Skis and went boating. Every time I took off my life vest, my bikini top would be off! I earned the wonderful nickname "J Nipps." I guess J Nipps gets to live on now!

MY GUILTY PLEASURES: Reality TV. It's so awful but so addicting. I also can't buy cereal because I'll eat the whole box at once.

MY LOVE FOR THE OCEAN: We know less about the ocean than we know about space. I love its beauty, diversity and mystery.



On the set of my first commercial.



In Oregon with Angus. He's like a horse!



Pretending to have a Victoria's Secret shoot.



PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

A fourth-grader was sitting at dinner with his parents. "Pop," he said, "today one of the kids in my class called me gay."

"Well, son," his father said, "tomorrow I want you to walk up to that boy on the playground and punch him right in the nose."

"Do I have to?" the boy responded. "He's really cute."

A creepy guy approached a beautiful woman at a bar with this pickup line: "They should have a sign on my dick that says 'Warning: Choking Hazard.'"

She shot back, "Isn't that the label they put on small objects?"



Four guys had been going on an annual fishing trip for many years. Two days before the group was to leave, one of the men's wives threw the book *Fifty Shades of Grey* at him and said, "I've been reading about kinky sex, and I'd much rather you stayed home and had some naughty fun with me."

Conflicted, the man read the book, and when he came home from work on the day of the trip, he was ready for his wife.

"What are you going to do to me?" she cooed excitedly.

"Get on the bed. I am going to tie you up," he said.

"Yes! Yes!" she screamed as he secured her to the bedpost. "And now what?"

He looked her in the eyes and said, "Now I'm going fishing."

Three words that ruin a man's ego: "Is it in?"

And three words that ruin a woman's ego: "I don't know."

When a newlywed woman told her girlfriend that marriage was a pain in the ass, her girlfriend replied, "Then you must be doing it all wrong."

What's the difference between a new wife and a new dog?

After a year, the dog is still excited to see you.

A man stormed into a bar with a gun in his hand and yelled, "Who the hell has been fucking my sister?"

A voice from the back shouted in response, "You don't have enough bullets!"

What do guys and bras have in common?

They both hook up behind women's backs.

What's the difference between light and hard?

You can sleep with a light on.

A woman visited her obstetrician. "Doctor, I'm pregnant again," she said. "I really need a hearing aid."

"I thought we decided at your last visit that your seven children were more than you could handle and that you were not going to have any more," the doctor said. "Did you not hear that?"

"I did," she said. "I'm hard of hearing, but I can read lips in the light of day."

"So how will a hearing aid stop you from becoming pregnant?" he asked.

"Well, you see," she said, "at night when my husband and I turn off the lights, he asks me, 'Do you want to go to sleep or what?' And I always say, 'What?'"

Any woman who thinks the way to a man's heart is through his stomach is aiming just a little too high.



A youngster came home and told his father they'd had a spelling bee at school, but he had missed the very first word.

"What was the word?" the father asked.

"*Posse*," the boy responded.

"Hell, no wonder you can't spell it," his father remarked. "You can't even pronounce it."

Condoms don't guarantee 100 percent safe sex. A friend of ours was wearing one when he was shot by the woman's husband.

If Rob is short for Robert and you get Willy out of William, how do you get Dick from Richard?

Ask him nicely.

Send your jokes to *Playboy Party Jokes*, 9346 Civic Center Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90210, or by e-mail to jokes@playboy.com. PLAYBOY will pay \$100 to the contributors whose submissions are selected.



"So now you know what a nice girl like me is doing in a place like this."



38

The

BEST SONGS

Sex

FORGET ALL THOSE SAPPY LOVE SONGS. HERE'S THE TOP MUSIC ABOUT THE ACT ITSELF

By Rob Tannenbaum



Best Song About a Girl Rejuvenated by a Big Dick

◀ **Madonna, "Like a Virgin," 1984**

As the film *Reservoir Dogs* begins, Mr. Brown (Quentin Tarantino) announces, "Let me tell you what 'Like a Virgin' is about." The song's narrator, he says, is a hussy whose man has an enormous rod, and when the two of them copulate, "it hurts just like it did the first time. Hence, 'Like a Virgin.'" Madonna later gave Tarantino a signed CD, on which she had written, "To Quentin—It's about love, not dick."



Best Song About VD

◀ **Procol Harum, "A Souvenir of London," 1973**

Lots of musicians have sung about venereal disease, even in the operetta *Candide*, which includes two songs on the topic. In this oddly cheerful ditty, the British group describes an unlucky tourist who returns from London with the pox. The word *leaking* creates a disturbing image; the BBC banned the song.

3. Second-Best Song About VD

◀ **The Coasters, "Poison Ivy," 1959**

Did you think the song was about poison ivy? Hint: It's about a girl named Ivy. If you mess around with her, she'll "make you itch."

4. Third-Best Song About VD

◀ **Kool Moe Dee, "Go See the Doctor," 1986**

A rapper takes a girl home soon after meeting her, brags to his friends and three days later, while "drip drip dripping," howls in pain. It's both explicit and comic and ends with an endorsement of condoms.



Best Prince Song About Sex

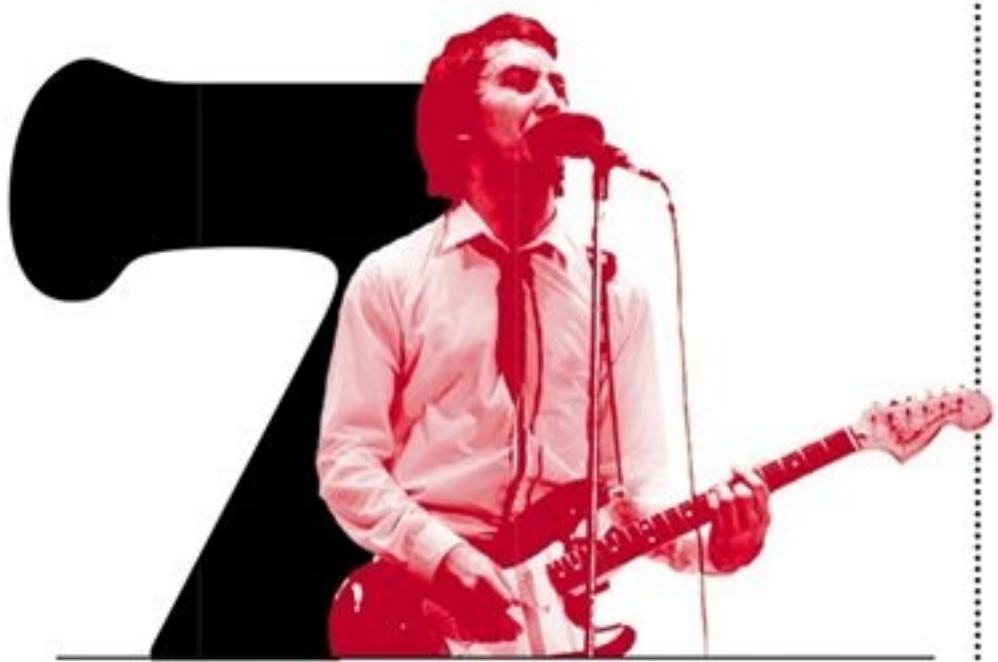
◀ Prince, "Darling Nikki," 1984

Prince has recorded dozens of great songs about sex, and it pains us not to include "Head," about staining the gown of a bride on her way to the altar. But we'll praise this *Purple Rain* track about a girl sitting "in a hotel lobby, masturbating with a magazine," because it outraged Tipper Gore and caused her to form the Parents Music Resource Center after she found her 11-year-old daughter listening to it.

6. Best Imitation of a Prince Song About Sex

◀ Ween, "L.M.L.Y.P.," 1990

The title? It stands for "Let Me Lick Your Pussy," and some of the lyrics are borrowed from Prince songs. In concert, the twisted cult act Ween often ended shows with a 30-minute version of this funk jam. It was the band's "Stairway to Heaven."



Best Pedophile Song to Get Radio Airplay

◀ The Knack, "My Sharona," 1979

How could a fantasy about statutory rape make it to number one? The great guitar riff bounces like a braless prom queen and obscures the panting pronouncement "I always get it up for the touch of the younger kind." Bluesmen have long sung about lusting for schoolgirls, but "My Sharona" is the only paean to underage sex to make it onto President George W. Bush's iPod.

Best Song About Blue Balls

◀ The Beatles, "Please Please Me," 1963

In this ecstatic tale of heavy petting and discontent, John Lennon pleads with his girl for...maybe a blow job, maybe a hand job, but release of some kind. Comically, this is the song that lit the flame of Beatlemania and set girls screaming and eager to please a Beatle, or even all four of them. (By the way, "I Saw Her Standing There" is basically about pedophilia. The Beatles: perverts?)



9. Best Song About Masturbation

◀ Buzzcocks, "Orgasm Addict," 1977



Best Song About Anal Sex

◀ Toni Basil, "Mickey," 1982

A chirpy New Wave track about a club girl pining for a vain guy who won't take her home because he's busy posing in the mirror. Horny and impatient, Basil resorts to a promise that's also a taunt: "Anyway you want to do it/I'll take it like a man." Mickey's chief interest, apparently, is not women.

11. Second-Best Song About Anal Sex

◀ Ween, "Chocolate Town," 2003

12. Third-Best Song About Anal Sex

◀ Deep Purple, "Knocking at Your Back Door," 1984

13. Best Song About Sex Between an Elderly Couple

◀ Howard Tate, "Look at Granny Run Run," 1966

14. Best Song That Brags About Premature Ejaculation

◀ Mötley Crüe, "Ten Seconds to Love," 1983

15. Best Song That Complains About Premature Ejaculation

◀ BWP, "Two Minute Brother," 1991



Best Dancehall Duet About Rough Sex

◀ Vybz Kartel featuring Spice, "Ramping Shop," 2008

Dancehall songs are way filthier than American hip-hop, if you understand the patois. Here, over a thrilling electronic beat, two Jamaican rappers bond over their massive egos: Spice brags about the tightness of her pussy, and Kartel counters, "Me cocky longer dan me Nike/Tell me wuh yuh like/Yuh waan me drive or yuh waan ride it like a bike?" Clever and oddly tender, it led Jamaica's broadcasting commission to ban songs about sex.

Best Sex Song That Doesn't Bother With Metaphor

◀ Notorious B.I.G., "Fuck You Tonight," 1997

The slow, sleazy R&B groove evokes Barry White, Hennessy and a water bed. But Biggie, the obese Brooklyn rapper, doesn't have seduction on his mind. "I'm fuckin' you tonight," he announces plainly. This song would make a great playlist with Akon's "I Wanna Fuck You," Noreaga's "I Wanna Fuck You," N.W.A's "I'd Rather Fuck You" and Beanie Man's "I'm Gonna Fuck You."



18. Best Song About Having Sex With a Hooker (and Not Liking It)

◀ Bruce Springsteen, "Reno," 2005



Best Song About Impotence

◀ Freda Payne, "Band of Gold," 1970

The narrator of this glorious R&B melodrama is an unhappy newlywed. On her wedding night she and her husband "stayed in separate rooms," and she implores him to return "and love me like you tried before." Tried? WTF? Maybe the bride had a case of vaginismus. (Look it up.) More likely the groom was incapable—Cialis didn't exist in 1970.

20. Second-Best Song About Impotence

◀ Kid Creole and the Coconuts, "Mister Softee," 1980

There's nothing subtle or mysterious about this one. It's not about an ice cream truck.

21. Third-Best Song About Impotence

◀ Elastica, "Stutter," 1993

A taunting, unsympathetic sneer from this female-fronted British quartet: "Is it something you lack/When I'm flat on my back?" Elastica's great first album added endorsements of lube ("Vaseline") and sex in and on top of automobiles ("Car Song").

22. Fourth-Best Song About Impotence

◀ Dead Kennedys, "Too Drunk to Fuck," 1981

102 Beer isn't always your friend, guys.



Best Song About Seducing a Virgin

◀ Rod Stewart, "Tonight's the Night (Gonna Be Alright)," 1976

Seduction is sleazy, and so is Rod Stewart. In this bubble-bath ballad, Stewart plies a sexual novice with booze, guilt, pressure and metaphor ("Spread your wings and let me come inside"). The gist is this: "Just let me put the tip in."



Best Song About Sex Recorded When Your Grandma Was Young

◀ Lucille Bogan, "Shave 'Em Dry," 1935

In this filthy Depression-era blues song, Bogan alternately brags about her skills ("I would fuck you, baby, honey, I would make you cry") and tells her lover he has crabs in his ass. "I got somethin' between my legs'll make a dead man come," she boasts, which likely inspired Mick Jagger's similar lyric in "Start Me Up."

Best Song About Ejaculation

◀ Sparks, "Tryouts for the Human Race," 1979



26. Best Song About Trying to Get Your Girlfriend to Have Sex With Another Woman While You Film It

◀ N.E.R.D., "Tape You," 2002



Best Song About a Blow-Up Sex Doll

◀ Roxy Music, "In Every Dream Home a Heartache," 1973

Bryan Ferry has had one of the most enviable sex lives of any musician, but in this haunted dirge he imagines an inflatable doll is "the perfect companion." He yearns to serve her, brings her to his mansion, changes her clothes every day, pledges eternal love—but like Dr. Frankenstein's monster, she betrays him. "I blew up your body/But you blew my mind," he sobs, and the track explodes into psychedelic torment. Doll and man can never mate.

28. Second-Best Song About a Blow-Up Sex Doll

◀ The Police, "Be My Girl-Sally," 1978

29



Best R. Kelly Song About Sex

◀ R. Kelly, "In the Kitchen," 2005

The single-minded Kelly recorded songs with the titles "Bump n' Grind," "Freak Dat Body" and "I Like the Crotch on You" all on the same album. ("Feelin' on Yo Booty" came later.) His R&B romps often have a streak of outrageous comedy, and his tallest tale, "In the Kitchen," isn't about Guy Fieri. Risking a grease fire, R. freaks his girl near the stove, "on the counter/By the buttered rolls." He even shouts, "Girl, I'm ready to toss your salad." Every healthy diet needs some roughage.

30. Best Song About Being a Deranged Male Prostitute

◀ Ramones, "53rd and 3rd," 1976

Best Song About the Absurdity of Sex Songs

◀ Tenacious D, "F*** Her Gently," 2001

Jack Black is a master of the amorous science, and he offers this acoustic ballad as a tutorial to lesser men: Sometimes you have to woo your girl before you penetrate her. Don't always fuck her hard, he says; occasionally

Best Song About Two Guys Having Sex

◀ Jeff Stryker, "Pop You in the Pooper," 2003

This *Adult Video News* Hall of Famer is unlikely to ever join the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, but no gay-porn star has ever recorded a funnier or franker country song about butt-boning a straight guy.

32



33



Best Song About Two Teen Girls

◀ Valeria featuring Aria, "Girl I Told Ya," 2007

Two girls have a sleepover that leads to explorations and gasping. Dad gets suspicious; the girls tell him nothing's going on. They're lying.

34.-36. Three Best Songs by Women Demanding Cunnilingus

◀ SWV, "Downtown," 1992

◀ Lil' Kim, "Not Tonight," 1996

◀ Trina, "Tongue Song," 2000

37. Best Song by a Woman Demanding Cunnilingus and Anilingus

◀ Khia, "My Neck, My Back," 2002



38

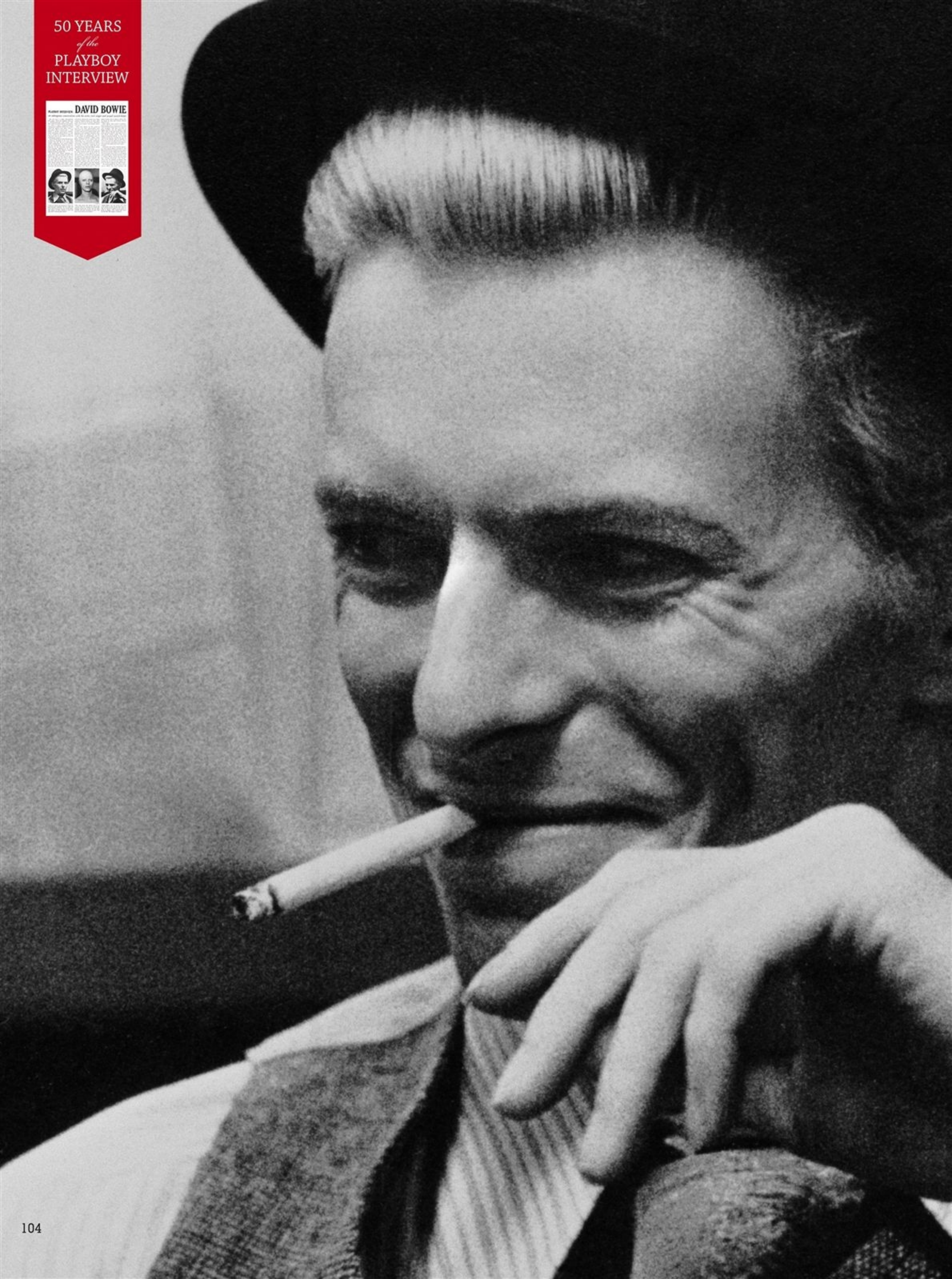



Best Song About Fucking the Police (Literally)

◀ Lil Wayne, "Mrs. Officer," 2008

Author interview **DAVID BOWIE**

By **CHRISTOPHER MOSELEY**
An intimate conversation with the actor, singer, and pop icon





David Bowie

When he wasn't redefining music and bending gender perceptions, the 29-year-old rock star was effortlessly manipulating the media

Among the most influential rock musicians in history, David Bowie has changed musical genres almost as often as he's changed his fashion—and sexuality. Bowie's greatest albums, from *Hunky Dory* to *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders From Mars*, from *Young Americans* to *Station to Station*, are indisputably some of the most important rock recordings of the past four decades. He was the diva of glam rock, inspiring everyone from the Rolling Stones to Elton John to Queen to T. Rex—but he also released soul, traditional rock-and-roll and disco hits. Lady Gaga, Madonna and Michael Jackson learned from his outrageous makeup, wardrobe and stage personae. And he kept the public guessing about his sexuality. Was he straight? Gay? Bi? All of the above?

Bowie, whose real name is David Jones, is now 66 years old and still making music—his new album, *The Next Day*, is his first in 10 years. He was 29 when he did the *Playboy Interview* with **Cameron Crowe**, the rock journalist who went on to write and direct such movies as *Jerry Maguire* and *Almost Famous*. It was 1976, a year after the star had announced that he'd given up on rock. "I've rocked my roll" is the way he put it. "It's a boring dead end. The last thing I want to be is some useless fucking rock singer." Crowe quickly learned that Bowie had lied, and in fact there was no letup in recording or touring for decades. At the time of the interview, Crowe reported: "Bowie is expertly charming, whether in the company of a stuffy film executive, another musician or a complete stranger. He is fully aware that he is a sensational quote machine. The more shocking his revelation...the wider his grin. He knows exactly what interviewers consider good copy, and he gives them precisely that. The truth is probably inconsequential."

PLAYBOY: Let's start with the one question you've always seemed to hedge: How much of your bisexuality is fact and how much is gimmick?

BOWIE: It's true—I am a bisexual. But I can't deny that I've used that fact *very* well. I suppose it's the best thing that ever happened to me. Fun too.

PLAYBOY: Why do you say it's the best thing that ever happened to you?

BOWIE: Well, for one thing, girls are always presuming that I've kept my heterosexual virginity for some reason. So I've had all these girls try to get me over to the other side again: "C'mon, David, it isn't all that bad. I'll show you." Or better yet, "We'll show you." I always play dumb.

On the other hand—I'm sure you want to know about the other hand as well—when I was 14, sex suddenly became all-important to me. It didn't really matter who or what it was with, as long as it was a sexual experience. So it was some very pretty boy in class in some school or other that I took home and neatly fucked on my bed upstairs. And that was it. My first thought was, Well, if I ever get sent to prison, I'll know how to keep happy.

PLAYBOY: Which wouldn't give much slack to your straighter cell mates.

BOWIE: I've always been very chauvinistic, even in my boy-obsessed days. But I was always a gentleman. I always treated my boys like real ladies. Always escorted them properly and, in fact, I suppose if I were a lot older—like 40 or 50—I'd be a wonderful sugar daddy to some little queen down in

(continued on page 142)

**SEX &
MUSIC**
ISSUE
APRIL
2013



DANCING

BY IRVINE WELSH



A DRUG, A BEAT
AND THOUSANDS
OF SWEATY BODIES.
**TRAINSPOTTING AUTHOR
IRVINE WELSH** LOOKS AT
AMERICA'S GROWING
ADDICTION TO ELEC-
TRONIC DANCE MUSIC

From being very much a minority taste, the beat-laden, drug-fueled behemoth of electronic dance music is now the USA's mainstream entertainment, with the repercussions of its infiltration into American culture yet to become manifest.

EDM's explosion is a fascinating phenomenon for seasoned observers of the dance-music scene. At last year's Ultra Music Festival in Miami I felt as though I were stepping back in time, reminded of Edinburgh's Rezerrection raves in the 1990s. The exception being, of course, that the seminaked people were dancing under a blistering sun rather than turning blue from exposure.

I've been attending raves (now a taboo word, replaced by the prosaic title "dance-music festivals") all over America for 20 years, mainly in the house-music stronghold of California but also everywhere from Chicago to New Orleans to New York City. At events like Ultra and Electric Daisy Carnival in Las Vegas, the crowd is, in the old British parlance, "mad for it," and for crusty veterans like myself there is something both uplifting and oddly disquieting about this. It would be nonsense to claim that the modern dance-music experience is inferior to the old-school one just because my 50-something legs and constitution mean I'm pretty much done with all-nighter-all-dayers and the chemicals that fuel them. That would be like a recently castrated eunuch arguing that they don't make orgies like

they used to. But we wanted dance music to take over the world, and now it has pretty much happened. So why all the skepticism? After all, dance music, or house or techno, lest we forget, is not strictly a European invention. It might have been redefined for mass consumption in the Old World, but it's as American as apple pie, forged in the great musical cities of Chicago, Detroit and New York. Only now it has been successfully rebranded for the American mainstream.

