

PLAYBOY

ENTERTAINMENT FOR MEN

MARCH 2014

The Lingerie

Issue
XOXO

THE UNDERGROUND
FEMALE ORGASM CULT
INTERVIEW: GAWKER'S
NICK DENTON

A CRAZED WEEKEND
WITH THE IRON SHEIK

BEST BOOZE IN
THE WORLD

CARS OF THE YEAR

PRESCRIPTION
FOR DEATH

20Q: TY BURRELL