If you like spectacle, EDM is hard to beat, taking the traditional rave staples of eye-popping lasers, brain-frying strobes, mind-blowing lights and cyber projections to new levels. As the doyen of U.K. dance-music commentators Simon Reynolds observed in a recent *Guardian* feature: "This AV glitz-blitz costs a lot, but then artists at the Deadmau5 level earn a lot, as much as \$1 million for a festival appearance, while hardest-gigging man in EDM Skrillex is reportedly worth \$15 million. With day tickets selling at around \$125 and well over 300,000 attending over three days, the Las Vegas Electric Daisy Carnival must have grossed in the region of \$40 million. The big money is attracting even bigger money: The mogul Robert F.X. Sillerman declared his intent to spend \$1 billion acquiring companies in the EDM field, while Live Nation, America's leading concert promotions company, recently purchased outright Hard Events."

Therein lies the rub: Acts are now defined purely in terms of their commercial success; depending on which article you read you'll find Skrillex, Deadmau5 or Tiesto touted as the biggest/most lucrative/highest-earning act in EDM. The music seems to be posted missing in all of this. Was Derrick May's business portfolio ever compared with that of Frankie Knuckles?

I CRAVED THE BEATS OF HOUSE MUSIC WHILE I WAS ON ECSTASY. I GOT IT. I WAS A CONVERT. IT WAS YEAR ZERO.



1. More than 320,000 people attended last year's Electric Daisy Carnival at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway. The sold-out event drew 115,000 in a single night. 2. EDM superstar Deadmau5 commands the crowd. 3. Thirsty attendees during a Steve Aoki set at XS Nightclub in Las Vegas. 4. Partygoers at the Electric Daisy Carnival.



The new EDM artists are no longer old-school DJs responding to changes in the mood of the crowd, leading the party from the front. As a breed they are generally straight, business-oriented music producers who preprogram their sets to tie in with the mind-boggling visual and lighting systems. The comment made by Deadmau5 that today's EDM stars basically just press PLZ caused some hackles to rise, but it was an honest statement. Deadmau5 contends that the real artistry is in the recording studio, not in the performance.

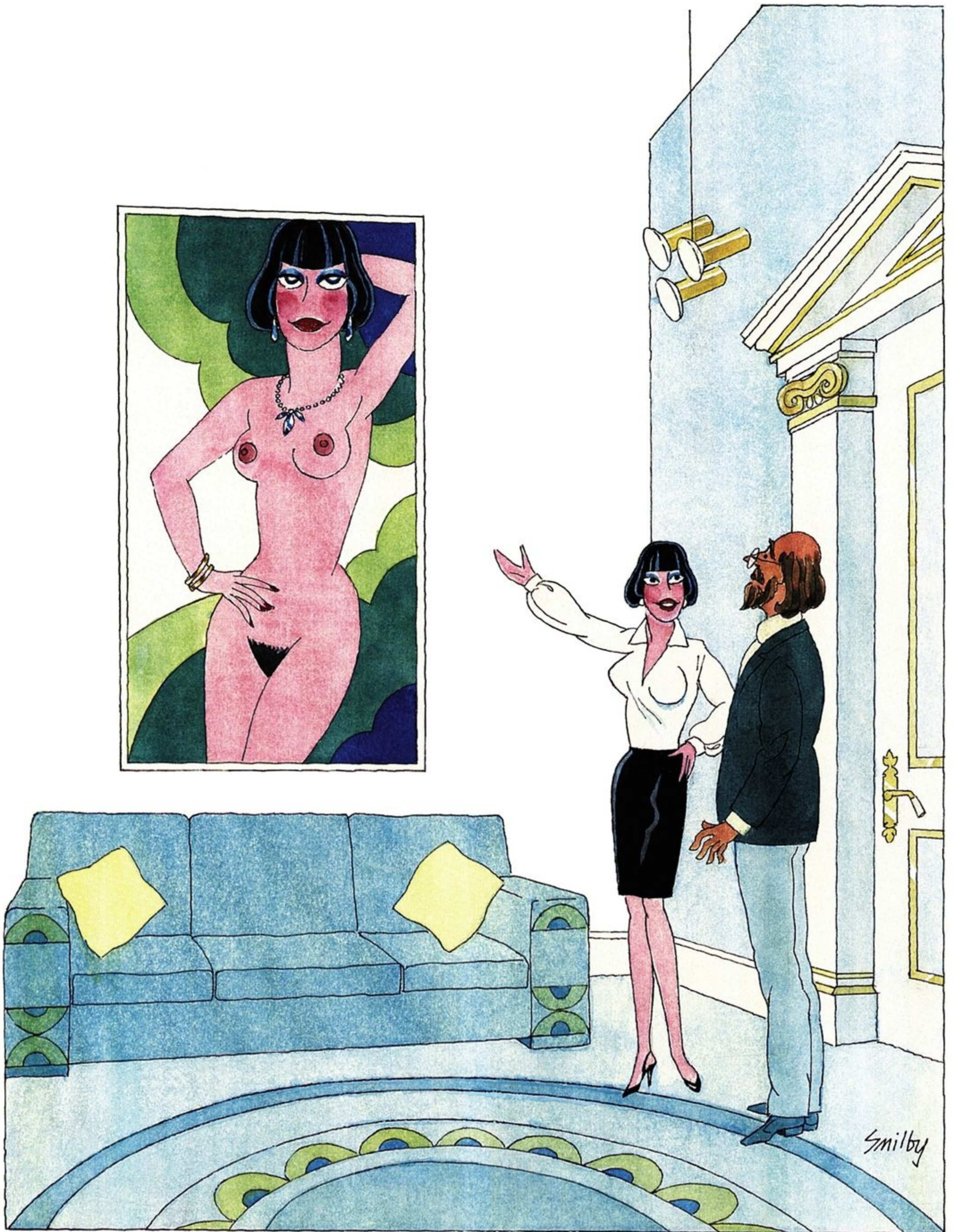
Perhaps old dogs like myself need to get real about EDM. After all, Simon Cowell's overproduced throwaways sell more than the hip young guitar bands of the day, just as a Jerry Bruckheimer production will generally have more viewers than the coolest HBO drama. It was always thus. Perhaps we just take EDM a bit too seriously. So then why does its popularity explosion fill so many old house-heads with concern? To answer this question, we need to consider where the scene started, and where it's ended up.

It's hard to think of two more divergent landscapes than the glitzy playground of Las Vegas, rising out of the desert, and

the "magic island" of Ibiza, Europe's house-music capital. I wasn't introduced to house music and ecstasy at either. That moment took place in the more prosaic surrounds of an Edinburgh city council works Christmas party. I reluctantly popped a pill, gun-shy of all drugs due to previous bad form with heroin. To my surprise, I found that I couldn't listen to Slade's "Merry Christmas Everybody." I craved the beats of house music while I was on ecstasy, just as much as I'd been ambivalent to them while on alcohol. I was delighted when my friend Susan, who had given me the pill, suggested we move on to Edinburgh's legendary Pure club. I got it. I was a convert. It was year zero.

Ibiza came later, those hedonistic summers of supreme decadence culminating in my gig deejaying to 10,000 crazed ravers in the Balearic institution that is the club night Manumission. I wasn't a great DJ, but it didn't matter. I had the tunes in my bag and everybody was mashed out of their heads on E and adrenaline, so the place went crazy. So did I. I had immersed myself in a scene that was just sheer, rapturous, euphoric enjoyment. I'd been in London as a teenager when punk was at its height and had supposed that was my zenith. It had been only the warm-up act. Yes, it also had its downside—drugs and

(continued on page 132)



"I'd like you to update this—I've had implants."



Obrigado
Brazil

THE HUMAN BODY AS ART PIECE, WITH
BOMBSHELL GABRIELA MILAGRE

There is so much beauty in this photograph, it's hard to know where to start. The inert black lava rock brings out the vibrancy of the flesh. The delicate composition uses the fabric of the bathing suit as brushstrokes to create a visual rhythm. And then there's the model herself—Gabriela Milagre, who hails from Divinópolis, Brazil (yes, a city that takes its name from the word *divine*). Austrian photographer Irene Schaur captured this image and the following ones in the wilds of Spain. But it's Brazil we must thank most of all. Gabriela is divine indeed.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY IRENE SCHAUR













P&S
AND

CIRCUMSTANCE

WITH MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION AT AN ALL-TIME HIGH, WE PRESENT OUR FIRST EVER GENTLEMAN'S GUIDE TO GANJA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JONATHAN KANTOR

WITH 25 STATES AND COUNTING either decriminalizing or legalizing marijuana for medicinal or recreational use, this is the dawning of the age of cannabis. It's a reality *PLAYBOY* anticipated some 50 years ago (in 1962 we reported on the medicinal uses of marijuana; in 1969 we published a manifesto calling for the legalization of the drug). What we couldn't predict was the boutique boom in all things bud. Today some of the best chefs in the country are cooking multicourse weed-tasting menus at secret pop-up dinners, doctors are prescribing strains of marijuana to patients with ailment-specific precision, the tacky dorm room bong has been supplanted by beautifully designed electronic vaporizers, and marijuana dispensaries that look more like gourmet food markets than old-school head shops are opening in tony neighborhoods. If you haven't partaken recently, be warned: The modern strains are extremely potent. So tread lightly, responsibly and, of course, legally. Herewith, a survey of the high end of the marijuana revolution.

THE GEAR

THE REVOLUTION WILL BE VAPORIZED

Bongs are *déclassé*. These vaporizers let you inhale smoke-free—and put the *high* in high design



MAGIC-FLIGHT LAUNCH BOX

\$119-\$149, magic-flight.com

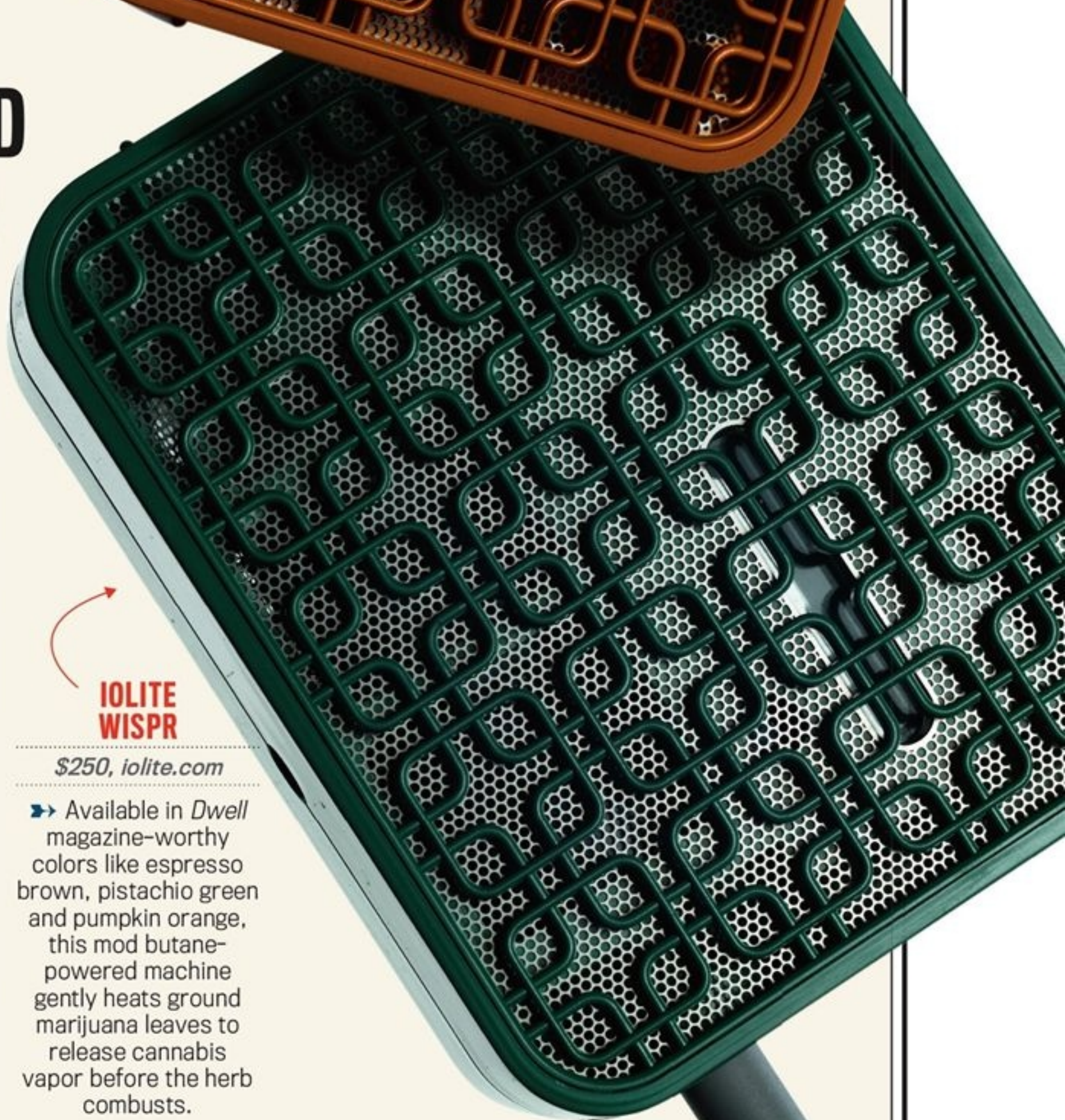
➤➤ Super portable at only two inches long, this bohemian-chic vaporizer is handmade from walnut, cherry or maple wood in, appropriately, southern California. It runs on rechargeable AA batteries and comes with a lifetime warranty.



PAX PLOOM

\$250, ploom.com

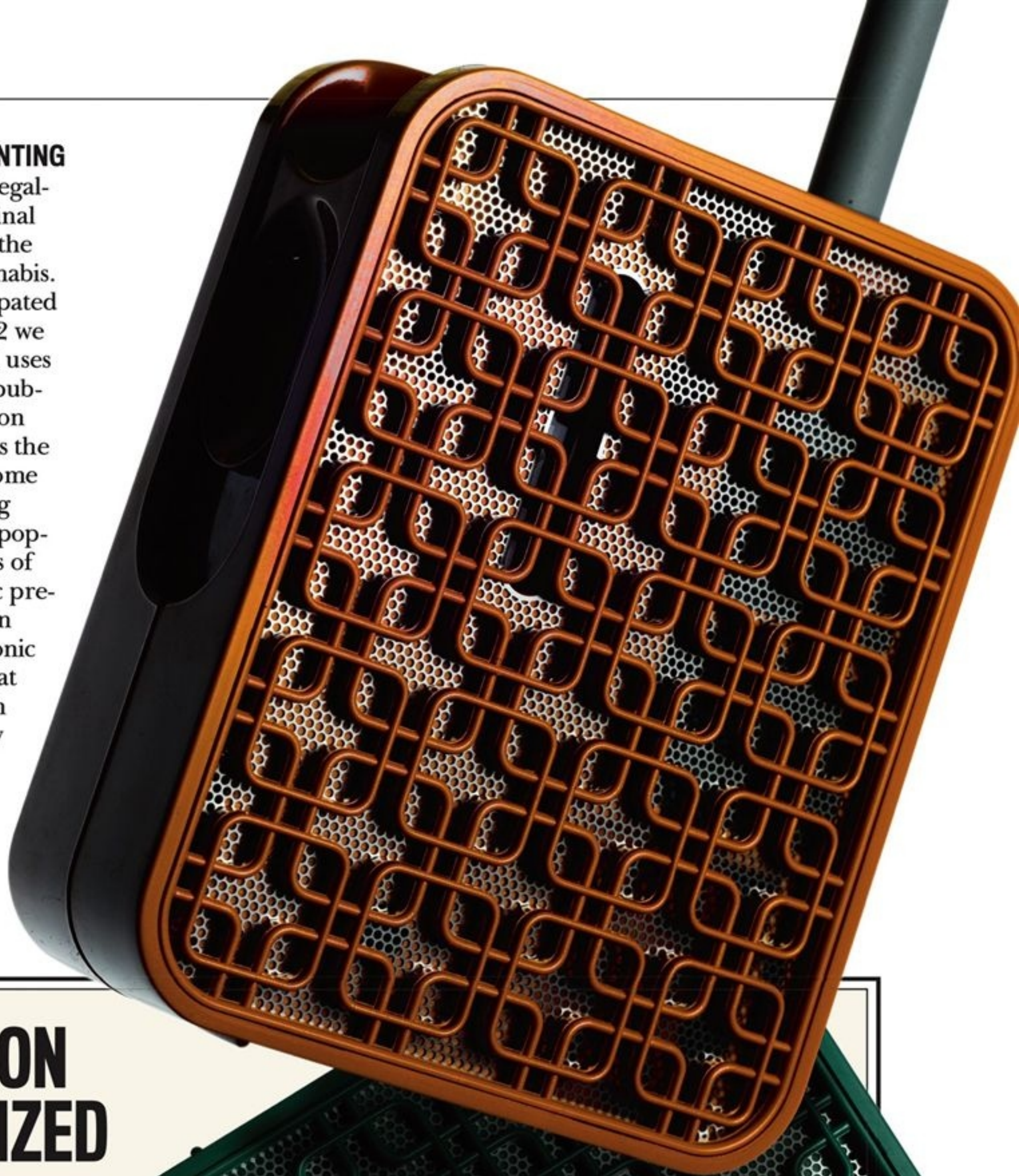
➤➤ If Steve Jobs had designed a vaporizer, it would have looked like this. The pen-like rechargeable model is sleek, smart and a marvel of ergonomics. An LED glows green when it's hot and ready to inhale and glows blue when it's idle and cooling down.



IOLITE WISPR

\$250, iolite.com

➤➤ Available in *Dwell* magazine-worthy colors like espresso brown, pistachio green and pumpkin orange, this mod butane-powered machine gently heats ground marijuana leaves to release cannabis vapor before the herb combusts.



THE PRODUCT

THE STONED AGE

With a dizzying array of marijuana strains on the market (Grape Ape, Purple Kush and Sour Diesel, to name a few), ask the sativa sommelier at your local dispensary to suggest a specific variety for your needs. In general, sativas are energizing, indicas are relaxing—and both are extremely potent. Edibles often list the THC content in milligrams, but it's best to start slow and low to determine your personal tolerance for a product.



SUPERFINE

Kief

➔ Leaving no part of the plant to waste, growers harvest the nearly microscopic resin glands of the marijuana plant. They're loaded with THC and can be vaporized, smoked or made into hash. In Arabic, *kief* means "pleasure or well-being."



CHILL PILLS

GoldCaps

➔ Gel caps aren't just for vitamins anymore. (Just don't store them with your omega 3s.) These are the closest thing to a traditional dose. GoldCaps come in 10-, 25- and 35-milligram strengths, are intense and have long-lasting effects.



SPREAD 'EM

Peanut cannabutter

➔ THC is fat soluble, which is why you'll often see it in lipid-rich foods such as butter, baked goods and, yes, crunchy peanut butter. Due to its potency, if you use it think in terms of little peanut butter crackers, not PB&J-sandwich portions.



CANDY LAND

THC lollipops

➔ Lollipops and other cannabis hard candies are made with cannabis tincture and generally have a less lasting effect than edibles made with THC-infused fats. Needless to say, as with all edibles, keep out of reach of children.



BAR NONE

Cannabis chocolate

➔ Venice Cookie Company's 4.20 chocolate bars come in artisanal flavors such as milk chocolate with toffee and dark chocolate with sea salt. Loaded with 180 milligrams of THC per bar, one of these provides at least six servings.



HIGH, HONEY

Kief honey sticks

➔ The earthy taste of marijuana plays nicely with intensely sweet honey you can eat straight or mix into tea. With 60 milligrams of kief in each stick, this stuff is extremely potent, so a little dab will do you.

Weed Eaters

Chefs across the country are hosting clandestine pop-up dinners at which weed is the starring ingredient (witness last spring's feasts hosted by Roberta's in Brooklyn and Starry Kitchen in Los Angeles). The most outspoken pro-pot chef is probably *Eddie Huang*, chef at Baohaus New York and author of the new food memoir *Fresh Off the Boat*. Here he shares his Asian-themed recipe for Diesel Tea Salmon. "My go-to weed-butter recipe is 'The Best Cannabutter Weed-Butter Recipe Ever' on YouTube," says Huang. "I used Sour Diesel, but that's because I couldn't find any backyard boogie. If you can get your hands on high school poops, use that because there's no difference when you're cooking it."

DIESEL TEA SALMON

1 lb. salmon (preferably skin-on, wild-caught, cut into 4 oz. fillets)

Canola oil

2 oz. weed butter, melted

6 oz. enoki mushrooms

2¼ cups of water

2 tbsp. loose-leaf green tea

4 cups cooked rice

½ cup chopped scallions

1 tbsp. wasabi paste

¼ cup soy sauce

Nori komi furikake (rice seasoning) to taste

Place oven rack approximately five inches from roof of oven and preheat broiler.

Place salmon pieces skin-side down on oiled baking sheet and brush with weed butter. Broil for five minutes, until lightly browned and just cooked through. While salmon is cooking, wash enoki mushrooms, discard the roots and separate enoki into bunches of five or six stems. Bring water to boil in a pot. Drop mushrooms in and turn heat off. After one minute, remove mushrooms and set aside. Next, steep green tea in mushroom water with a strainer. Put a cup of rice in each of four large bowls, then top with salmon, mushrooms and brewed tea. Garnish with scallions, wasabi paste, soy sauce and furikake. Evenly distribute the butter from the baking sheet among the bowls. "If you want to get faced," says Huang, "this is the most important step."



POT CHEF

Eddie Huang

BAOHAUS RESTAURANT
238 E. 14TH STREET
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

➤ Before he became a chef and an outspoken Twitter personality, Eddie Huang was a lawyer, comedian and pot dealer. In his memoir, *Fresh Off the Boat*, he writes, "I had other comics selling my weed."



DIPLO-MATIC MISSION



***THE STYLISH
DJ AND
PRODUCER
ROCKS THE
COOLEST
SPRING
FASHION***

*By Rob
Tannenbaum*

*Photography by
Kenneth
Cappello*



Fashion by
Jennifer Ryan
Jones

Styling by
Mark Holmes

if

SEX & MUSIC
ISSUE
APRIL
2013

you're anything like us, you've wondered, What the hell does a DJ do? In Diplo's case, the answer is a lot. He runs the record label Mad Decent, which is practically Motown for clubbers. The Grammy-nominated producer has worked with artists as disparate as M.I.A., Lil Wayne, Justin Bieber, Usher, Beyoncé, Radiohead, Britney Spears and Skrillex. (If you

don't like at least two of those acts, you don't like music.) As the mastermind behind modern dancehall act Major Lazer, he inspires young women to dance, sweat and strip off their clothes. And Diplo may be the most stylish DJ on the circuit, dressing up while his fans get down.



↓
Opposite:
Sunglasses,
\$210, by
Mosley Tribes
for Oliver
Peoples.

This page:
Suit, \$1,495,
by Burberry
London.
Shirt, \$395,
by Marc
Jacobs.
**Pocket
square**, \$12,
by Topman.
Watch,
Artix GT
chronograph,
\$3,450, by
Oris.

Q & A

Q: Is style as important for a DJ as it is for someone in a rock band?

A: DJs are sort of the Mick Jagers of this generation. We should try to have some kind of trendsetting and taste-making vibes, but I don't think a lot of DJs do. They don't even care.

Q: Do you give fashion advice to other DJs?

A: I tell all the guys they need to dress better. They wear baggy jeans, hoodies, old sneakers. Some will even wear flip-flops to a club. They're deejaying parties at clubs that are making upward of a million dollars a night from bottle service, and the DJs are getting paid out the ass. I don't know why they dress like hobos when they're making millions of dollars a year.

Q: Were you a well-dressed kid?

A: [Laughs] We didn't really have money to buy good clothes. When I was a kid in Florida, my mom and dad used to take me



↓
Trench coat, \$1,740, by Marc Jacobs.
Sports jacket, \$860, by Paul Smith. **Shirt**, \$150, by Won Hundred.
Trousers (part of a suit), \$3,695, by Marc Jacobs.
Sunglasses, \$210, by Mosley Tribes for Oliver Peoples.
Shoes, \$248, by Cole Haan.

to Marshalls and Ross Dress for Less to get the discounted clothes. These stores had British Knights from five years before and off-brand Nike Airs—sneakers you couldn't find anywhere else.

Q: So can you dress well at Marshalls?

A: My mom's budget was about \$100, and I could make 10 outfits from that. Marshalls always had some weird shit, like year-old Rocawear, and you could get it for one tenth the original price. It was almost like going to a thrift store. I had a \$50 pair of UFO pants, and my mom was like, "It's crazy to spend that much money on a pair of jeans!"

Q: Your music has a lot of global influences. From the

way you dress, it's hard to tell where you're from.

A: Nobody thinks I'm American—everybody thinks I'm German or English. I don't know why; I have a Florida tattoo, and I'm actually kind of a hillbilly. But I'm trying to pull off a James Bond kind of swagger. Even when I deejay in Cambodia, where it's 100 degrees and there are mosquitoes everywhere, I still rock a suit. You have to look cooler than the fans who come to see you perform.

↓
Jacket, \$730, by PS by Paul Smith, available at MrPorter.com.
T-shirt, \$130, and **pocket square**, price on request, by Sandro. **Jeans**, \$185, by Rag & Bone. **Sunglasses**, \$210, by Mosley Tribes for Oliver Peoples. **Shoes** by Maison Martin Margiela, Diplo's own.

HIEROPHANT

(continued from page 86)

who had just sold his first full-length story to *Fabulous Tales*. I even tend conveniently to forget the miserable way (for me at least) the evening eventually concluded. Now I'm inclined to remember it as the first time I ever met Nemesio Carvajal.

He was a young and very earnest Latin American science-fiction writer who had just come from Mexico. He had contacts with the radical circle that Robert Heinlein was still part of in those days. Tony Boucher was fluent in Spanish and able to translate for us, but I recall Nemesio Carvajal as having pretty good working English even then.

"Nemesio?" L. Ron Hubbard asked when they were introduced. "That's a hell of a name, kid. But then you Latinos have a bit of a flair when it comes to baptism, don't you? You know the joke? If Jesus is Jewish, how come he's got a Mexican name?"

"Well, you're one to talk," Heinlein interjected. "Isn't your first name Lafayette?"

"Yeah," Hubbard sighed. "That's why I use Ron."

Glasses were poured of cheap white sherry, which I soon discovered was the propulsion fuel for those evenings. A toast was proposed.

"To all the stories that will be written tomorrow."

"Then this is the Tomorrow Literary Society?" asked Nemesio.

"No, kid," Hubbard told him. "*Mañana*, no translation needed. As you know, the word has another meaning. A lot of these hacks aren't as good as me at meeting deadlines."

Nemesio frowned. Boucher tried to explain that English speakers used the word more to mean "procrastination."

"It's a bit of a gringo thing, Ron," he added. "You know, this easygoing Latin, always putting off today what he can do tomorrow."

"Well, excuse me," Hubbard said. "You know, I once tried to explain *mañana*, in my own gringo way as you have it, to an Irishman. He told me that there was nothing in the Gaelic that conveyed the urgency of such a term!"

Hubbard paused for some sporadic laughter and then tried to continue to hold the room by launching into an improbable story of a recent expedition of his to Alaska. It was clear that he liked to dominate any assembly and to portray himself as an adventurer, a fearless explorer. He had written so much outlandish pulp fiction that he was already finding it hard to distinguish it from fact.

But he wasn't allowed to get away with it for long. The imaginative competition was far too much for him. The conversation turned to the concept of parallel worlds and alternate futures, the notion of time being nonlinear, the possibilities of precognition. The world was ripe for the

speculative genre with all the uncertainties of war, the bewildering potential of new discoveries in science and technology. But amid all these great events I couldn't help thinking that my personal life was on the brink of something, that this was a crucial night in my own history.

Heinlein began to hold forth on the curvature of space-time, of world lines and points of divergence. Nemesio intervened to speak of an Argentine writer who had just published a collection of stories. In one, a character is described as attempting a novel that would describe a world where all possible outcomes of an event occur simultaneously, with each one leading to further proliferation.

"It is titled '*El jardín de senderos que se bifurcan*,'" he explained.

Boucher offered a swift translation. "The garden of paths that bisect?"

"Yes. You see, in the story there is a novel and a labyrinth. It turns out that the novel is the labyrinth and the labyrinth is the novel."

"Sounds interesting," Boucher said. "What's this writer called?"

"Borges," Nemesio replied. It was the first time any of us had heard that name.

"So what's his genre?" Hubbard demanded. "Mystery or fantasy, or what?"

"Those things, yes," said Nemesio with a smile. "And more. He is also an important poet."

Hubbard huffed indignantly.

"We're definitely at a place where the paths are diverging," said Cartmill.

"But surely," Brackett interjected, "in the world, in our world, whatever that is, there will be one reality if totalitarianism goes on unchecked and another if it is defeated."

"Not necessarily," Heinlein argued. "It could be that different worlds can coexist. In the past as well as the future. That's why this kid's story is so important." He nodded over at me. "'Lords of the Black Sun' shows us the worst that will happen. By imagining it perhaps we can avoid it in our own reality."

Feeling foolishly pleased with myself, I caught Mary-Lou's eye across the room. She smiled at me, and in that moment I imagined our future together. Then Jack Parsons walked in.

There are many images that can attest to the dark and passionate features of the glamorous rocket scientist. Parsons was undeniably photogenic, so one can still appreciate those deep-set eyes, that quizical mouth, the thick curls swept up into a crowning mane. But none of these portraits can ever do justice to his charisma, that delicately soulful presence one felt when he entered a room.

His voice was soft and slow, his manner hesitant. His gaze was open, searching. He looked romantically disheveled in a fine flannel suit that needed pressing and an open-necked shirt ringed with grime. There was a light sheen of sweat on his brow. With scant introduction and a gentle insistence, he joined in the conversation.

"We're certainly approaching a crucial moment," he said.

"In your rocket experiments?" asked Heinlein.

"In that, yes," Parsons replied. "But in the greater work too."

"You mean this mystical stuff?" Jack Williamson demanded.

"Look, I know you think it's all a bit far-fetched, but didn't you say once that science is magic made real?"

"I did, yes," Williamson conceded.

"There must be any number of ways to break through the space-time continuum. We should experiment with them all. Soon there will be a chance to test some of this unseen wisdom. The hierophant has ordered a special mass that might just help change the course of the war."

"Wow," Mary-Lou murmured, her eyes wide and bright.

I realize now, of course, that he was talking about Aleister Crowley and that perhaps Jack had some knowledge of Operation Mistletoe. All I noticed then was the way Mary-Lou looked at him.

"What's a hierophant?" asked Leigh Brackett.

"It's a fancy name for a high priest," Hubbard explained.

"So you've finally joined this Order," said Heinlein. "I hope you haven't given up on the science."

"Oh no," Parsons replied with a smile. "I'm following both paths now."

The fact that Jack Parsons was actually quite shy and nervous only seemed to add to his charm. He appeared to be channeling an enchantment from another dimension. And there was a reticence in how he described his experiments that was intriguing for all us fantasists. He had to be discreet, he explained. The U.S. military had become interested in missiles and jet propulsion and was now funding the California Institute of Technology's rocket group, which was testing secret prototypes out in the desert. He gave a vague account of the group's activities that conjured visions of mystics raising fire demons in the wilderness. The desert as an empty stage beneath a theater of stars, a limitless temple of research. He was equally obscure about this occult sect of his, the *Ordo Templi Orientis*. He was living a strange double life, one of wild asceticism and divine exhaustion, toiling beneath the harsh sun by day, enacting sacramental rites at the Agape Lodge of the OTO by night. He embodied a weird fusion of modern science and ancient wisdom, part hip technocrat, part Renaissance wizard.

He certainly cast some sort of spell over the room that night. It was an energy that seemed to split the discussion into waves and particles. No one voice could hold all the attention after that point. The party began to fracture and oscillate. Hubbard was in one corner detailing an improbable jungle adventure to Cleve Cartmill. Anthony Boucher was exchanging rapid Spanish



"Hey, boy! You take us number one fella, we give you plenty nice stuff!"

with Nemesio. Heinlein and Williamson were circulating. Leslyn Heinlein went into the kitchen for olives and more sherry. I had already noticed a buzz of attraction between Parsons and Mary-Lou. I watched with dread as she slowly, inexorably began to gravitate toward him.

They were in deep discussion about astronomy and astrology when Heinlein pulled me into his orbit. He announced he was going up to his study to show Jack Williamson his "Timeline of Future History" and insisted I join them. We went upstairs. Heinlein had on his wall a chart that mapped out a chronology of all the futuristic stories he had written and was planning to write. I stared at it blankly as Williamson made enthusiastic comments. When I think of it now I see the strange comment "The Crazy Years—mass psychosis in the sixth decade" next to the 1960s, but perhaps that's because it was the one prediction Heinlein really did get right. At the time I'm sure I simply looked dumbfounded by the imagined course of the next two centuries as if searching for some clue as to what was going to happen that evening.

I excused myself and went back downstairs. I was beginning to feel the effects of the sherry. I took a wrong turn and found myself in a utility room. I felt as if I were trapped in the labyrinthine tesseract of Heinlein's story. I eventually found my way back to the lounge and looked around like a lost child. Hubbard caught my eye.

"She's outside, kid," he drawled with a cruel smile.

I went to the door and spied Mary-Lou by the front porch, standing close to Parsons. He was pointing up at the sky, tracing a constellation as he talked in a low, intense drone. I felt as if I was losing

my footing and I held on to the door for support. I went back inside, walking in an absurd crouching posture. Leslyn frowned as she handed me another glass of sherry and asked Nemesio about Mexico. He said that he was actually from Cuba. I tried hard to concentrate as he told me his story. Like many young men he insisted on a pattern to his as yet unformed life. He was always late, he concluded. He had planned to go to Spain to fight with an anarchist militia. Two days before he was due to embark from Havana, Franco marched into Madrid. He then went to Mexico to study, with the intention of meeting Leon Trotsky. He finally obtained a letter of introduction, only to arrive at Coyoacán four days after Trotsky was assassinated by Ramón Mercader.

"I think this is why I started writing about the future, so as not to be late," he explained with a grin. "But I am also interested in technological utopianism."

He had come to L.A., making contact with a disparate group of American radicals: Trotskyists, members of the technocracy movement and libertarians like Heinlein, who had been involved in Upton Sinclair's End Poverty in California campaign back in the 1930s.

The party was beginning to break up. Mary-Lou came back into the lounge.

"Larry," she said, somewhat breathlessly, "I'm getting a ride with Jack."

"But—but, Mary-Lou," I slurred. "I thought I was driving you home."

"It's okay, Larry. You'll want to talk some more." I remember the way her eyes sparkled as she said, "Hasn't it been a wonderful evening?"

Then she was gone. My recollection of the evening after that begins to jump

around. Leaps in time and space. I was in the kitchen helping myself to another drink. Joining in with a dirty limerick recitation. ("There once was a fellow McSweeney/Who spilled some gin on his weenie./Just to be couth/He added vermouth/And slipped his girlfriend the martini.") Throwing up in a plant pot. Collapsing onto the couch in the lounge.

The following morning's hangover was ghastly, augmented by wretched feelings of guilt and humiliation. I apologized to the Heinleins for my behavior. Leslyn was certainly annoyed with me, but Robert just laughed it off and plied me with strong black coffee. Nemesio had also stayed over, sleeping in the spare room in a more planned and civilized fashion. I gave him a ride downtown to where he was staying with an elderly couple who worked for the League for Industrial Democracy.

When I confided to him about Mary-Lou, he gave a long sigh.

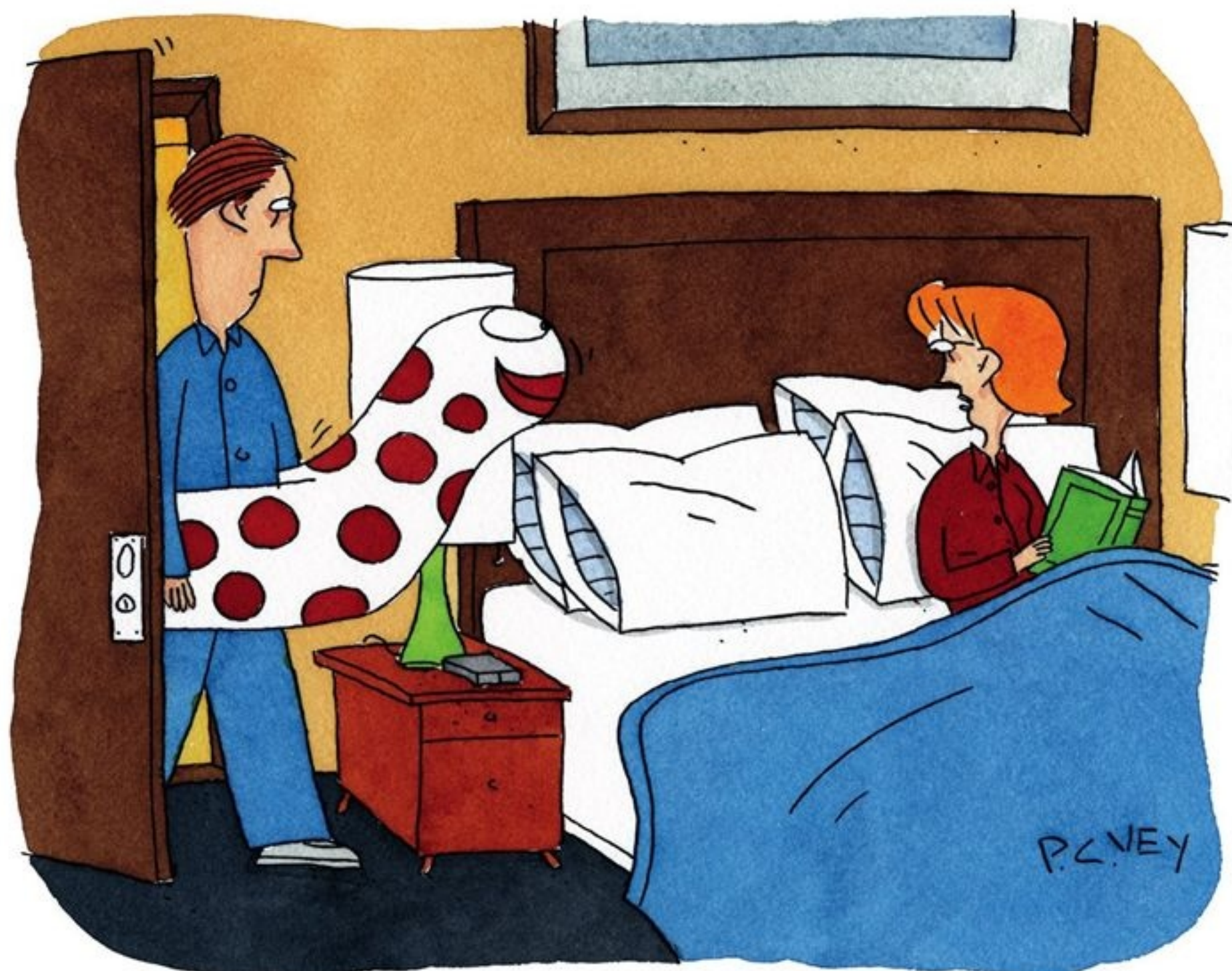
"*Siempre*," he declared. "With love it is always hard."

Nemesio always seemed older than his years. He was actually a few months younger than me, but from the start he assumed a sense of seniority in our friendship. I never minded this. He was, after all, far more mature than me in so many ways. He gave me a political awareness and something of a sentimental education. We had experiences in common that acted as a kind of emotional bond: We had both grown up without fathers. We agreed that we would see each other at the next Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society meeting at Clifton's Cafeteria.

After dropping him off I went home and spent the rest of the day trying to ease a blinding headache and to placate my mother, who, having waited up for me in vain, had spent the previous night phoning hospitals and police stations, certain that I had become the victim of some gruesome incident.

For the next few days I stayed indoors, struggling to write but mostly brooding about Mary-Lou and Jack Parsons. I found myself rereading an article on his rocket experiments that had appeared in *Popular Mechanics* the previous fall. His handsome face taunted me as it stared out of photographs between illustrations of test sites and diagrams of launch trajectories. Thursday came around and I went along to Clifton's. I tried to clear my mind of it all, but before long I was talking about Parsons. And there was plenty of gossip about him. It was said that he was married, though he and his wife took other lovers; that he was actively recruiting for the Ordo Templi Orientis, hosting discussion groups on literature and mysticism at his home in Pasadena. There were stories too of parties at the Agape Lodge, tales of spiked punch, near-orgies and invitations for all to join in the gnostic mass in the attic temple.

Luckily Nemesio turned up and managed to distract me from my wild imaginings. He had already acquired the nickname



"Why can't you use regular sex toys like everybody else?"

Nemo from the LASFS crowd, and it would become his name from then on.

"It's a good one," I told him. "Like Verne's submariner in *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*."

"It also means 'no one,'" he replied with a shrug.

He then went on to recount his theory of how Verne had based his Captain Nemo on the 19th century submarine inventor from Barcelona, Narcís Monturiol.

"Narcís?" I retorted. "Hubbard's right, you know. What is it with these Spanish names?"

"Well, he was Catalan, actually. But you know, Monturiol was a visionary, a true exponent of liberational technology. He had written many pamphlets on socialism, pacifism, feminism even. He supported the setting up of utopian communes in the New World. When that failed he became interested in science and technology. His was the first fully functional submarine."

"Well, a lot of guys on the Atlantic convoys won't thank him for that."

"Yes, but his was a craft for exploration." Nemesio began to sketch the design of an underwater craft on a napkin. "A pilot ship for mankind's journey into the unknown. And his ideas then were still in advance of what the Nazis have now. He developed an independent underwater propulsion system, with a chemical fuel that could generate enough energy to power the vessel and produce oxygen as a side product. It was truly remarkable."

Nemo showed me his drawing. It was of a fish-shaped craft with a row of portholes along its side.

"It looks like a spaceship," I remarked.

"Yes," Nemo agreed. "Maybe that's what it was. Maybe that is the answer. If you can't change the world, build a spaceship."

When I walked out of Clifton's that night, Mary-Lou was waiting for me. She was wearing slacks and a windbreaker with the collar turned up. She looked like a fugitive.

"Hi, Larry," she said. "Can we talk?"

We found a bar on South Broadway. We ordered beer and I went to the pay phone to call Mother.

"She gets worried if I'm late home," I explained.

"You're such a good boy, Larry," she said.

I know now that this was meant tenderly, but at the time it was like a jab in the gut. I made my call and then we found a quiet booth. Mary-Lou looked different, her face pale and ethereal, her eyes intense. All at once she began telling me of the strange new things she had learned, about the Ordo Templi Orientis and its peculiar English hierophant, Aleister Crowley. She spoke of the power of the will and the gaining of universal knowledge through symbolic ritual.

"Remember that night when I said that I wanted to know everything?" she said, her eyes burning beneath the neon light. "Well, now I think I can."

"But that's crazy, Mary-Lou."

"You see, every man and every woman

come to the Lodge, you know. It would be so good for you."

"Er, I don't think so, Mary-Lou."

"Well," she said with a curious smile, "think about it."

And then the conversation turned to more or less small talk. We asked each other about our writing, of course. She told me that she had outlined the whole of her space opera *Zodiac Empire* for *Superlative Stories*. She was working through the planets toward a final installment that would center on the sun. Nemo had told her about a Renaissance heretic and revolutionary called Tommaso Campanella who had written a utopian book titled *The City of the Sun*, and she planned to base it on that. We finished our drinks, and I dropped her off on my way home.

I hadn't exactly been looking forward to my next appointment with my psychoanalyst, Dr. Furedi, but even I could not have foreseen such a difficult session. I tried to explain what had happened in the previous week, but such was my agitated state, I must have appeared manic and obsessive. And the details, well, I suppose that they did seem a little too much like the demented fantasy of someone who read too many pulp magazines. It soon became clear that my analyst was treating it all as the delusional ravings of some paranoid condition. The good-looking, diabolical scientist was, of course, merely a symptom of my hysteria. Dr. Furedi became particularly

interested in my reference to "rockets," obviously interpreting them as the phallic objects of my repressed imagination. I left his consulting room a gibbering wreck.

And the worst thing was that there was an element of truth in his distorted perception of my problem. I was irrationally obsessed with Parsons. And though I was jealous of him for having taken away the presumed object of my affections, I was also jealous of Mary-Lou, in that she had become the focus of his attentions. I was pretty sure this was not sexual jealousy, but with scant practical experience in these matters, I felt in serious danger of having some kind of breakdown. It was with a sense of desperation that I decided to face my anxieties head-on.

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is a star. Everyone has to find their own destiny. The law of the strong is our law and the joy of the world."

"The law?"

"Love is the law."

"Love? Is that how you feel about Jack Parsons?"

She sighed.

"Oh, Larry——"

"But he's married, Mary-Lou."

"That's just a superficial institution, Larry. We're living in a new age. Monogamy is redundant. If we get rid of jealousy we can really set ourselves free. I mean, look at you."

"Me?"

"Yes, you. You're so goddamn buttoned-up and neurotic. You should

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Orientis was in a large wooden house on Winona Boulevard. I persuaded Nemo to come along to an open meeting with me. I was a little scared, to tell you the truth, but I wanted to find out what all this was about. The first part of the meeting was very informal. We were shown into an upstairs lounge buzzing with a bohemian crowd, a mix of young and old, some flamboyantly dressed, others theatrically solemn. I spotted an ancient silent-movie actress chatting with a man whose catlike face was dusted with powder and rouge. We were offered punch. I'd already decided that if this stuff was drugged, well, it would all be part of the experiment. I took a tentative sip. It tasted dark and sweet with a licorice aftertaste. Suddenly Mary-Lou was next to me.

"Glad you could come, Larry. Go easy with that stuff," she said, nodding at the cup in my hand. "It's got a kick to it."

I stared at her for a second and then drained the rest of the punch in one gulp.

"I'm feeling adventurous." She laughed.

"That's good. Because if you come up to the mass, you've got to take communion. That's the rule."

A gong sounded and the party began to make its way up a wooden staircase through a trapdoor. As Mary-Lou went on ahead she turned back to me.

"See you later, Larry. Stick around. We're going to Pasadena later. There's going to be a special party."

The attic temple was small and gloomy. Wooden benches faced a raised dais where two obelisks flanked a tiered altar lined with candles. There was a hushing of voices as the congregation settled. A trill of soft laughter ran along the pews and a sharp scent of incense filled the air. There came a low drone of a harmonium playing the slow chords of a prelude, though I'm sure I heard in counterpoint the melody of "Barnacle Bill the Sailor." At the time I thought this was my febrile imagination, but I later found out that the organist liked to improvise around a jaunty tune slowed to a funeral pace.

The priest and the priestess entered and the ceremony began. It was not what I had expected. I had imagined some brooding satanic ritual, but this seemed almost lighthearted. There was certainly nothing demonic about it. The ceremony had much medieval symbolism: swords parting veils, lances and chalices—Freud knows what Dr. Furedi would have made of it all. My mind began to spin very slowly. The drug was taking hold. It was not an unpleasant feeling. The mass became a long, monotonous chant punctuated by sudden moments of exuberant gesture or astonishing verse. Images of burning incense beneath the night stars of the desert, of the serpent flames of rocket launches. Alien dialogue in some far-flung adventure. And I was somehow part of it. I felt relief flood through my usually anxious self. I figure now that it was probably mescaline that had spiced up the punch.

At times I found myself enthralled by the drama in the temple and at others almost oblivious to the proceedings. The priest and the priestess appeared to show

real passion for each other as they enacted a strange, sensual fertility rite. The woman spoke urgently of pleasure, pale or purple, veiled or voluptuous, of a song of rapture to arouse the coiled splendor within, and for a moment I was utterly enchanted. Then the priest began to chant an unintelligible dirge and my thoughts diffused. I drifted into a trancelike state, and before I knew it the mass was at an end and we were all summoned to a communion of wine and rust-colored wafers. As we filed out the organ played a recessional of ominous chords with a slow ditty over it that sounded a lot like "Yes! We Have No Bananas."

Back in the lounge I was talking with Nemo. The conversation seemed urgently heightened and languidly casual at the same time. There were moments when we seemed to be having the same thoughts simultaneously. We felt sophisticated, wildly intellectual.

Our eyes locked and I noticed that his pupils were as sharp as pencil leads. We both agreed that this mass would not seem out of place in a pulp fantasy, that so many of the stories we had been exposed to appeared to hark back to a warped idea of the Middle Ages, with knights, maidens, quests and supernatural revelation. Nemo spoke of how so much space opera seemed to be a rendition of some interstellar Holy Roman Empire. We had begun to speculate on what kind of religion a science-fiction writer would come up with when Mary-Lou came over to join us.

"You took the host then," she said to me. "You know they're prepared with animal blood."

I shrugged, not knowing what to say but determined not to be as shocked as she thought I would be. I noticed Parsons at the far end of the room, holding court amid a small circle of people. The priest and priestess stood near him, touching each other with a casual intimacy.

"The priestess seems to be in love with the priest," I said to Mary-Lou.

"Oh, that's Helen Parsons," she retorted. "Jack's wife."

"You mean...?"

"I told you, Larry. We have to reject hypocritical social standards."

I felt my face flush at the thought of it. I let out a peculiar giggle.

"Larry?" said Mary-Lou.

"Mary-Lou," I replied.

I wanted to say that I loved her. Love! To call it out just as the celebrants had done in the gnostic mass.

"Are you coming to Pasadena with us?" she asked.

I nodded and my teeth clenched in a manic grin. My head raced with curiosity and delirious expectation.

The May evening was warm when we reached the Arroyo Seco, the dry ravine that cuts through the San Gabriel Mountains. The scrubland at the edge of Pasadena was then a suburban wilderness, a homely arcadia thick with chaparral, sycamore and tangled thickets of wild grape. The Caltech rocket group had the lease on three acres that had been cleared as a

launch site. There was a group of corrugated sheet-metal huts, a sandbag bunker and an arcane assembly of test apparatus. These were the beginnings of the famous Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

Some kind of party had already begun. There was wine and beer and a sense of pagan revelry. I was passed a thin, hand-rolled cigarette. Marijuana, I thought with an exuberant sense of sinfulness. I took a puff and broke into a spluttering spasm. Nemo took it from me and inhaled the drug with casual expertise. He had tried it in Mexico, he confided to me. Mary-Lou explained to us that tonight was a ritual to influence the space-time continuum. This was the special mass that Jack Parsons had spoken of that night at the Heinleins', the one ordered by the hierophant to change the course of the war.

Parsons arrived in white robes, clutching a spray of mistletoe in one hand, a sickle in the other. The party started to form itself into a circle around him. It was then that I saw the rocket on its stand. Taller than he was, it seemed to tower above us, a totem, a faceless idol. On the ground around it were scorch marks and what looked like runic markings. Parsons began an ululating invocation to the god Pan. Drunk and drugged, my mind reeled but my body assumed its tranquilized equilibrium. I felt a wonderful balance: my weight on the earth, my head in the sky. I turned to Nemo and he nodded to me, wide-eyed and smiling.

"Yeah," he said. "We're going to make contact, man."

I nodded back. I had no idea what he meant, but at that moment it all seemed to make sense. The sky darkened and Parsons motioned for the circle to widen. At nightfall the rocket was launched. There was an explosion of thrust, an exultant rush of energy into the heavens. The crowd gasped as one.

"Yes," Nemo hissed as the vehicle reached its zenith.

The rocket released its payload, a parachute flare that floated like an angel of grace over the Arroyo Seco. As it descended, Nemesio pointed to something beyond it high up in the firmament.

"See?" he implored. "They're here, man!"

I couldn't tell what he was gesturing at. All I could see were some dim stars that were just making themselves visible.

"Come on," he said and began to make his way toward the San Gabriel Mountains. "They're coming in to land!"

I went after him for a while, but he moved like a man possessed, following a track up into the canyon. I called after him as he began to climb the hillside. Then he was gone.

I went back to the party. A bonfire had been lit and shadow figures danced in the convulsive firelight. My once-benign mood of narcosis began to fade and the evening's saturnalia now seemed harsh and sinister. My anxiety returned, unwelcome but familiar. I wandered about, trying to find Mary-Lou. I thought I caught a glimpse of a wild goat gamboling in a darkened glade. I followed and found myself in a clearing.

There was a trickle of laughter and by the flickering light I could make out bodies cavorting in this sacramental grove. Yellow flames licked at the pitched gloom, and here and there naked flesh glowed amber or albescent. A bright flare from the pyre lit up a face, which turned and caught my gaze. It was Mary-Lou. She smiled as she saw me, her eyes brimstone, her mouth a lewd grimace.

"Come on, Larry," she implored in a harsh whisper. "Join us!"

I froze. My whole body clenched into an apoplectic spasm but for a heart that hammered away in a wild palpitation. I felt a terrible sadness. The image of the twisted bodies was already seared on my memory, my timid desire overwhelmed by a dreadful sense of loss. This was the death of love, I suddenly thought.

Perhaps Mary-Lou caught my look of dismay. I don't know. Her face went blank for a second and then she turned away from me, into the embrace of Jack Parsons and two or three others.

I stumbled away unsteadily and out of joint, coldly sober but reeling about like a drunken fool. I lay down in the dust and felt the world spin against my back. Looking down at the starry depths, I felt the lonely vertigo of the universe. My own sorry little space opera stretched out into infinity. Eventually I regained enough balance to pick myself up and walk to my car. I clambered onto the backseat and fell into a troubled sleep.

I woke to Nemo gently shaking my shoulder. I got out of the car and adjusted my eyes to the powdery haze of morning.

"What happened to you?" I asked him.

He shrugged and stared back at me with dead eyes. He looked as if he had been dragged through a forest.

"It's hard to explain, Larry," he said. "I saw something."

I never got the whole story of what he witnessed that night. Over the years he would refer to the time when he had seen "something from another world," but he always seemed reluctant to elaborate further. For a while I thought he worried that I might think he was crazy. But maybe he just wanted to keep it to himself. To save it for his fiction. And the influence of this experience can certainly be found in his work, in stories such as "Interstellar Epiphany" and "The Uninvited Guest." At the time neither of us really wanted to talk about the previous night, so we drove back to L.A. mostly in silence.

Mother was predictably upset when I turned up at the house looking wild-eyed and disheveled, and I was unnecessarily blunt with her when she asked after my whereabouts, loudly declaring that I had been at an orgy.

"Larry!" she chided me.

"Oh, don't worry, Mother," I called out as I went up to my room, "your precious son is still a virgin."

Excerpted from The House of Rumor, to be published by Amazon Publishing/New Harvest.



CLIVE DAVIS

(continued from page 58)

it. Spotify and streaming are generating revenue. But the most important fact in all this is that we're dealing with something that is still a basic need. I *know* that music is a need. We're not dealing with a product that is dated. Now it's a matter of finding a solution as to how to get music in a commercial, profitable way—fair to the originators and satisfying to the consumers—so it can continue to grow. But the need for music is still there.

PLAYBOY: Because it's now harder for artists to make money selling records, does the lion's share of their income come from performing?

DAVIS: That's accurate for established artists, for veteran headliners, whether it's Madonna, Springsteen, Elton John or Rod Stewart. They fill arenas all over the world, which makes a fortune compared with their record sales. Lady Gaga is a big breakthrough, so she still probably makes more from live performances, but her albums sell 2 million, 3 million, 4 million copies. That was pretty significant as a breakthrough. The biggest-selling rap artist is probably Lil Wayne at 2.5 million. Eminem does some touring, but his albums are major sellers. Others are Kanye West and Jay-Z.

PLAYBOY: Are they on your iPod?

DAVIS: I don't have an iPod. I have an iPhone and an iPad.

PLAYBOY: Is that what you use to listen to music?

DAVIS: I listen on CDs. I have a home in Westchester, about an hour away, and I go there on weekends. I'll listen in the car going there and coming back. I also use Spotify on occasion. I watch videos to see what competitive artists look like as they break.

PLAYBOY: Do you go to clubs?

DAVIS: That was a long ago thing. Now you get videos, though for established artists, or an artist on your roster who is performing, you go. Barbra Streisand goes back so many years that I have to go to the Hollywood Bowl when she performs there. Alicia Keys is touring, and I'll see her. I just saw Sting and Tony Bennett at a charity dinner.

PLAYBOY: You've worked with the biggest stars in the world by now. You're about to turn 81. Do you think about retiring?

DAVIS: Look, your health has to be good to enable you to come to an office every day. I am still at the office a minimum of eight hours every day. Besides, you can work in this job as long as your track record is good. You get report cards every Tuesday and Wednesday. Tuesday is radio, when they release the Top 40; Wednesday they release the SoundScan results, which track sales.

PLAYBOY: Is it harder to break records these days, when radio stations have such formulaic playlists? On most stations, DJs have little opportunity to play what they want.

DAVIS: Actually, the size of the playlist has always been pretty much the same. What you do miss is the free-form album stations.

There are definitely fewer rock stations. With fewer rock and free-form stations, how do you find the next Dylan? Where is the next Springsteen? The artists who broke in the past few years primarily came out of the singles world—out of electronic dance music—and they don't show the artistry of a Dylan or a Springsteen. Also, albums aren't what they used to be. The public will buy 5 million copies of a single but only a few hundred thousand albums at most. There's not the curiosity to hear more of the artist. People buy only the particular song they like. There are exceptions, but it's a serious problem when it comes to developing careers, not just breakthrough singles. I'm trying to think of the last solo folk-rock artist to break. It might be harder to break a Patti Smith now—someone completely new.

PLAYBOY: Has anything replaced radio as a way to break artists?

DAVIS: Yes. Online is one way. The web gives people an opportunity to hear and see an artist, but not too many artists break off the web, at least so far. Besides online, a lot of new artists have come from reality-TV competitions. No one has developed meaningfully from the competitions in the past two or three years, but before that we found Kelly Clarkson, Carrie Underwood and Chris Daughtry. I did *The X Factor* with

Leona Lewis for her debut album. Still, it's not easy to break artists who don't fit in the mainstream. It's not easy to break a rock artist; reality shows are pop music. But like I said, people want music. That hasn't changed. Music is as vital as ever, which is why I'm encouraging students to go into this industry by starting the Clive Davis Institute of Recorded Music at NYU. I want the best people to go into this business, and I want them to understand its potential.

Popular music has a remarkable history. It's tied with the culture's development, yet it hasn't been treated with the same seriousness as other music forms. There was no place to study music—except for very elitist music, maybe classical or jazz at Berklee or the conservatories. Mainstream contemporary music, however, which has so much of an impact around the world, wasn't taken seriously as an art form. There was no place to seriously study it, to be trained so you could push this industry further. Now there's a school of popular music where the future of the music business is learning and collaborating.

I endowed the institute for another reason. I've always been bothered by the image of the record executive as the gold-chain-wearing, finger-snapping, almost shady character. Well, that's not what it's like. It has always bothered me that the profession I chose has that stereotype. I

look back at the people who have shaped this business: Warner Bros. Records under Mo Ostin and Joe Smith, A&M Records with Jerry Moss and Herb Alpert. Going back years before me there was Alan Livingston of Capitol Records and, more recently, Richard Branson of Virgin, Chris Blackwell of Island, and David Geffen. I can go on and on. These executives were behind music that we still listen to and that changed the culture. You can argue that the history of music is far more in-depth than that of film. The real leaders of the music industry have been incredibly bright, talented minds, and entrepreneurial. The future leaders should know that tradition, and they should have more opportunities at an early age to learn more, digest more, put their talents to use. They should know they can be part of what comes next, the most exciting next thing.

PLAYBOY: What excites you now?

DAVIS: I was very glad to see the arrival of Mumford & Sons. And Adele—I was very glad to see how she soared over everybody else. I have nothing to do with those artists, but it's encouraging for the future of music that artists outside electronic dance music are finding success. Brittany Howard, the lead singer of Alabama Shakes, is also strong.

PLAYBOY: When you're listening to the radio and songs come on by artists you've worked with—Aretha, Bruce, Janis, Whitney—do you feel a particular pride?

DAVIS: The answer honestly is yes. I do have a definite sense of pride. Like the Mamas and the Papas; sometimes "California Dreamin'" comes on. A song like that or a Simon & Garfunkel song. I'm reminded that what Paul Simon did was incredible. Paul Simon should always be considered in the same breath as Lennon and McCartney. And there's a thrill when I hear Bruce Springsteen. There's an extra thrill when you're involved with them personally, when you were there from the beginning.

PLAYBOY: Are you as excited as when you discover something new?

DAVIS: Hearing the old music is not necessarily better than the feeling of finding someone new, working with someone great coming up. Over the past three or four years I did "Bleeding Love" and "Better in Time," which broke Leona Lewis after she won *The X Factor*. I worked with Kelly Clarkson with "My Life Would Suck Without You" and "Already Gone." I did "Spotlight" with Jennifer Hudson. I did Whitney's final album, and I supervised her recent greatest hits album. I did a network-TV special, *A Grammy Salute to Whitney Houston*. I've just signed Aretha to do another album. I signed Rod Stewart. I'd never worked with him before, and then I did five volumes of *The Great American Songbook*, which sold almost 20 million copies. I'm still working with Santana. I'm just locking up the rights to bring *My Fair Lady* back to Broadway. I've written my autobiography. It remains exciting. I'm still looking for the next thing, the next artist.



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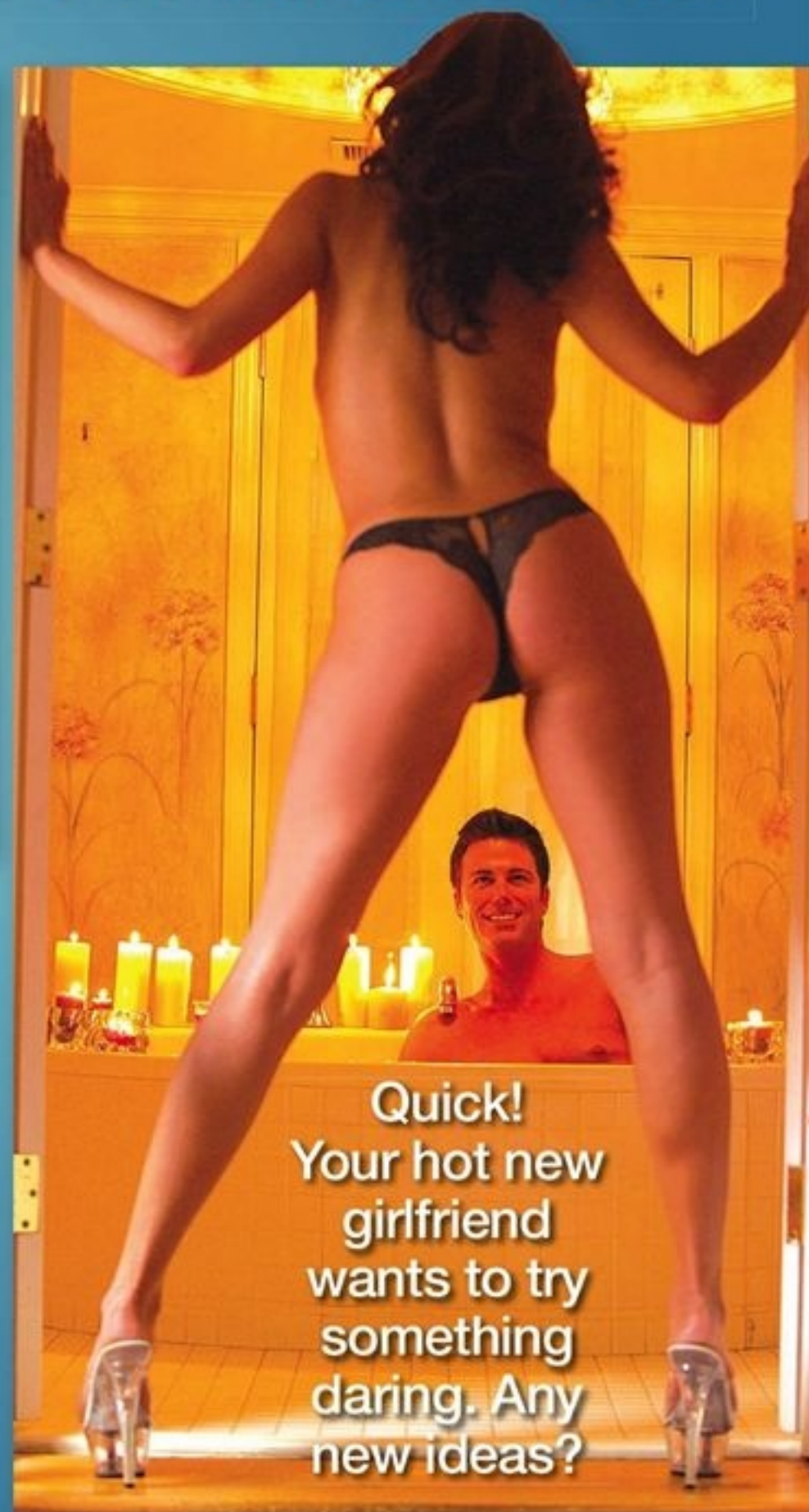
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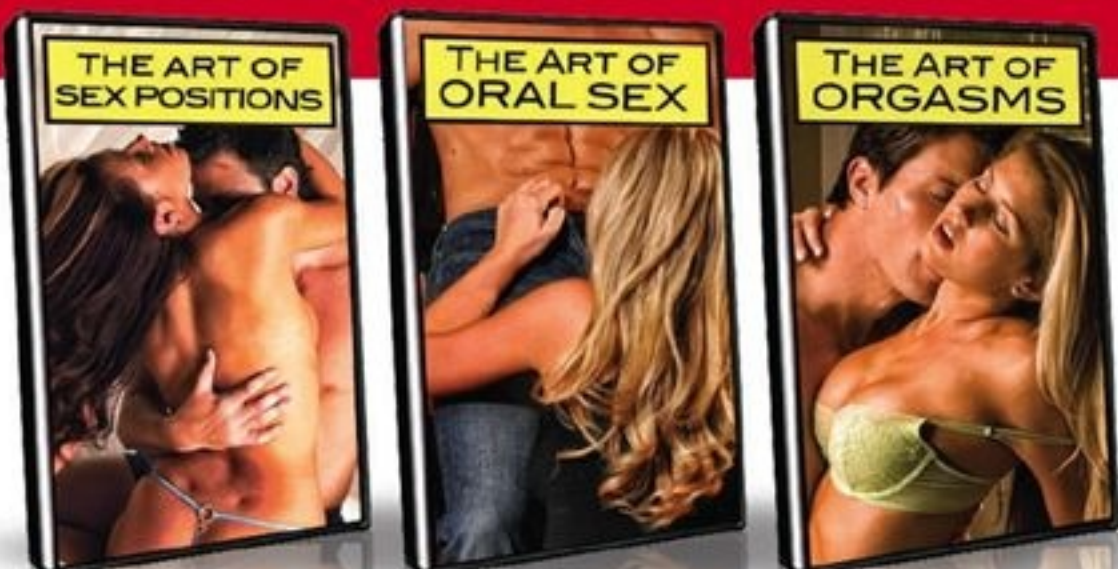
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OFF THE EDGE

(continued from page 108)

intoxication generally do—but I wouldn't have missed it for the universe.

Now it's strange to think of Vegas, which I associate with Tom Jones and boxing, in the same way as those old days in Ibiza. Yet the isolation and anything-goes ethos the two places share have made Vegas the perfect site as the dance-music center of the Americas. Even the suited Talibanites of the Christian fundamentalist right tacitly accept that monument to capitalist excess, though perhaps with the old caveat "What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas."

Spring break in America, no longer limited to spring or to college kids, provided the mainstream cultural *raison d'être* for EDM by throwing a lot of bodies together under a four-by-four beat and a strobe light. For some time the young (and the not so young) have been flooding spots like Las Vegas and Miami Beach, looking for the party. With the staple acts long in the tooth and as stale as old bread, and the audience either dying, incontinent or suffering foreclosure, the gap in the Vegas market was yawning. And this party also had to be about more than being in a club or bar, listening to the latest mainstream pop records given the four-by-four treatment. It's hard to see youth flocking to these spots to enjoy the Cowell-esque conveyor belt of bland, disposable flunkies or synthetic "country" and teen stars. There's not a whole lot of fun in that game once puberty kicks in.

The issue of how to get young people, who will spend money whether they have it or not, into city stadiums and parks has been an ongoing one. What will they come for? EDM has provided the spectacle. It's undeniably crass to say that EDM equals house and techno plus spring-break culture, but the first two brought the beat, the other the

bodies in search of fun. And they have quite possibly revitalized Las Vegas.

More crucially, the internet has demolished the old walls between cultures, ending the time lag that prevented the North American spread of U.K.-based dance genres such as jungle. By the time U.S. DJs got their hands on the latest U.K. sounds as imports, they were out of date and no longer essential. Now dubstep, the original completely networked dance scene, enjoys global synchronization, with a relatively free trade in sound files and new track edits of DJ mixes on pirate radio stations, which fans then post on YouTube. EDM spread like a virus once major acts began to tour U.S. soil, and it wasn't long before American producers got in on the act, both at home and abroad.

The genesis of this rise can arguably be charted through American R&B and hip-hop acts going to Ibiza, doing pills, discovering David Guetta and his Fuck Me I'm Famous party, and being moved to collaborate with him to make big club and pop hits. Acts such as P. Diddy, Chris Brown, the Black Eyed Peas and Kanye West then made dance music cool in America by marginalizing the gay factor. This, Boston-born dance-music luminary Arthur Baker argues, paved the way for the takeover of Las Vegas by dance giants "like Paul Oakenfold, who upped things through his touring with Madonna, and then the new-school home-grown acts such as Deadmau5 and Skrillex, who gave the kids their own stars."

Indivisible from the artistic side of the equation is the scene's commercial rebranding. This was basically about finding a new terminology to disassociate raves and house and techno music from the traditional concerns authorities and parents had about them, with their sexy vibe of near-naked bodies and, most of all, almost every participant on mind-bending chemicals. The

game changer was the 2010 Electric Daisy Carnival at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. Advertising rave culture as EDM is one thing, but the past wasn't so easily air-brushed. A 15-year-old girl who managed to bypass the event's age restrictions and gain entry became the scene's first high-profile ecstasy-associated fatality.

The justifiable outcry that followed this tragedy might have been a blow but in fact became a huge leg up for EDM in America. Electric Daisy Carnival was forced out of Los Angeles but, fortuitously for the burgeoning scene, relocated to Las Vegas. Moreover, the incident advertised the fact that such huge events actually did exist in the States.

What we traditionally know as raves appeal not just to the public but also to entertainment entrepreneurs. Cheaper to put on than rock-and-roll festivals, they involve fewer people to deal with and less equipment to worry about. Ironically, due to ecstasy (now also rebranded as the powdered "molly") the crowds are generally far better behaved than at alcohol-soaked rock-and-roll festivals. And then there is the one thing America has in spades: space. Huge parking lots and giant sports stadiums abound, along with a ready-made events culture of people who are accustomed to filling them. The biggest factor quite possibly lies in those three little letters: EDM. Americans are not the most difficult people in the world to market things to—that's what comes of being the oldest mass consumer society on the planet. It's an unwritten law that for any big participatory event to be successful, it must, like the USA, be hung on three letters: UFC, NBA, NFL, MLB, etc. Thus, EDM.

Driving EDM to the musical mainstream requires financial viability, meaning electronic music on this side of the Atlantic has to pitch to the masses, and the ubiquitous four-four beats of house music need to infect almost every stream of popular music. The problem with this lowest-common-denominator effect is that it can often mean that much of the music isn't very good ("soulless shit," in Baker's words). It's hard to escape the contention that EDM is catering largely to people who simply want entertainment and have minimal immersion or emotional investment in the scene. When *The Wall Street Journal* is moved to complain about "The Dumbing Down of Electronic Dance Music," something is clearly awry.

Yet a counterargument runs that the older rave generations are on shaky ground complaining about the commercialization of dance music. We were the ones, after all, who, having had our fill of cold fields and disused factories, started to pine for proper toilets and bars. You can't have enough in the capitalist world of entertainment, only too much. So then came the VIP lounge and the velvet ropes of the superclub, another precedent of EDM.

The good and bad aspects of EDM were summed up by Chicago house legend and articulate observer of the American dance-music scene Tommie Sunshine: "I love the fact that this music is where it is. If you



"You idiot! You're gonna ruin it for the rest of us!"

say differently, you're either lying or you never got it in the first place. House music to me was always inclusive: I always wanted everyone to come to the party. We lost a lot of that inclusiveness when the whole bottle-service and dickhead-doorman thing became a cliché. But this subculture wasn't made up of people playing by the rules. And now people want to put rules on it. It's showbiz, and the love of music has been tragically lost."

Kids need their heroes, and as an old anti-house purist who grumbled about DJs stealing music before I succumbed to the power of the beat (and the pill), I'm in no position to bemoan the rise of musicianship and technological spectacle over DJ performance in dance music. But I also want people to know about the history and spirit of the rave. As Baker says, "No one is educating the kids on its underground ethnic roots, the forefathers of the old school, the gay DJs who were wiped out by AIDS. The cycle of history on dance music is about five to 10 years—before that the kids are clueless for the most part."

Here in America, Larry Levan is long gone, but some of the giants of techno and house such as Derrick May, Kevin Saunderson, Juan Atkins and Frankie Knuckles are still strutting their stuff. It would be great if today's EDM kids were checking them out. If you are investing heavily in something in terms of your time, money and social life, you should know about it. Why? Because it's yours: It's your culture and your history. If you don't, you're just another passive consumer in the supermarket line, waiting for the next tune before doing the hamster-on-the-wheel routine. And yes, since we put our own spin on it over in Europe, I also want people to know about Shoom, the Hacienda, Ibiza and the free party scene, culminating in Castlemorton and the Blackburn arrests.

Worryingly, there are signs of an imminent U.S. crackdown. The swaggering machismo of spring-break frat-boy culture has moved dubstep toward the harder sound of "brostep," which has been embraced in the States. There's no doubt the EDM experience is heavily packaged, less about music or even dancing than just about being a face in this huge extravaganza, partying hard and getting as fucked-up as possible. Another element of contemporary American EDM, one it shares with some of the harsher European techno scenes, is that under the veil of celebration there is often a tangible sense of anger and alienation. Members of the EDM generation are the first Americans who will be poorer than their parents, and they often carry a palpable sense of frustration associated with that status.

While the tragic ecstasy-related death of the teenager in 2010 illustrates that the scene perversely grows on notoriety, in the long run such incidents can only make it more visible to the authorities. The event illustrated the unavoidably symbiotic link between EDM and ecstasy. The *Los Angeles Times*, reporting on the Electric Daisy Carnival, stated that "about 120 attendees were taken to hospitals, mostly for drug intoxication."

There are only so many ways you can sanitize an experience that is, in essence, largely about the interface between a sound and a drug, whether you are celebrating or hiding by doing so. There will be people who say that drugs are irrelevant, that it's all about the music and they can dance themselves into a transcendental state. But with a few new-age nerdish or rehab-case exceptions, this is bullshit. If there's a party in the penthouse of a tower block, 90 percent of people, or more, will opt for the express elevator rather than 60 flights of stairs. Ecstasy, by increasing sensitivity to light, touch and above all beat, made the U.K. and European rave explosion, just as a more generic cocktail of drugs, led by MDMA, is now doing for dance music in America.

As I write this, there are moves by the city of Miami to restrict the Ultra festival, a magnificent three-day party that turns a sterile downtown into a tropical carnival. Inevitably drug use has been cited. Never

mind that every single weekend, in every city in America, just as many drugs will be consumed by unsupervised people who will then likely come into contact with sober citizens going about their business. An EDM festival packed with dancing, drug-fueled, sexually liberated youth is a soft target for a reactionary politician trying to hog headlines.

So, sadly, EDM seems almost custom-made to be shunted into the firing line, contested in an America increasingly divided by age and ideology. The threat to Ultra shows that right-wing, Tea Party-driven legislators, with their seemingly relentless quest to control the uterus and to proscribe through certification where the penis can and cannot be inserted, now have such events conclusively on their radar. EDM has changed America and is changing it still. Hang on tight; it could be a bumpy ride.



VILE RAT

(continued from page 62)

of it." When friends worried about his safety, he'd joke, "I'll try not to die this time."

On this afternoon in Libya, Smith noticed suspicious activity outside the compound. Attacks by extremist Islamic militiamen had been growing in Benghazi in recent months—rocket grenades fired at the Red Cross building in May, an IED explosion outside the U.S. compound in June. Now this was the onset of what would become the most controversial attack yet, a messy scandal for the Obama administration and a dark stain on Hillary Clinton's career.

But for Smith, it wasn't about diplomacy anymore; it was a struggle for survival. He took to his computer and fired up a chat window. He began urgently trying to describe the scene as it unfolded, "assuming we don't die tonight."

"We saw one of our 'police' that guard the compound taking pictures," he wrote.

Soon after he wrote "Fuck."

Then "Gunfire."

And then, nothing at all.

Smith's last messages didn't go to the White House. They went to the world where he lived a double life of diplomacy, a massively multiplayer online role-playing game called *Eve Online*. Run by CCP Games, an independent developer in Iceland, *Eve* pits players against one another in futuristic space wars. Though wildly complicated, it has become one of the most successful games on the internet, with more than 400,000 subscribers paying \$15 a month to battle for hours a day. It has also become an underground cultural phenomenon. There are *Eve* podcasts, online radio stations, blogs and fan festivals from Las Vegas to Moscow.

Yes, it's geeky, but it's also surprisingly influential and unique: a virtual world of geopolitical intrigue that attracts real-life spies, hackers and emissaries from across the globe. And in this parallel universe, no one was more influential than Sean Smith, who went by the name Vile Rat. As one of his *Eve* allies blogged after his death, "If you play this stupid game, you may not realize it, but you play in a galaxy created in large part by Vile Rat's talent as a diplomat."

Diplomacy is a game, and to understand the mind of this diplomat—and what was going through it the moment the consulate was attacked—you have to understand the game of *Eve*. Launched in 2003, it was created by a group of buddies in Reykjavik who wanted to put more balls and brains in computer-game warfare by making it more like real life. "*Eve* is a mirror of real-world geopolitics," says Alexander Gianturco, Smith's best friend in the game. "Territory is scarce, resources are scarce, and there are massive wars of people fighting over them."

The game takes place in New Eden, a galaxy of more than 7,500 star systems controlled by four warring factions. After logging on and creating your avatar—from

its shoes to its eyebrows—you join one of the competing races.

But that's where the similarities with other games end. Unlike in, say, *Call of Duty*, you don't have a required set of missions to complete or enemies to slaughter. Once you create a ship to pilot, you're off to explore the galaxy as you see fit. Flying a ship through *Eve* is like gliding through a dreamy sequence of *Star Trek*, with incandescent white supernovas and spiraling wormholes. But despite the beauty, *Eve* is a ruthless Wild West. As in reality, the battles center on making cash. To fuel this, *Eve* boasts one of the most complicated virtual economies on the internet, with its own currency. The game's builder employs a full-time staffer with a Ph.D. in economics.

Almost every item inside *Eve*—from the spaceships to the towers—is created, distributed and sold by the players. To earn money, players work at in-game jobs—seemingly menial tasks such as smashing rocks or driving a delivery truck. For hours a day. As in reality, sex can be a currency. One of the game's most notorious players, a busty blonde avatar named Tigerlily, is a self-described "sexpionage agent." She plies her trade in Pleasure Hubs, sections of *Eve* devoted to gambling and sex. She waits for high-profile pilots to fly through and then flirts with them in chat—hoping to lure them into a private chat session where they can have full-blown cybersex. "When you're presented with a sex slave and all she wants to do is suck your cock, it works out quite well," she says.

In real life Tigerlily works in national security for the Canadian government.

For added gravitas, *Eve* has a unique element of mortality. In the game, death is real. "The idea," says CCP spokesman Ned Coker, "was to have a massive universe where the core principles were that death has to mean something and everyone lives in the same game world." This is a radical departure from hit online games such as *World of Warcraft*, in which players can die and respawn without much consequence. By limiting itself to a one-game world and making losses permanent, *Eve* raises the stakes for gamers.

As in real life, evil is part of the game. "We don't regulate what players do," says Touborg, the game's lead designer. "We accept that people don't want to play good guy all the time."

For a player like Sean Smith—who would encounter his share of bad guys from Iraq to Libya—*Eve* was something remarkable: a political minefield with high stakes, just like the world he lived in day to day.

Smith grew up in a middle-class suburb of San Diego, an only child raised by a single mom. Despite his technical chops and ham radio hobby, he was no pencil-necked geek. He had a passion for Chargers football and motorcycles, eventually getting himself a Harley Sportster. After graduating from high school, he joined the Air Force, where he worked on ground radio maintenance and, during his six-year stint, became a staff sergeant.

It was during this time that he found his other home, online, at SomethingAwful.com, a comedy website that lampoons pop culture (featuring, for example, a series of titles for the porn versions of film classics, such as *Rear Windhole*). He hung out with other die-hard fans of the site in the Something Awful forums, where they called themselves Goons.

But the Goons didn't just sharpen their spears for goofy websites. They were serious gamers. And as Smith soon learned, few games seemed riper for conquest than a new one called *Eve Online*. The Goons began to trickle into the game, and soon they numbered in the thousands. As their power grew, the game began to trickle into their lives away from their computers. When one early leader left the Goons, rumors flew that he had stolen currency from his teammates. In retaliation they hacked into his e-mail. They found nude pictures of him and faxed photos of his penis to his office.

Goons also began to organize off-line meet-ups. During one, Smith met with some of the guys in Washington, D.C. They drank, talked politics and ribbed one another as most men do. "He was soft-spoken but a guy you would listen to," remembers Touborg.

There was a reason for Smith's quiet resolve. One day he let slip that when he wasn't fighting wars in *Eve*, he was working as a State operative in real life. To prove it, "I'd make him show me his diplomatic-immunity badge," recalls Sean Conover, a fellow Goon and the security director at CCP. But that was as much as he'd get from Smith. "He was pretty hush-hush," Conover says. "For him to tell me details while sitting in the Green Zone would be a pretty big deal. He had rockets lobbed at him every day. He plugged into a video game to not have to deal with that."

"Fuck mortars," Smith typed to his buddies in *Eve*. "Sirens again God dammit."

Smith was in Iraq, in his fifth year working with the State Department. Hearing the bombs fall around him was becoming routine. It was also wearing on his family. One day while talking with his mother, he suddenly went silent, then came back some minutes later.

"What's happening over there?" she asked.

"Listen," he replied and held out his phone.

His mother could hear explosions in the distance. As hard as it was, she tried to accept the dangers he faced in the line of service. "I can't spend my life worrying about it," she later recalled. "I accepted what he wanted to do."

Smith tried to make the most of his time in the war zone despite the 11-hour days. The situation in Iraq was beyond tense. The 2003 U.S.-led invasion had toppled Saddam Hussein's government, leaving a power vacuum in the region. Tribal warfare raged. The State Department in Baghdad had the unenviable task of steering political negotiations toward a peaceful regime that would work according to Washington's interests in the region. Meanwhile the death toll mounted by the

day. Suicide bombers killed hundreds in the first half of 2008 alone, and it seemed only a matter of time before someone targeted the U.S. consulate.

"We lived in shitty trailers and ate some kickass food," Smith later recalled. "This is the best job I can even dream up," he said on another occasion. "You do things every day, then you see it on CNN later." And another time: "Places are unimportant; people make the place in this line of work," he wrote. "The best post could be a living hell if your Ambassador/DCM/MGMT are bad, but the worst hellhole on the planet could be the place you always remember as your favorite post if the community is awesome."

A huge Obama supporter, Smith was known to go around slapping Obama stickers on Republicans' desks. For fun, the guys would grab a jeep and joyride into Baghdad to hit up the shops and restaurants. "It's a college party atmosphere," as he put it. "If you're spending that much time in your apartment, you'll be that weird shut-in guy. Don't be that guy (it's not healthy!)."

To help survive the insanity of life in a war zone, he escaped into battles in *Eve*, where he could apply what he was learning in real-life diplomacy to fueling the Goons' conquests. In Iraq he was observing firsthand how the U.S. was handling diplomatic efforts in the wake of Saddam Hussein's removal: increasing security in Baghdad, engaging in talks with Syria and Iran, joining forces with Iraqi tribe leaders to fight militants.

The Iraq war was directly mirroring the biggest battle ever in *Eve*, known as the Great War. As fellow Goon Gianturco describes it, the Great War was "a three-year grudge fuck between two blocs"—the Goons and a group called the Band of Brothers. As nerdy as an online war sounds, it's addictive for the players. The Great War was all about conquest, about which alliance would become the most powerful in the game.

Vile Rat sought peace where others sought war. "A lot of people think space-ships drew him to *Eve*," recalls his friend James Lohman, a 36-year-old computer-security specialist known in *Eve* as Digi. "But it was the politics, the espionage." And as a leader of the Goons, Smith decided to apply his real-life skills to the problems. "He created his own diplomatic section that was modeled on what he'd learned in the State Department," says Gianturco.

With more than 10,000 Goons to manage, Smith spent hours a day communicating with his fellow online diplomats, analyzing chat logs, examining intelligence. He created the Corps Diplomatique, based on his experience in the State Department. It was structured as a group consisting of chief and junior representatives. Getting into the Corps wasn't easy. Smith made prospective diplomats go through a demanding application process. They had to write essays and analyze political history. They had required reading: *The Years of Lyndon Johnson*, *The 48 Laws of Power*, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. They also had to pass tests on solving diplomatic challenges.

Eve's reputation for attracting real-life

hackers, diplomats and military personnel extends deep into the game's subculture. While Smith was negotiating for greater democracy within the virtual world, he was also recruiting the brightest gamers for real-life jobs with the State Department.

"He was one of State's best advocates for getting people onboard," Lohman says. "If he liked you and knew you decently enough, he'd do everything he could to talk you through the application process. The thing about Sean is that he loved his job very, very much. He loved the people and believed in the mission—the diplomatic mission, bringing democracy to people who don't have it but want it, keeping foreign relations intact."

"Can I offer a dissenting opinion on this one?"

It was March 2012 and Smith was taking his turn at the microphone alongside eight other leaders on a stage in Iceland. He wore a black Fanfest T-shirt pulled over a white one and had a bottle of beer before him. Smith had no idea, of course, that he had less than six months to live.

The occasion was the annual *Eve Online* Fanfest, a gathering for hundreds of the most hard-core players from around the world, none more hard-core than Smith and the other guys on the dais. They were the elected representatives of the Council of Stellar Management, a group of players responsible for conveying the concerns of the *Eve* community to the developers at CCP in Iceland.

The group was discussing whether there should be the equivalent of political parties within their online world. "The party system is a good way to get ideas coalesced around a particular candidate," Smith said, despite others' reservations. He suggested using the American system of democratic primaries as a model. "All the different candidates go in there and say, 'Okay, we're going to have our ideas clash, and the best person is going to get the votes of the community.'"

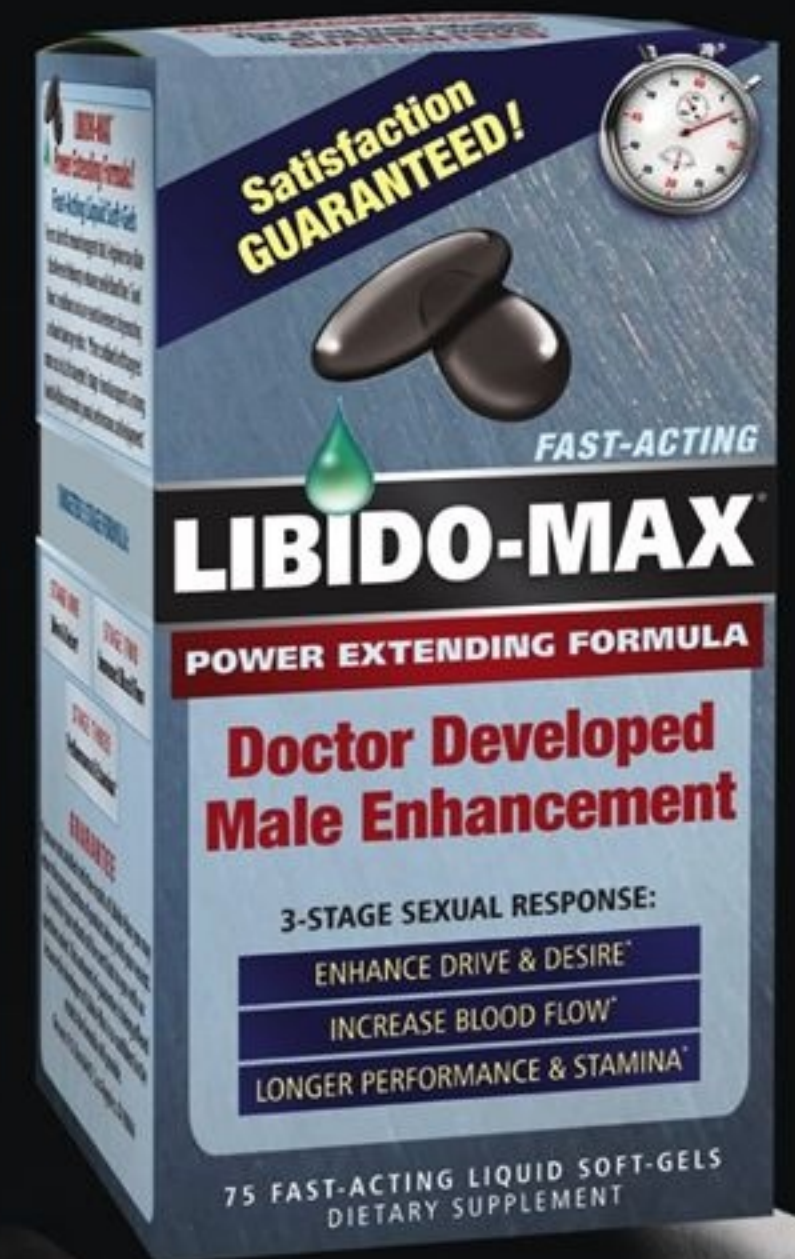
Meanwhile, a storm was brewing in Libya around similar issues: party systems, candidates, control, power. People were fighting over some of the same values Smith was lobbying for in *Eve*. And as he discovered to his horror just five months after the Fanfest, they were willing to kill for what they believed in.

Through the summer of 2012 a series of violent episodes in Libya heightened anxiety among Americans there—kidnappings, assassination attempts, attacks perpetrated by Al Qaeda operatives. The American diplomats, led by Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens, continued their work. Then on the evening of September 11 the situation exploded in a crescendo of terror outside Sean Smith's room in the consulate.

It began at 9:42 P.M., when mobs of armed men launched their assault. Seventeen minutes later a U.S. surveillance drone was dispatched to fly overhead. Less than 90 minutes after the initial assault, President Obama was alerted to the situation by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

By that time Smith had already typed his

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last words online from his desk. As he heard the security alarm sound over the gunfire, a security agent tried desperately to lead him and Ambassador Stevens toward safety. But there was no safety to be found. The building burst into flames, and asphyxiating black smoke choked the air. By the time the three reached an escape window, the smoke was so thick they could barely breathe.

On the brink of passing out, the security agent leaped out a window, gulping in air. Then he tore back inside. Frantically, he peered through the conflagration for Smith and Stevens, only to feel his lungs dam up with hellish darkness. Desperate to stay alive, the agent bolted for the roof to alert backup. An armored car arrived, and a team of agents stormed the building, scanning for Smith and Stevens in the flames.

In the online world that Smith called home, Goons were reeling. Smith had abruptly logged off mid-chat. Was he alive or dead? This wasn't the first time Smith

had been caught in crossfire, and his fellow Goons figured he was okay. "Sean, as long as Goons have known him, has been in some tough spots where places were hot and getting attacked," Lohman says. "He drops and says, 'Gotta go, gotta go,' and everyone laughs about it. There's a dark humor element. This was one of those times."

But as news of the attack hit the internet, Lohman began to feel increasingly nervous. With contacts from his job in government security and the spy world, he tapped his channels for information but kept coming up empty. "No one had anything, and the State operations center wasn't talking," he recalls. Finally another government-employed Goon tipped him off that Vile Rat was likely inside the consulate at the time. Casualties were being reported. "It's probably Sean," he told Lohman, "but I don't know for sure."

Over at CCP in Iceland, Conover reached out to Gianturco to see if he knew

anything. The news wasn't good. "Oh no, the attack on the Libyan consulate," Gianturco said. "Oh no, he's in there."

"Relax," Conover replied, trying to reassure himself against the unimaginable. "He's fine, no way."

In *Eve*, as in any other video game, there's one large difference from life off-line. In a video game, you have control. You can sit down and escape into a pixelated universe of friends and fun. Yes, you can die, but you can always come back. Even in *Eve*, where mortality is part of the game, if you die you can always enter the game again as a clone of your former self. You can live forever, fix your mistakes, find community and solace. And if anything goes wrong, all you have to do is hit a few buttons on your keyboard and start all over. That's what made this game such a haven for Smith and everyone else who found a home in *Eve*.

There was just one problem: It wasn't real.

The next day, Gianturco took to the *Eve Online* community to tell them that, this time, real war, real flames, real smoke, the awful and uncontrollable reality of reality, had beaten their friend. "My people, I have grievous news," he wrote. "Vile Rat has been confirmed to be KIA in Benghazi; his family has been informed and the news is likely to break out on the wire services soon. Needless to say, we are in shock, have no words and have nothing but sympathy for his family and children. I have known Vile Rat since 2006; he was one of the oldest of old-guard Goons and one of the best and most effective diplomats this game has ever seen. His family is in our thoughts and prayers."

Smith, Stevens and two American security agents had been killed in the attack. The news sent shock waves through the community online and at CCP. "It's just fucking odd," Touborg recalls. "Of all the people in Africa, four Americans die and you knew one of them—it was like getting struck by lightning."

"This is a man who was doing good work in Libya, trying to help people, and for this to happen was a terrible way to go," Conover says. "And the flip side was that Sean touched a lot of people in the game. As a diplomat, he was the guy people would talk to, he was the guy making sure we had friends. After seven years the people you touch and the ripples you create are tremendous. That's what makes it such a terrible thing."

It wasn't the first time a gamer in *Eve* died in real life, and there was some hesitancy to treat Smith's death differently from others. But the pilots of *Eve* knew this was unique given the awful nature of the attack and Smith's legendary status in the game. He was their greatest diplomat, online and off, and they would give him the send-off he deserved.

In addition to being memorialized in news pages and broadcasts across the world, Sean Smith became an unlikely lightning rod of outrage.

Conservative talk show host Glenn Beck accused Smith of being a CIA operative.



Smith's mother briefly took to the airwaves, pleading for answers from the government. "I begged them to tell me what happened," she said. "I look at TV and I see bloody handprints on walls, thinking, My God, is that my son's? I don't know if he was shot. I don't know—I don't know. They haven't told me anything. They are still studying it. And the things that they are telling me are just outright lies."

The deaths of Smith and the other Americans have continued to plague the Obama administration. Despite high-profile hearings, the entire truth about what happened in Benghazi may never be known.

In death as in life, Sean Smith was honored in the two worlds he inhabited. In the real world the tribute came on September 14 at Andrews Air Force Base outside Washington, D.C. A Marine procession carried the coffins of those killed in Libya onto the tarmac, draped in American flags. A somber crowd, including Smith's family, gathered as President Obama and Hillary Clinton took the podium to address them.

"Sean Smith, it seems, lived to serve," Obama said. "First in the Air Force, then with you at the State Department. He knew the perils of this calling from his time in Baghdad. There in Benghazi, far from home, he surely thought of Heather and Samantha and Nathan, and he laid down his life in service to us all. Today Sean is home."

Clinton also cited the friends, family and colleagues Smith left behind but added "and that's just in this world. Because online, in the virtual worlds that Sean helped create, he is also being mourned by countless competitors, collaborators and gamers who shared his passion."

For Smith and the others, after all, *Eve* was more than just a way to merge his online and off-line worlds of war games. It was a community. As a real-life envoy he was often on the move, far from his family, his friends and the safety of suburban life. Whether he was in Pretoria or Baghdad, he could sit down, press a few buttons and tap into a world of players who knew him better than anyone at his temporary posts. "At the end of three years he's off to somewhere else," says Lohman. "He didn't have time to get to know anybody. The internet is always on, so he put his time there."

Gamers took to Twitter to honor his memory. "Sean Smith had it right," tweeted one. "Use diplomacy in real life and only fight wars with other gamers online." Some posted YouTube videos. "To the rest of the world, his name was Sean Smith," reads the text overlay of one as it fades into dreamy space clouds. "To us, his name was Vile Rat." But the most elaborate honor came inside the game itself. Dozens of players steered their ships into outer space, positioning themselves over a patch of deep black darkness and flickering white stars. There, they ignited spherical defense fields that emitted a purplish glow. From a distance, the lights of the individual purple spheres blurred together to spell a phrase, one that burned indelibly in their hearts and minds: "RIP Vile Rat."



GHOST

(continued from page 81)

she's supposed to wanna fuck you."

Ever since the accident, Doc's speaking voice has been a flat, crackly growl. He makes a weird Cyrano, coaching Plaboi through what's supposed to be a seduction song. Another take. Doc listens with his head down on the console. Plaboi's still putting too much mustard on it—too much Lil Wayne, not enough Drake. Or think of "Nuthin' but a G Thang," how what grabbed people about it was the matter-of-fact way Dre and Snoop delivered their rhymes, just a few degrees of swagger away from normal speech. Doc and Snoop wrote that.

"You got too much comedy on it," Doc tells Plaboi. "This is a song about fucking. You ain't gonna walk in the club with a rubber nose hangin' off your dick. You wanna be swangin'. This is Colt 45 malt liquor."

Finally, after a couple more takes, Doc gets on the talk-back and says to Plaboi, "I'm gonna need you to take this song home and learn it, kinfolk. Because you learned it, but you learned it the way you do it."

Then he says, "I gotta blow," and looks around the room for Duke.

Duke's real name is Steven Blackmon. He's married to Doc's sister, but Doc calls him his brother. Duke has a goatee, box-fresh Converse, a little gold in his teeth and a white iPhone earbud always dangling from one ear. He doesn't talk, but he's silent in a not-unfriendly way, like he's just saving battery life or paying attention to things that aren't you.

Duke has two jobs: He drives Doc around all day, and he makes sure Doc blows into a GPS-equipped wireless portable Breathalyzer called a Soberlink every day at 10 A.M., two P.M., six P.M. and 11 P.M. Condition of his parole. If he tests positive for alcohol, he goes to jail.

"You supposed to blow at two," Doc explains. "You got until 2:30. At 2:31, you're late. And if the president didn't call and tell you not to do it, your excuse won't wash."

He's learned that the hard way. In 2011, on Thanksgiving Day, Doc—who was on probation for DWI at the time—was at home with family and figured he'd have a beer. One turned into a six-pack; he blew dirty the next morning and ended up staring across the desk at a new probation officer, who looked at Doc's file and said, "You've got a drinking problem." Doc, with that tone he can take with people sometimes, said, "No, I've got an authority problem."

She violated him back right then and there. Doc lucked out, though: He landed in front of a Dallas felony court judge named John C. Creuzot, who was near the end of his 20 years on the bench and had lately become a stalwart proponent of diversion programs, in which repeat offenders facing jail time are instead steered into rigorously supervised treatment and counseling.

Doc spent January through March 2012 in county jail—the Lew Sterrett Justice Center, here in Dallas—and then did seven months in rehab. He didn't see his eight-year-old daughter, Puma, whose mother is the singer Erykah Badu, whom he's known

since they were both aspiring rappers hanging out in the same Dallas teen clubs. Didn't see his own mother. Saw his manager, John Huffman, exactly once. But he got sober. On November 6, 2012 he was released from rehab; now, after 30 days of enforced curfew, he has started to rebuild his life.

He goes to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings where the older gentlemen in their slacks and good shoes remind him of Rudy Ray Moore in *Dolemite*, as though any minute Queen Bee herself is going to kick down the door. There are four things on the backseat of Doc's car: *Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book*, a copy of *The 50th Law* (a Machiavelli-for-managers textbook co-authored by Robert Greene and 50 Cent), a three-disc bootleg mixtape entitled *Love Justice: 90s Street Romance Music* and a laptop bag that could keep a hot-air balloon anchored.

This morning, Duke drives him and Huffman out to a middle school in Cedar Hill, southwest of Dallas, so he can talk to a classroom full of at-risk kids about the importance of not squandering their potential, about how jail "ain't where you want to be." It's the first time he's ever done a speaking gig like this; afterward he tells me, "What you just witnessed was the first moment of my adult life."

The next phase of his adult life, in the manner of many modern bids for redemption, involves a reality-TV show. A pilot has been shot, laying the groundwork for a show on which Doc coaches a handpicked cast of local Dallas rappers—Plaboi is one of them—and teaches them to deliver lyrics he's written. They're calling it *I Got My Voice Back*. Maybe it will be a premium-cable series. Maybe it will come out in snippets online. They're keeping the concept loose as Doc figures out what to do next.

Surgery is now available that can fix what happened to Doc in that accident, surgery that didn't exist back then. Surgery that doesn't actually, technically, exist as an option in this country. There's a doctor in Spain who, using stem cells, grew a whole new trachea for a woman who'd lost hers in an accident. Maybe the show will be about Doc exploring those options. He's not sure yet. The surgery's no joke, and he would do it only if he thought it could help change the laws regarding stem-cell research in this country.

"At this point, at 44, it's gotta be for some other reason than for me to fuckin' rap again," he says. "It's gotta be a bigger cause."

What's important right now is that he do something positive with this second chance he's been given—even if it's just putting Dallas's hip-hop scene on the map a little bit.

"Houston had their chance," he tells the kids. "Atlanta had their chance. Them boys in Louisiana had their chance. L.A., New York, Chicago—Dallas, we're the only ones that haven't had our shot yet. We've got some of the best young producers, some of the best young singers—everything they got, we got. Matter of fact, we might be better than them. I was."

This is a story about two men who have enormous power over each other because they need each other. Doc has made two

comeback albums since the accident, 1996's *Helter Skelter* and 2003's *Deuce*. Both of them have their moments, but neither featured Dre as producer, neither got his endorsement, and neither sold. And Dre has never finished a solo record without Doc's help—whether Dre needs him as a lyricist, a sounding board or a good-luck charm is hard to say, but he needs Doc as much as Doc needs him.

Their creative lives have been entangled since the moment they met in Dallas in the late 1980s, sometime after N.W.A released their first single, the epochal outlaw manifesto "Boyz-n-the Hood."

Doc and the Fila Fresh Crew had made a few records by then. When DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince's ingratiating novelty-rap act started catching on, Doc wrote his own Will Smith-style goofy everyman song, "I Hate to Go to Work." In the video he's in a shirt and tie, groaning through a case of the Mondays, uttering no epithet stronger than *sheesh*. A few months later, when they heard "Boyz-n-the Hood" for the first time, they felt embarrassed. "Boyz-n-the Hood" wasn't shirt-and-tie rap. It wasn't put-upon-nice-guy music. It was matter-of-fact menace, realness *über alles*.

"The world was changing," Doc says, "from 'Parents Just Don't Understand' to kids just don't give a fuck."

Not long after that, Dre comes through Dallas. As a favor to Fila Fresh Crew manager Dr. Rock—they were both in the L.A. electro-funk group World Class Wreckin' Cru for a minute—he agrees to produce some tracks for the group. In the studio, he sees Doc rapping, sees Doc coming up with rhymes and feeding them to Fresh-K, sees potential for him as a solo act—but he also sees a guy who could potentially help put words in Eazy's mouth.

He takes Doc aside and says, "Come to California. We'll both get rich."

Nobody thought of L.A. as any kind of hip-hop mecca back then. Growing up in Dallas, Doc absorbed mostly East Coast influences. When he first heard rap music, it was Run-DMC, Fat Boys, LL Cool J. He had his mind blown the first time he heard Rakim and Slick Rick, rap's first master of linear narrative.

Doc learned to love words by reading to his paternal grandmother—big books, way over his head. He'd sung at the arts magnet school. He loved Richard Pryor, wanted to be a comedian. His sixth-grade teacher, Mrs. Stevens, would let him do five minutes of stand-up at the end of class on Fridays if he had refrained from being a fuckup the rest of the week.

This was probably the best year of his life, he says. His parents were together, living in the suburbs. The next year they split. Doc moved back into the projects in Dallas with his maternal grandmother. "She was a loving woman," he says, "but her love was stern love. Her love had knuckle prints on it."

Now for school Doc was bused way out to Highland Park, where the white kids threw the *N* word around freely and the imported ghetto kids ran in self-protecting packs. "I spent a lot of time inside," Doc says. "It kept me alone, imagining the future, contemplating what I wanted to be."

All the contradictions, all the ontological slipperiness concerning realness and criminality and theater that have shaped and undone hip-hop from the gangsta era forward—it's all encoded in N.W.A's DNA from the jump. They deal in painful,

unvarnished truth and violent exploitation-flick fantasy. They're black music's Sex Pistols, simultaneously a scourge of hypocrisy and a world-class con job. In addition to being the bank, Eazy is a street dude with unassailable cred, but he can't write rhymes—his "reality raps" are scripted by Ice Cube and MC Ren. They've succeeded in turning Eazy into an icon—the Ruthless Villain. But now they need somebody to get him on the radio, to write him lyrics whose every other word isn't *bitch* or *motherfucker*. Cube is already writing for Eazy, but he isn't going to smooth Eazy's edges. Doc says that back then "Cube was always Cube. He was going to say, 'I'm going to cut your throat and leave you in the Dumpster.' That's just what it is." That's where Doc comes in.

"I've always known how to talk to white people," Doc says. "I knew if you made it funny and clever, it would be less threatening. You could say whatever you wanted as long as you let 'em know it's a joke. Don't take it to heart; I'm not really going to cut your heart out. But I might."

A few days after Doc arrives in California, Dre drives him to a recording studio in Torrance, where most of N.W.A is waiting. Doc meets MC Ren and DJ Yella, and he meets Eazy. Eazy's one of those guys. Not a star quite yet, but he already has a magnetism. "When Eazy was in the room," Doc says, "you knew it. Even if you didn't see him walk in. It would spread. That's what kind of person he was."

But even a matinee idol needs a script. Dre puts on a drum track—a big rubbery funk loop from the title track of Bootsy Collins's 1977 sophomore album, *Ahh... The Name Is Bootsy, Baby!*—and says to Doc, "Can you write Eazy something to this?" In 10, maybe 15 minutes Doc has a lyric, and "We Want Eazy" ends up being the highest-charting single off Eazy's solo debut, *Eazy-Duz-It*.

There's a "We Want Eazy" video. Nobody asks Doc to be in it. He's pissed, like "Damn, I wrote this fuckin' song" pissed, but he doesn't say anything, worried if he does they'll tell him to fuck off back to Dallas. At N.W.A shows he'll be out in the lobby, hearing people talking about Eazy, about how Eazy's the greatest, off some songs Doc wrote. But there's not much he can do. He isn't a full-fledged member of the band. He's a fifth Beatle. Around this time he starts going by "the D.O.C." instead of "Doc-T." He wants to associate his brand more closely with N.W.A's. The letters in "D.O.C." don't stand for anything. He just wants his own acronym.

It didn't help matters that his name doesn't appear in the album credits. Sometime after "We Want Eazy" blew up, Doc gave Eazy the publishing rights to the song, accepting a gold chain as payment. He never officially signed anything, he says, but he also says he was never much of a businessman, that he would have signed whatever Eazy put in front of him. He didn't expect Eazy to claim later that the gold-chain deal entitled him to *all* the songs Doc wrote during his tenure with Ruthless Records, from *Eazy-Duz-It* all the way through N.W.A's second album, *Niggaz4Life*—but today he admits he probably should have.

"It's not that Eric was a bad person,"



"It's my husband! Think, where did I put the handcuff keys?!"

Doc says. "But he was a dope man. Taking advantage of people is part of that territory. You can't feel any kind of way about it."

The chain has a gold nameplate with diamonds in it, just like the ones the guys in N.W.A were starting to buy, but smaller. I ask him to ballpark the chain's retail value.

"About three grand," Doc says with a tight, weary smile. "I don't know if Eric knew he'd just fucked the shit out of me, but I imagine he did."

There wasn't time to worry about it. Things were moving too fast. N.W.A was going somewhere every weekend, doing shows. "It was nuts, on some Beatles kind of shit," Doc says. "A zillion kids fuckin' shaking the van because you sitting inside. Eazy-E fans, man. They wanted that little dude. And he was loving it. He took full advantage of the perks. Ended up costing him, though." (Eazy died of AIDS in 1995, at the age of 31, after running through groupies as though he were keeping score by the pound.)

The shine finally started to trickle down. N.W.A's first national tour opened in Nashville in the spring of 1989, with Doc doing eight minutes a night as an opening act. The crowds dug him. *No One Can Do It Better* dropped that June; within three months it sold 500,000 copies. By the end of the tour he was doing 30-minute sets. Radio picked up on "It's Funky Enough," a Dre

production with way more commercial reach than, say, "Fuck tha Police." Years later, when *Rolling Stone* asked Chris Rock to make a list of the greatest rap albums of all time, the comedian put *No One Can Do It Better* at number 11. "I was going to school in Brooklyn," he wrote, "and the only time you could see rap videos was on a weekend show with Ralph McDaniels called *Video Music Box*. D.O.C.'s video for 'It's Funky Enough' premiered, and D.O.C. had an L.A. Kings hat on. When I came to school on Monday, half the kids in Brooklyn had L.A. Kings hats on. It was official."

By the fall of 1989, Doc is feeling like a star. He's partying and drinking. At his side is Suge Knight. Suge had played college football, had suited up for the Rams a couple of times. Suge has ties to the Bloods, or finds it expedient to let people think he does. Suge is either a concert promoter or a security guy or a record executive on the rise, depending on who asks, and in the meantime he deals in physical intimidation.

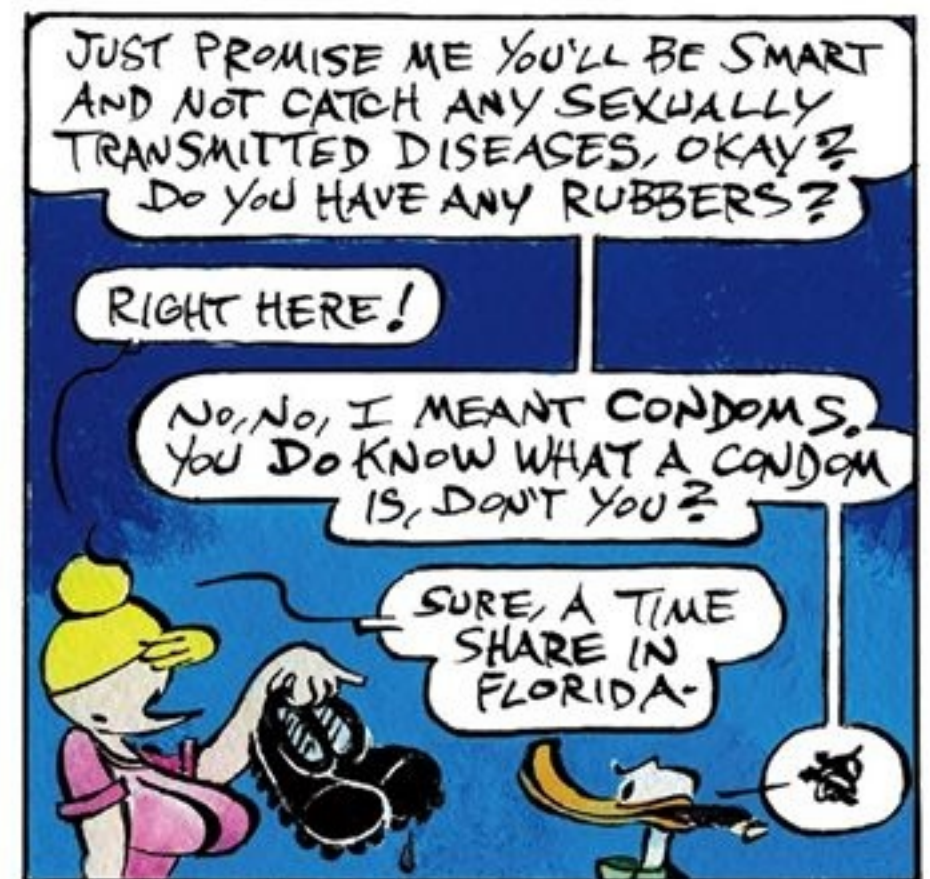
"A lot of people called him my bodyguard," Doc says, "because he was a 300-pound dude who beat people up after I made a mess. But no—he was just a buddy." After a while no club in Hollywood would have them, Doc says, "because invariably

I'd get drunk, slap some woman on her ass and start a fight. And he'd beat up a bunch of people, and then I'd get the girl and go home. He loved it. He's a bruiser; that's what he did."

But Suge has ideas and connections. Suge and Doc talk about starting a label together. Suge knows Dick Griffey, founder of SOLAR Records—an old-school industry dude, one of those guys "who's got enough nuts to get it done by any means necessary," Doc says. "Griffey packed a gun every day in his little office. He'd pull it out and sit it on the table."

The label is still coming together that fall when Doc celebrates the completion of principal photography on two music videos—including "The Formula," in which Dre plays Frankenstein and Doc is the monster he's bringing to life—by spending the following day driving around partying and chasing girls. Around 3:30 A.M. he leaves a girlfriend's home in Beverly Hills. On Wilshire Boulevard a cop car flashes its lights at him. Doc tries to get away; he hits a couple of right turns, parks his Honda Prelude on a side street and gets low. A few seconds later, a cop taps Doc's window with a billy club. Maybe because he's still wasted, Doc jumps out of the car and starts performing for the cops right then and there, like the famous rapper he is. The cops laugh and

Dirty Duck[®] by Bobby London



give him a ticket. Doc has all his gold and platinum records in the trunk of the car; he takes them out and poses for pictures with the cops.

Thirty minutes later on the freeway, he falls asleep at the wheel and hits a concrete divider. He's thrown through the window and smashes into a tree face-first. The cops have to pry his teeth out of the tree bark.

"Rap musician Tracy Lynn Curry of the D.O.C. was in stable condition after losing control of his car on the Ventura Freeway, authorities said."

"Curry, 21, suffered injuries to his face, including damage to one eye and his nose, said California Highway Patrol Officer David Grajeda. He was in stable condition Thursday at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, said spokesman Ron Wise."

"Grajeda said Curry had alcohol on his breath after the accident Tuesday and was arrested but released before being booked so he could get medical attention."—Los Angeles Times, "Rapper Injured in Car Wreck," November 17, 1989"

"The whole West Coast hip-hop movement changed direction the night I had that accident," Doc says. "Everybody's fortunes changed that night."

When he arrives at Cedars-Sinai, Doc has so much stuff in his system the doctors can't sedate him. When they try to intubate him, he thrashes around and the tube damages his vocal cords. He endures 20 hours of reconstructive surgery on his face. Amazingly, he comes through the accident without a single broken bone—but after the intubation his voice is destroyed. He can speak, but the golden voice is now a ravaged croak. Half his gift gone, just like that.

There's psychological fallout too. His hits become a curse. "I couldn't stand to listen to myself," he says. "If I went to a club and they played my song, I'd have to leave."

People tell him he should retire, go out on top instead of trying to make another record with his fucked-up voice; Dre is one of them. Dre still has work for him behind the scenes. In January 1990, Ice Cube quits N.W.A to go solo, and Doc becomes the group's principal songwriter, supplying lyrics for "Always Into Somethin'," "Appetite for Destruction" and other songs on *Niggaz4Life*, N.W.A's final full-length album, and for the EP *100 Miles and Runnin'*.

At Suge's urging, Doc starts whispering to Dre, urging him to let Suge take a look at Dre's contract. You may know how the story goes from here. Suge convinces Dre to leave Ruthless Records and sign with his new company, which he and Doc are calling Funky Enough Records. Suge convinces N.W.A manager Jerry Heller and Eazy-E to let Dre and Doc out of their Ruthless contracts; he allegedly brings two large men toting lead pipes and Louisville Sluggers to the meeting to set the mood. With Dre in the fold as house producer, Suge proceeds to build Funky Enough into one of the biggest rap labels in the country. Except he's no longer calling it Funky Enough. The label is now called Death Row.

Doc helps talk Dre into making a solo album, promising to write lyrics for it. Dre's stepbrother, the rapper Warren G, brings a charismatic 20-year-old rapper from Long Beach into the fold, Calvin Broadus, who goes by Snoop Doggy Dogg. When they start making *The Chronic*, Doc still has money, a Benz and a place near Agoura Hills. Snoop

and Warren G move in. Snoop can rap, but Doc works with him on turning rhymes into actual songs. He sends Snoop upstairs to a spare bedroom, makes him write for an hour. Doc goes over what Snoop's written, like an editor, saying, "This line's really cool. Let's cut this one out. This one is dope, but it would sound better if you put it here."

"I'd smooth out the rough edges," Doc says.

At some point it's made clear to Doc that despite having been a founding partner in Funky Enough, he no longer owns a piece of Death Row. There's not much he can do. And you eat well when you're making records with Dre. Even when Doc has to cut his overhead and move into a one-bedroom apartment with Snoop and six or seven other guys, it's exciting enough not to feel like privation. They're partying, but they're also creating music, writing hits for Dre. And whenever the money runs out, Doc hits up Dre and Dre has his handlers cut a check and Doc buys 40s, weed, even ecstasy—this before every rapper in the world got into ecstasy, Doc says, "back when X was brand-new and nobody did it but white kids from Orange County." It took the edge off.

"People were getting beat up in the studio," Doc says. "It turned into gangland. There was Bloods and Crips in there every day, and there was always that thing in the air—you didn't know whether or not there'd be some shooting. There were shots fired in that place. The only way I felt comfortable there was being loaded."

And yet it felt safer somehow than trying to figure out what to do next. And when he finally does leave, years later, in 1994, it isn't because of the violence or because he's been kicked out of his piece of the company or anything else. It's because he has a fight with Dre. Doc writes a song he wants to record as a comeback single, fucked-up voice and all. But Dre's making a record called *Helter Skelter*—a duets album, him and Ice Cube, back together for the first time since N.W.A's *Straight Outta Compton*. And when Dre hears Doc's song, he decides he wants to record it himself. It's the last straw. Doc packs up and moves to Atlanta, where he works with the rapper MC Breed.

In 1996, with help from the Dallas producer Erotic-D, Doc finally puts out his second solo album; as a jab at Dre, he calls it *Helter Skelter*. Dre's *Helter Skelter* is never finished.

They've been on and off ever since.

"Dre and I have had this break-up-to-make-up kind of thing for fuckin' 20 years," Doc says. "I think it's partly because we respect each other and partly because I don't give a fuck how much money you got, I'm not going to take shit from you. I'm not going to kiss your ass. I remember when you didn't have one dollar. Now that you have 100 million of them or 500 million of them, that don't make your ass no less funky to me."

Last year, not long after Doc went to rehab, Huffman got a call from Dre's people saying Dre wanted Doc to come to Miami to help him out with a song he was cutting with Jay-Z and Rick Ross, which would eventually



be released as “3 Kings” on Ross’s 2012 album *God Forgives, I Don’t*, and Huffman had to explain to Dre’s people that Doc was indisposed. When I talk to Doc in Dallas, he says he understands that this may have been the last straw.

“I think he’s at a point where he sees me as, you know, ‘You’re never going to get it. You’re never going to figure it out,’” Doc says. “And I don’t blame him for that. I haven’t given him any real cause to see that I’m not the same dude I was then.”

(When reached for comment, Dre’s longtime publicist spoke kindly of Doc but told me Dre and Doc’s relationship was complicated and that Dre’s willingness to participate in this article would depend on where he and Doc stood. A subsequent attempt to reach Dre through his Aftermath label also yielded nothing. A few months after I left Dallas, Doc’s manager told me Dre’s people had gotten back in touch with Doc. Doc has written five new songs for Dre, and he’s working on more new material for *Detox* with Memphis producer Jazze Pha.)

Plaboi takes a seat on the couch in the back of the studio control room, next to another *I Got My Voice Back* cast member, a 30-year-old white rapper who records under the name Blaze Won. Doc steps into the recording booth. He’s written some new lyrics for a song he wants Blaze Won to record and wants to cut a demo version for Blaze to study. A studio engineer named Hal Fitzgerald plays the beat. It’s an elegiac, synth-driven instrumental—kind of a rap power ballad, like something Eminem might emote over. Lyrics about war, “chemical verbiage,” the weight of history, politicians lying to Fox News.

Doc takes a few runs at the song, and then—jokingly, almost off-mike, like a warm-up—he starts saying some of the lines in this voice. It sounds a little like Rick Ross, a little like Abe Simpson, a little like Vito Corleone’s ghost. What it doesn’t sound like is Doc’s usual sandpaper growl.

There were these two Mexican kids with him in rehab, Doc tells me later, who to annoy people would walk around making weird-ass yawning noises without moving their mouths. One day one of the kids made the sound, and Doc got mad and made it back to him, as if to say “I know it’s you, motherfucker,” and after a second he realized that when he’d made the noise, it didn’t come out flat and gravelly like his regular voice. Without even trying, he’d used some other part of his throat to generate a tone.

“I tried to do it again and couldn’t, and then I let out a big-ass yawn and did it again. Every time I yawned, I yawned loud and tried to make that note stay, like a clear note. Once I started doing that, it got a little stronger.”

He’s tried rapping in this voice before, but this is the first time he’s done it in front of people. You can tell it’s not something he’s physiologically meant to do—he gulps air between bars and can’t get too many words out at a time. He keeps asking Hal to stop

the tape, wind it back, let him punch it in line by line. But in spite of all that, it’s working. He’s rapping.

When Huffman walks in and hears the sound coming out of Doc’s mouth, his eyes bug out.

“You hear that?” he says to Hal. “What can you do with it?”

“I don’t know yet,” Hal says. Huffman doesn’t look at Doc in the booth, as if making eye contact might break the spell. He’s staring over Hal’s shoulder at the Pro Tools readout.

“That is fucking insane,” Huffman says. “That is fucking insane, dude.”

His newly adapted voice is only a little more expressive an instrument than his gravelly postaccident one. But there are possibilities. If he can create a tone, maybe he can Auto-Tune his vocals, like all the hot rappers do these days. They can piece together a song on the computer. He could put something out—just a single. Maybe he won’t put his name on it. See how people respond if they think it’s a whole new guy.

“One day that shit’s gonna work,” Doc says, hanging his headphones on a music stand, “and it’s gonna freak you guys out.”

He’s decided to keep the song he was demoing, rewrite the lyrics to suit his own story, maybe put it out as the first new D.O.C. song in almost a decade. Duke gets on the freeway and Doc opens his laptop, cues up the beat in iTunes and opens a Word document—lyrics in all-caps boldface. The beat plays softly for the rest of the ride as Doc tinkers on-screen, fine-tuning a new first verse:

*“I watched the world pass while sleepin’ in first class
Usin’ bodies, rotten from following the world’s path
Huh, kissing the devils’ asses while they laughin’
As if now for better or for worse I’m married to the math
Not a Catholic, but rosaries tatted, a confused addict
5150, medication habit, illegal racket
White rabbits scattered through purple hills
Another tragic ending, I can feel it, my heart’s rapid, the end’s near
Another classic, sadly, whose Achilles heel was smokin’ and drinkin’ to cover cheers and hide fear
Lost in resentments, and usin’ pain so cavalier
Now I’m left with dreams of Puma
Knowing what greatness is
Always contemplating what could have been
Leaving me emotionally suicidal for 20 years
Cursing my higher power
I choose to call God’s ear
And even after all of the shit I gave
I’m still here, I’m still here”*

Doc is bobbing his head almost imperceptibly, fingers moving on the keys, making tiny fixes—“smokin’” becomes “smoking,” “but” becomes “cuz.” It’s a work in progress, but he knows he’s onto something.



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DAVID BOWIE

(continued from page 105)

Kensington. I'd have a houseboy named Richard to order around.

PLAYBOY: How much of that are we supposed to believe? Your former publicist, the celebrated ex-groupie Cherry Vanilla, says she's slept with you and that you're not gay at all. She says you just let people *think* you like guys.

BOWIE: Oh, I'd love to meet this impostor she's talking about. It sure ain't me. That's actually a lovely quote. Cherry's almost as good as I am at using the media.

PLAYBOY: Yet the fact remains that you've never been seen with a male lover. Why?

BOWIE: Oh, Lord, I got over being a queen quite a long time ago. For a while, it was pretty much 50-50, and now the only time it tempts me is when I go over to Japan. There are such beautiful-looking little boys over there. Little boys? Not *that* little. About 18 or 19. They have a wonderful sort of mentality. They're all queens until they reach 25, then suddenly they become samurai, get married and have thousands of children. I love it.

PLAYBOY: Why, at a time when nobody else in rock would have dared allude to it, did you choose to exploit bisexuality?

BOWIE: I would say that America forced me into it. Someone asked me in an interview once—I believe it was in 1971—if I were gay. I said, “No, I’m bisexual.” Seventy-one was a good American year. Sex was still shocking. Everybody wanted to see the freak. There was very little talk of bisexuality or gay power before I came along. When they told me that a drag-queen cult was forming behind me, I said, “Fine, don’t try to explain it; nobody is going to bother to try to understand it.” I’ll play along, absolutely *anything* to break me through. All the papers wrote *volumes* about how sick I was, how I was helping to kill off true art. In the meantime, they used up all the space they could have given over to true artists. That really is pretty indicative of how compelling pretension is, that it commanded that amount of bloody writing about what color my hair was gonna be next week. I want to know why they wasted all that time and effort and paper on my clothes and my pose. *Why?* Because I was a dangerous statement.

The follow-up to that, now that I’ve decided to talk a little more—if only to you—was, “How dare he have such a strenuous ego?” That, in itself, seemed a danger to some people. Am I, as a human being, worth talking about? I frankly think, Yes, I am. I believe myself with the utmost sincerity.

PLAYBOY: But aren’t you having trouble getting *other* people to believe you? Take, for example, your well-publicized farewells to showbiz. You’ve retired twice, swearing you’d never have another thing to do with rock and roll. Yet you’ve just finished a six-month world concert tour, promoting your newest rock-and-roll album, *Station to Station*. How do you rationalize these contradictions?

BOWIE: I lie. It’s quite easy to do. Nothing matters except whatever it is I’m doing at the moment. I can’t keep track of everything

I say. I don’t give a shit. I can’t even remember how much I believe and how much I don’t believe. The point is to grow into the person you grow into. I haven’t a clue where I’m gonna be in a year. A raving nut, a flower child or a dictator, some kind of reverend—I don’t know. That’s what keeps me from getting bored.

PLAYBOY: What else do you do to keep from getting bored?

BOWIE: You name it.

PLAYBOY: How about drugs?

BOWIE: What year is it now? Seventy-six? I suppose I’ve been knocking on heaven’s door for about 11 years now, with one sort of high or another. The only kinds of drugs I use, though, are ones that keep me working for longer periods of time. I haven’t gotten involved in anything heavy since 1968. I had a silly flirtation with smack then, but it was only for the mystery and enigma of trying it. I never really enjoyed it at all. I like fast drugs. I hate falling out, where I can’t stand up and stuff. It seems like such a waste of time. I hate downs and slow drugs like grass. I hate sleep. I would much prefer staying up, just working, all the time. It makes me so mad that we can’t do anything about sleep or the common cold.

PLAYBOY: How much have drugs affected your music?

BOWIE: The music is just an extension of me, so the question really is, “What have drugs done to me?” They’ve fucked me up, I think. Fucked me up nicely and I’ve quite enjoyed seeing what it was like being fucked-up.

PLAYBOY: Then you agree with the reviewer who called your *Young Americans* album “a fucked-up LP from a fucked-up rock star”?

BOWIE: Well, *The Man Who Sold the World* is actually the most drug-oriented album I’ve made. That was when I was the most fucked-up. *Young Americans* probably is a close second, but that is from my current drug period. *The Man* was when I was holding on to some kind of flag for hashish. As soon as I stopped using that drug, I realized it dampened my imagination. End of slow drugs.

PLAYBOY: That doesn’t sound much like the guy who was recently busted in upstate New York for possession of eight ounces of marijuana.

BOWIE: Rest assured the stuff was not mine. I can’t say much more, but it did belong to the others in the room that we were busted in. Bloody potheads. What a dreadful irony—me popped for grass. The stuff sickens me. I haven’t touched it in a decade.

PLAYBOY: In the song “Station to Station,” though, you do refer to cocaine—

BOWIE: Yes, yes. The line is “It’s not the side effects of the cocaine...I’m thinking that it must be love.” Do the radio stations bleep it out?

PLAYBOY: None that we’ve heard. Did you have any reservations about using the line in the song?

BOWIE: None whatsoever.

PLAYBOY: One might easily construe it as advocating the use of cocaine. Or is that the message?

BOWIE: I have no message whatsoever. I really have nothing to say, no suggestions or advice, nothing. All I do is suggest some

ideas that will keep people listening a bit longer. And out of it all, maybe *they’ll* come up with a message and save me the work. My career has kind of been like that. I get away with murder.

PLAYBOY: You claim you like to work all the time, yet you release only one album a year. What exactly do you do between recording sessions?

BOWIE: I write songs and screenplays and poems, I paint, I do Kirlian photography, I manage myself, I act. I produce, I record, sometimes I tour. I could give you five new and unreleased David Bowie albums right now. I could just hand them over. I’ve got an incredible backlog of material. Work, work, work....

PLAYBOY: Do you ever relax?

BOWIE: If you’re asking whether or not I take vacations, the answer is no. I find all my relaxation within the context of work; I’m very serious about that. I’ve always thought the only thing to do was to try to go through life as Superman, right from the word go. I felt far too insignificant as just another person. I couldn’t exist thinking all that was important was to be a *good* person. I thought, Fuck that; I don’t want to be just another honest Joe. I want to be a supersuperbeing and improve all the equipment that I’ve been given to where it works 300 percent better. I find that it’s possible to do it.

PLAYBOY: Surely you doubt yourself sometimes.

BOWIE: Not so much anymore. About two years ago, I realized I had become a total product of my concept character Ziggy Stardust. So I set out on a very successful crusade to reestablish my own identity. I stripped myself down and took myself apart, layer by layer. I used to sit in bed and pick on one thing a week that I either didn’t like or couldn’t understand. And during the course of the week, I’d try to kill it off.

PLAYBOY: What was the first thing you attacked?

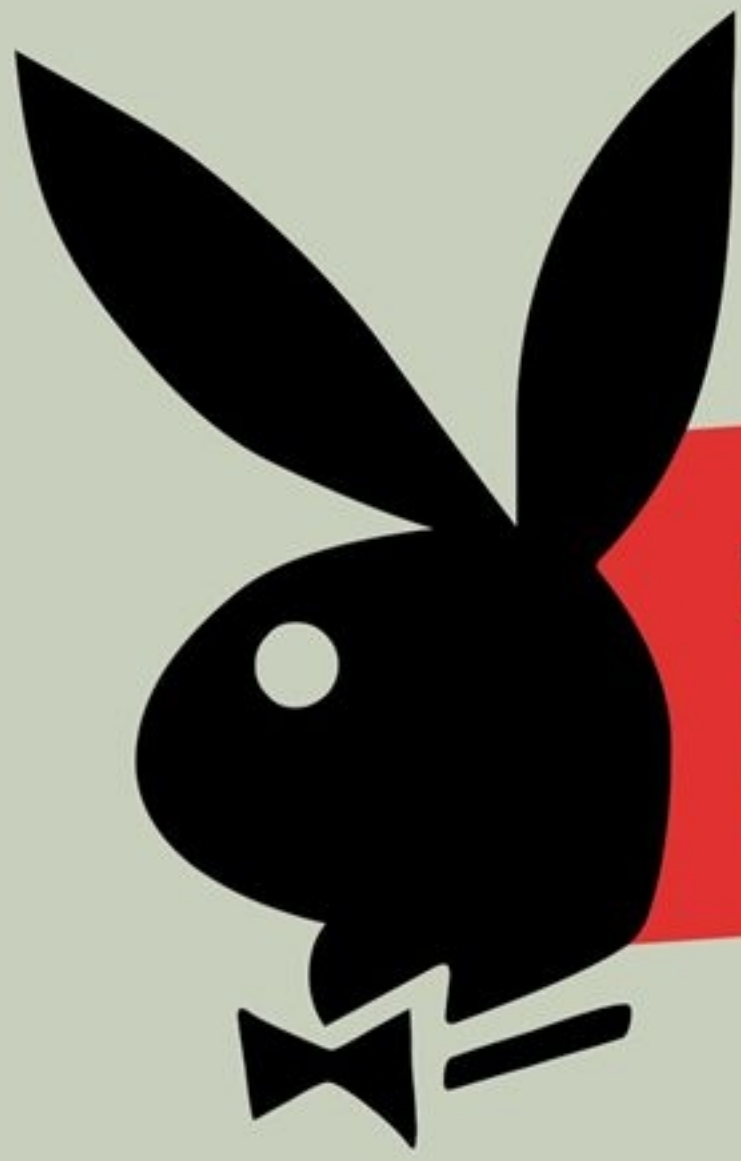
BOWIE: I think my lack of humor was the first thing I picked on. Then prissiness. Why did I feel that I was superior to people? I had to come to some conclusion. I haven’t yet, but I dug into myself. That was very good therapy. I spewed myself up. I’m still doing it. I seem to know exactly what makes me sad.

PLAYBOY: Doesn’t taking yourself apart all the time tend to make you a little schizophrenic?

BOWIE: The four of me will have to talk about that. Am I schizophrenic? One side of me probably is, but the other side is right down the middle, solid as a rock. Actually, I’m not schizophrenic at all. I think that my thought forms are fragmented a lot, that much is obvious. I often think of six things at one time. They all sort of interrupt one another. Not very good when I’m driving.

PLAYBOY: Do you ever have trouble deciding which is the real you?

BOWIE: I’ve learned to flow with myself. I honestly don’t know where the real David Jones is. It’s like playing the shell game. Except I’ve got so many shells I’ve forgotten what the pea looks like. I wouldn’t know it if I found it. Being famous helps put off the problems of discovering myself. I mean



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that. That's the main reason I've always been so keen on being accepted, why I've striven so hard to put my brain to artistic use. I want to make a mark. In my early stuff, I made it through on sheer pretension. I consider myself responsible for a whole new school of pretensions—they know who they are. Don't you, Elton? Just kidding. No, I'm not. See what I mean? That was a thoroughly pretentious statement. True or not, I bet you'll print that. Show someone something where intellectual analysis or analytical thought has been applied and people will yawn. But something that's pretentious—that keeps you riveted. It's also the only thing that shocks anymore. It shocks as much as the Dylan thing did 14 years ago. As much as sex shocked many years ago.

PLAYBOY: You're saying sex is no longer shocking?

BOWIE: Oh, come on. Sorry, Hugh. Sex has never *really* been shocking; it was just the people who performed it who were. Shocking people, performing sex. Now nobody really cares. Everybody fucks everybody. The only thing that shocks now is an extreme. Like me running my mouth off, jacking myself off. Unless you do that, nobody will pay attention to you. Not for long. You have to hit them on the head.

PLAYBOY: Is that the Bowie success formula?

BOWIE: That's always been it. It's never really changed. For instance, what I did with my Ziggy Stardust was package a totally credible, plastic rock-and-roll singer—much better than the Monkees could ever fabricate. I mean, *my* plastic rock-and-roller was much more plastic than anybody's. And that was what was needed at the time. And it still is. Most people still want their idols and gods to be shallow, like cheap toys. Why do you think teenagers are the way they are? They run around like ants, chewing gum and flitting onto a certain style of dressing for a day; that's as deep as they wish to go. It's no surprise that Ziggy was a huge success.

PLAYBOY: But you've said that you find rock depressing and sterile, even evil.

BOWIE: It is depressing and sterile and, yes, ultimately evil. Anything that contributes to stagnation is evil. When it has familiarity, it's no longer rock and roll. It's white noise. Dirge. Just look at disco music—the endless numb beat.

PLAYBOY: You say it's dirge, yet you had the biggest disco hit of last year in "Fame," and you scored again this year with "Golden Years." How do you explain that?

BOWIE: It's a lovely escapist's way out. I quite like it, as long as it's not on the radio night and day—which it is so much these days. "Fame" was an incredible bluff that worked. I'm really knocked out that people actually dance to my records, though. But let's be honest; my rhythm and blues are thoroughly plastic. *Young Americans*, the album "Fame" is from, is, I would say, the definitive plastic soul record. It's the squashed remains of ethnic music as it survives in the age of Muzak rock, written and sung by a white limey. If you had played *Young Americans* to me five years ago and said, "This is an R&B album," I would have laughed. Hysterically.

PLAYBOY: What did you think of Barbra Streisand's recording your song "Life on Mars"?

BOWIE: Bloody awful. Sorry, Barb, but it was atrocious.

PLAYBOY: You're not noted for cordial relationships with other artists. Yet there was the rumor that you flew to Europe to spend a sabbatical with Bob Dylan. What about it?

BOWIE: That's a beaut. I haven't even left this bloody country in years. I saw Dylan in New York seven, eight months ago. We don't have a lot to talk about. We're not great friends. Actually, I think he hates me.

PLAYBOY: Under what circumstances did you meet?

BOWIE: Very bad ones. We went back to somebody's house after some gig at a club. We had all gone to see someone, I can't remember who, and Dylan was there. I was in a very, sort of...verbose frame of mind. And I just talked *at* him for hours and hours and hours, and whether I amused him or scared him or repulsed him, I really don't know. I didn't wait for any answers. I just went on and on about everything. And then I said good night. He never phoned me.

PLAYBOY: Did he impress you?

BOWIE: Not really. I'd just like to know what the young chap thought of me. I was quite convinced that what I had to say was important, which I seem to feel all the time. It's

Sex has never really been shocking. Everybody fucks everybody. The only thing that shocks now is an extreme. Like me running my mouth off, jacking myself off.

been quite a while since somebody really impressed me, though.

PLAYBOY: Some psychiatrists would call your behavior compulsive. Does the fact that there is insanity in your family frighten you?

BOWIE: My brother Terry's in an asylum right now. I'd like to believe that the insanity is because our family is all genius, but I'm afraid that's not true. Some of them—a good many—are just nobodies. I'm quite fond of the insanity, actually. It's a nice thing to throw out at parties, don't you think? Everybody finds empathy in a nutty family. Everybody says, "Oh, yes, my family is quite mad." Mine really *is*. No fucking about, boy. Most of them are nutty—in, just out of or going into an institution. Or dead.

PLAYBOY: What do they think of you?

BOWIE: I haven't a clue. I haven't spoken to any of them in years. My father is dead. I think I talked to my mother a couple of years ago. I don't understand any of them. It's not a question of their understanding *me* anymore. The shoe's on the other foot.

PLAYBOY: Are you still obsessed, as you reportedly once were, with the fear of being assassinated onstage?

BOWIE: No. I died too many times onstage, man. And it's really not too bad. No, I

don't have that paranoia anymore. I've now decided that my death should be very precious. I really want to use it. I'd like my death to be as interesting as my life has been and will be. And being assassinated is not quite a hero's demise. Assassination is the...the snub. The Great Snub. It's the ultimate result of that Wilhelm Reich philosophy—nobody will be allowed to be any more than we are—that most people subscribe to in their hearts. People aren't very bright, you know. They say they want freedom, but when they get the chance, they pass up Nietzsche and choose Hitler, because he would march into a room to speak and music and lights would come on at strategic moments. It was rather like a rock-and-roll concert. The kids would get very excited—girls got hot and sweaty and guys wished it was them up there. That, for me, is the rock-and-roll experience.

PLAYBOY: How is your relationship with Elton John these days?

BOWIE: He sent me a very nice telegram the other day.

PLAYBOY: Didn't you describe him as "the Liberace, the token queen of rock"?

BOWIE: Yes, well, that was before the telegram. I'd much rather listen to him on the radio than talk about him.

PLAYBOY: Do you feel you've been taken advantage of over the years?

BOWIE: Not taken advantage of. Exploited.

PLAYBOY: Are you suggesting you haven't made all that you should have?

BOWIE: What, moneywise? Oh, Lord, no—we made nothing. All I've made is an impact and a change, which, of course, is worth a lot. I keep telling myself that. The best thing to say about it all is that it's archetypal rock-and-roll business. Read the reports of the Beatles, the Stones and a lot of other big entertainers and take some kind of amalgamation of all that; it's a pretty accurate picture of my business. John Lennon has been through it all. John told me, "Stick with it. Survive. You'll really go through the grind and they'll rip you off right and left. The key is to come out the other side." I said something cocky at the time like, "I've got a great manager. Everything is great. I'm a 1970s artist." The last time I spoke to John, I told him he was right. I'd been ripped off blind.

PLAYBOY: You're not a rich man? After five gold albums?

BOWIE: *Now*, yes, exceedingly. No! Wait, America! Not at all. Haven't got a penny to my name. I'm pleading poverty at the moment, but I'm *potentially* very rich. Theoretically rich but not wealthy.

PLAYBOY: Are you as bitter about the music business as Lennon and Mick Jagger have said they are?

BOWIE: No, no, no. You see, I needed to learn about it. You've got to make mistakes. It's very important to make mistakes. Very, very important. If I glided through, I wouldn't be the man I'm not today.

PLAYBOY: Last question. Do you believe and stand by everything you've said?

BOWIE: Everything but the inflammatory remarks.

Excerpted from the September 1976 issue.



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DUNHAM

(continued from page 84)

parts that are meaty enough to connect with. It's important to me to create fully formed characters who don't feel just like good guys, villains, creeps or sluts. I want it to feel real. I want my male friends to feel just as much of a connection to my work as my female friends do.

Q6

PLAYBOY: How do you want *Girls* to contribute to the ongoing conversation about feminism?

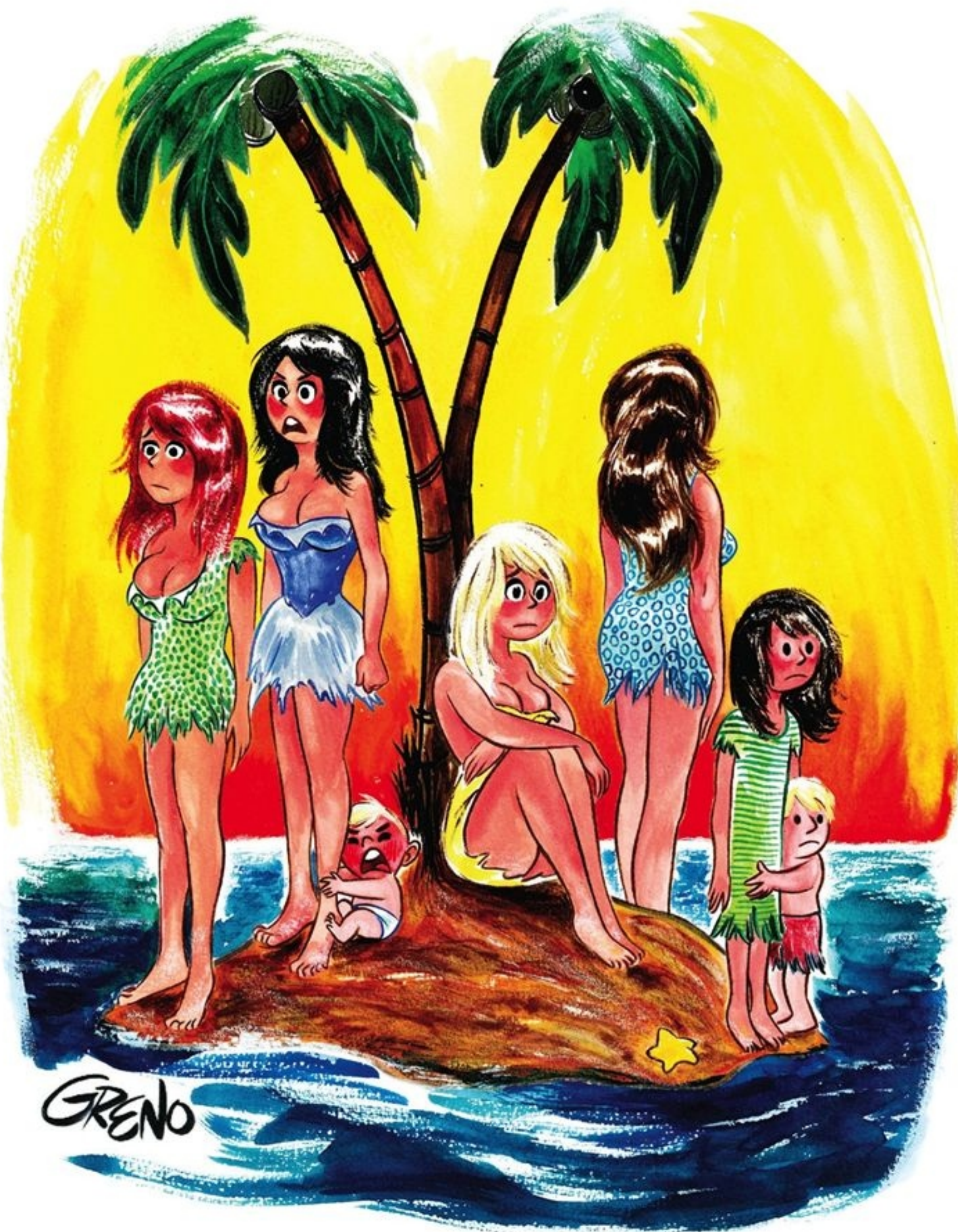
DUNHAM: On *Girls* I like being a mouthpiece for the issues I think young females face today. It's always shocking when people question whether it's a feminist show. How could a show about women exploring women not be? Feminism isn't a dirty word. It's not like we're a deranged group who think women should take over the planet, raise our young on our own and eliminate

men from the picture. Feminism is about women having all the rights that men have.

Q7

PLAYBOY: If you woke up tomorrow in the body of a Victoria's Secret model, what would you do for the rest of the day?

DUNHAM: I'd be really disoriented and wonder what had happened in the night. Which enemy had dragged me to the doctor? I don't think I'd like it very much. There would be all kinds of weird challenges to deal with that I don't have to deal with now. I don't want to go through life wondering if people are talking to me because I have a big rack. Not being the babest person in the world creates a nice barrier. The people who talk to you are the people who are interested in you. It must be a big burden in some ways to look that way and be in public. That said, I probably would want to see if I could get free food at restaurants. Then I'd call a doctor and see if she could return me to my former situation.



Q8

PLAYBOY: What kind of guy has a chance with you?

DUNHAM: When I was younger I liked men who gave me some guff. I liked badasses with hearts of gold, though they often ended up not having a heart of gold. They were a little like the Adam character on *Girls*. Now I'm much more into someone who is interesting and open with his emotions, has a really good sense of humor and a passion for what he does, wants to hang out with my parents and doesn't want to stay out too late. If I can get excited imagining funny things he did as a kid, there's a pretty good chance I'm in love with him. It's a sad day when you stop believing in the idea of having a soul mate or having someone who understands you deeply and loves you eternally. I'm a pretty unorthodox girl, but I guess people might be surprised to learn that despite what some of the characters on the show are doing, I remain an eternal romantic with a desire to hear all the things girls like to hear said to them.

Q9

PLAYBOY: You recently won two Golden Globe awards. Is there a downside to being critically adored and the object of great expectations in your mid-20s?

DUNHAM: Well, when you're 26 you're an adult, but you're not exactly an adult. In medieval times I would definitely have been an adult, but I would've also been old and gouty and about to fall into a hole. But not now. The harder part is less about being adored; it's more about being my age, having a real job and people who depend on me—and not being in service to someone else in *their* work. There's a reason people are apprentices first: You get the bigger responsibilities when you're ready for them. I feel I am ready, and fortunately I'm not drawn to behaving badly, which is good because I don't have the option to disappear like some other 26-year-olds. If I did, you might find me eating a lot of cheesy carbohydrates, watching many episodes of a really shitty television show and sleeping in the afternoon. Of the seven deadly sins, I'm most guilty of gluttony and sloth.

Q10

PLAYBOY: What's your grocery checkout aisle routine?

DUNHAM: I cannot get out of the market without six trashy magazines and seven packs of gum. I wish I could resist those things. Oh, and sometimes a Cadbury Creme Egg, if it's in season.

Q11

PLAYBOY: Now that you're so admired, who's hitting on you?

DUNHAM: Sometimes when we're shooting the show, extras don't know that I'm the director. They'll come up and say, "How long have you been working as an extra? Want to walk over to the craft services table?" I'm always flattered when that happens because there are a lot of very beautiful girls around in short skirts, and they chose me. Unless they're pretending they don't know who I am. Otherwise, despite all the attention I'm getting *(concluded on page 149)*



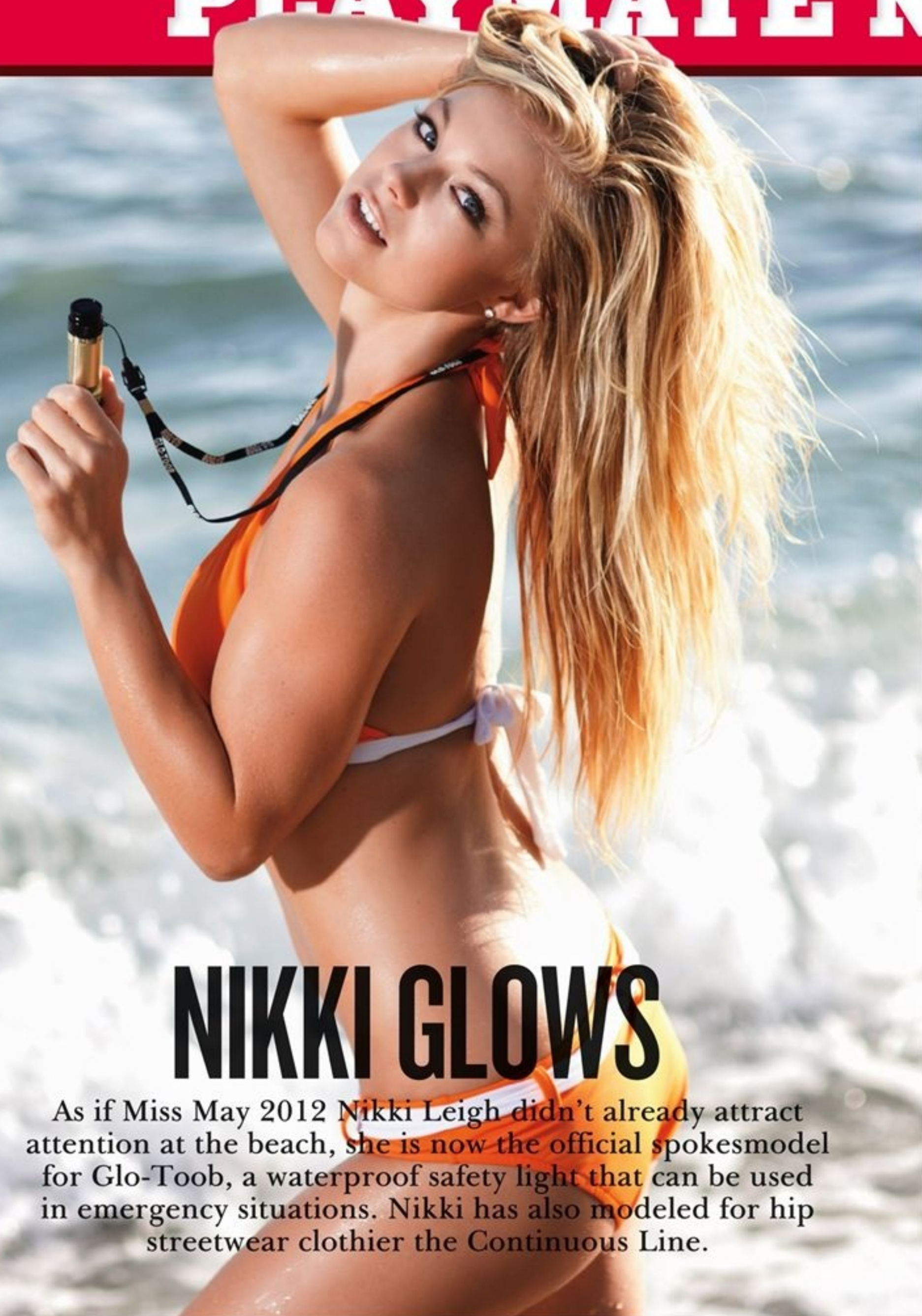
INTIMATE APPAREL

VICTORIA SILVSTEDT

THERE'S A NEW VICTORIA IN LINGERIE

"For me it's important to wear pretty lingerie," says PMOY 1997 Victoria Silvestedt. "It makes me feel modern, confident, glamorous and sexy." With that notion, she and the Marie Meili brand conceived a new luxe lingerie label called Very Victoria Silvestedt. Launched in Paris, the line uses eight different design motifs from jacquards to animal prints and features five different bra silhouettes including the Diva, which enhances a woman's natural endowment by two cup sizes. "I think men should appreciate that we women have such a passion for pretty underwear," Victoria says. "This collection is classily seductive and can be fun for all of us."

PLAYMATE NEWS



NIKKI GLOWS

As if Miss May 2012 Nikki Leigh didn't already attract attention at the beach, she is now the official spokesmodel for Glo-Toob, a waterproof safety light that can be used in emergency situations. Nikki has also modeled for hip streetwear clothier the Continuous Line.



 #twitpics

@AmyLeighAndrews
Here's a view of South Beach from the vantage point of Miss April 2010.

girlTALK

1. Having fun with the paparazzi in L.A., Miss March 2011 **Ashley Mattingly** laid one on her "girlfriend."



2. Congratulations are in order for Miss February 1999 **Stacy Fuson**, who graduated this December from Azusa Pacific University with a bachelor of science degree.



3. It was a happy day when Miss September 1963 **Victoria Valentino** met producer Garry Marshall at Vicki Abelson's Women Who Write salon.



Miss August 2004

Pilar Lastra peeled out with racer Mario Andretti as they opened Austin's new Circuit of the Americas F1 track.



PLAYMATE* FLASHBACK

After Indiana University student PAMELA JEAN BRYANT shrugged off not being cast for a local fashion show, she tried out for our 1977 *Girls of the Big Ten* pictorial and was selected. One year later and 35 years ago this month she became Miss April 1978 and later starred in *Don't Answer the Phone!*, *Lunch Wagon* and *H.O.T.S.*



DUNHAM

(continued from page 146)

lately, I definitely haven't had any Ryan Goslings saying "I love the way your mind works. Can I take you to dinner?" Maybe it would happen if I looked like a Victoria's Secret model for one day. *Now* I understand how I could use that.

Q12

PLAYBOY: How did you learn about sex, and who taught you?

DUNHAM: I think I was five. A girl at school explained it to me. I didn't believe her because it seemed so barbaric, so I went home and asked my parents if it was true. They sat down together and explained sex to me. My parents were sensitive. They said, "Your dad and I did this so that you could get made." They gave me the male and female perspective. That was the traumatic part. I remember thinking, I don't want to learn this, and I definitely don't want to learn this looking at the faces of both of you. I wish *one* of them had taken the job and come into my bedroom alone. But I asked. It was because Amanda DiLauro told me, so it was really her fault.

Q13

PLAYBOY: *Girls* is set in Brooklyn. What does the media get wrong about New York's hippest borough?

DUNHAM: I don't live in the same Brooklyn neighborhood as my characters; mine is slightly more old-people-y. But I'm a Brooklyn girl and love it. The first time I watched *2 Broke Girls*, another Brooklyn show, I liked it, but there were people in Williamsburg saying, "You can't go out in that jacket in Brooklyn. You're going to get robbed!" Many parts of Brooklyn are tony suburbs of Manhattan, but the most interesting thing is the push-pull and the collision of young meets old, historic meets new. Most people don't look at that. Also, not everyone has a handlebar mustache.

Q14

PLAYBOY: In your breakthrough independent feature film, *Tiny Furniture*, your character, Aura, has hot, clumsy sex in a drainpipe on a construction site at night. Why a drainpipe?

DUNHAM: New York real estate is rough. When two people who want to have sex don't have a place to go, what are their options? I was trying to think of both a comedic and a sort of dark place for people to engage. The funny thing is it was such a cheap movie and the pipe was the most expensive part of our entire operation. We needed a place to put the pipe where we could light it properly. We had the pipe built in an iron yard. I had a big sewer pipe in mind, but they built one from a piece of scrap metal that wobbled around. When I noticed that I thought, We're done for. Everything is ruined because of this stupid wobbling pipe. Cut to: People wound up being amused that the pipe had a certain amount of give and jiggle.

Q15

PLAYBOY: What's the millennial generation's rule for how many times you can sleep with

someone before one party or the other starts to feel it's no longer casual?

DUNHAM: What an interesting question. I'm the worst. I could hate somebody and then if I slept with them once, I'd be planning our wedding in my head. Even though I knew they weren't fit to shine my shoes, I just couldn't separate those two acts very well. And yet, I know people who have been sleeping with each other for years who aren't anywhere near dating, and I know people who have had sex with someone once and rent the U-Haul van to move in. Millennial men and women could stand to know that not everyone wants just casual affairs, even though there's a lot of pressure to have sex and not care—and when you're a woman it's supposed to be a triumph when you can do that. I try to never push that methodology on *Girls*. I believe people want to be connected in an intense human way, but it's getting lost in the shuffle. So there's no rule, but most of my girlfriends start to get squirrely about it and wonder what's going on 10 dates in.

Q16

PLAYBOY: Who do you dream of directing in a nude scene?

DUNHAM: I don't want them to date in real life, but I wouldn't mind putting David Strathairn and Rooney Mara in a room together and seeing what happens when they have sex in a movie context.

Q17

PLAYBOY: One of the louder criticisms of *Girls* is that it takes place in a narrow world of young, urban, middle-class white women and is thus not suitably diverse and representative of your generation.

DUNHAM: I think that's a valid criticism, but we can't let that erase someone's ability to tell a personal story. While being racist and promoting inequality are crimes that should be punished, the sin of writing two Jewish girl characters and two Waspy characters feels less egregious to me. I've tried to be elegant about it and receive the criticism, and I understand what's hard about it. At the same time I'm like, Really?

Q18

PLAYBOY: What's in your purse that would surprise us?

DUNHAM: I still keep a paper date planner, which seems pretty old-school. I always have a novel. The stray-vitamin situation is pretty out of hand. But most surprising? A spoon. I'm always dragging one around. It's a metal spoon. A plastic spoon makes sense. A metal spoon from your house makes it look like you're going to commit a spoon murder.

Q19

PLAYBOY: From which TV character should Hannah take love and relationship advice?

DUNHAM: Mary Tyler Moore. Even though she's perpetually single, she has a positive attitude about it and doesn't psycho out on people. She believes she's gonna make it after all. She's a pretty good example of chipper, appropriate single-woman attitude.

Q20

PLAYBOY: What's the one interview question you don't want to be asked anymore?

DUNHAM: If I could abolish one question, it would be "Why are you naked on TV so much?" I don't know. Use your imagination.



"I think your parents giving you a pet is a sign of their love—even if it is a drug-sniffing dog."

NEXT MONTH



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THE DRUG WAR FROM THE INSIDE.



TYRION TIGHTENS THE NOOSE.

VA-VA-VROOM—IN A PICTORIAL THAT WILL GET YOUR HEART RACING, SOCIALITE, HEIRESS AND REALITY-TV STAR TAMARA ECCLESTONE—DAUGHTER OF AN ARMANI MODEL AND A FORMULA ONE MOGUL—SHOWS WHY SHE'S WHAT THE BRITS CALL THEIR "BILLION \$\$ GIRL."

CANNIBAL—HE DISCOVERED HE HAD A SPECIAL ORAL TALENT, BUT IT MAY BE TIME FOR THE LADIES TO WIPE THE WET GRIN OFF HIS PIEHOLE. IT'S AN EXTRAORDINARILY BIZARRE PIECE OF FICTION FROM OUR MASTER OF MANIACAL MAYHEM **CHUCK PALAHNIUK**.

EL GRINGO LOCO—IT'S NOT UNUSUAL THAT A MIDDLE-CLASS, COLLEGE-EDUCATED FOOTBALL PLAYER FROM CALIFORNIA WOULD LIKE GETTING HIGH. BUT HIS APPETITES LED HIM SOUTH OF THE BORDER, WHERE HE BECAME A CONFIDANT OF MEXICO'S MOST VICIOUS DEALERS. THE MAN KNOWN AS "THE CRAZY WHITE GUY" GIVES **JOHN H. RICHARDSON** AN EXCLUSIVE LOOK INSIDE THE CARTEL.

ACCIDENTAL CAPITALIST—HOW DID AN ADVENTURER WITH A DISTASTE FOR CONVENTION END UP BOTH RICH AND THE HERO OF THE GREEN REVOLUTION? **CRAIG VETTER** PROFILES YVON CHOUINARD, THE ICONOCLASTIC FOUNDER OF PATAGONIA, A COMPANY ACTUALLY STRIVING TO DO THE RIGHT THING.

SALE OF THE CENTURY—MATTHEW COX APPEARED TO BE A REAL ESTATE GENIUS. UNFORTUNATELY, HE WAS A FRAUD. DESPITE EXTENSIVE PLASTIC SURGERY TO CHANGE HIS APPEARANCE, HE STILL GOT CAUGHT. FROM BEHIND BARS, COX PROVIDES **DAVID KUSHNER** WITH A UNIQUE VIEW OF THE MORTGAGE CRISIS THAT TRIPPED US ALL.

ACTION!—AFTER A CAREER FILLED WITH BOX-OFFICE GOLD, J.J. ABRAMS HAS A SINGULAR CHALLENGE AHEAD: DIRECTING THE NEXT *STAR WARS* FILM, DUE IN 2015. HIS CURRENT FILM, *STAR TREK INTO DARKNESS*, ALSO FACES THE JUDGMENT OF A LEGION OF PARTICULAR FANS. IN A FAST-PACED *PLAYBOY INTERVIEW*, ABRAMS REVEALS TO **DAVID HOCHMAN** THE SECRETS OF CRAFTING THE MODERN BLOCKBUSTER.

ROYAL RUMBLE—PETER DINKLAGE LOOKS LIKE A BADASS—AND PLAYS ONE EXCEPTIONALLY WELL ON *GAME OF THRONES*—BUT SAYS CHOPPING OFF THE ARTIFICIAL LEG OF A 70-YEAR-OLD AMPUTEE ACTOR FROM BEHIND IS AS TOUGH AS HE GETS. THE ACTOR SHARES HIS WICKED SENSE OF HUMOR WITH **ERIC SPITZNAGEL** IN A LIVELY 20Q.

PLUS—A CLASSIC *PLAYBOY INTERVIEW* WITH **MUHAMMAD ALI**, THE BACHELOR'S GUIDE TO INTELLIGENT LEISURE, SPRING SCENTS, THE MARVELOUS **MISS MAY** AND MORE.

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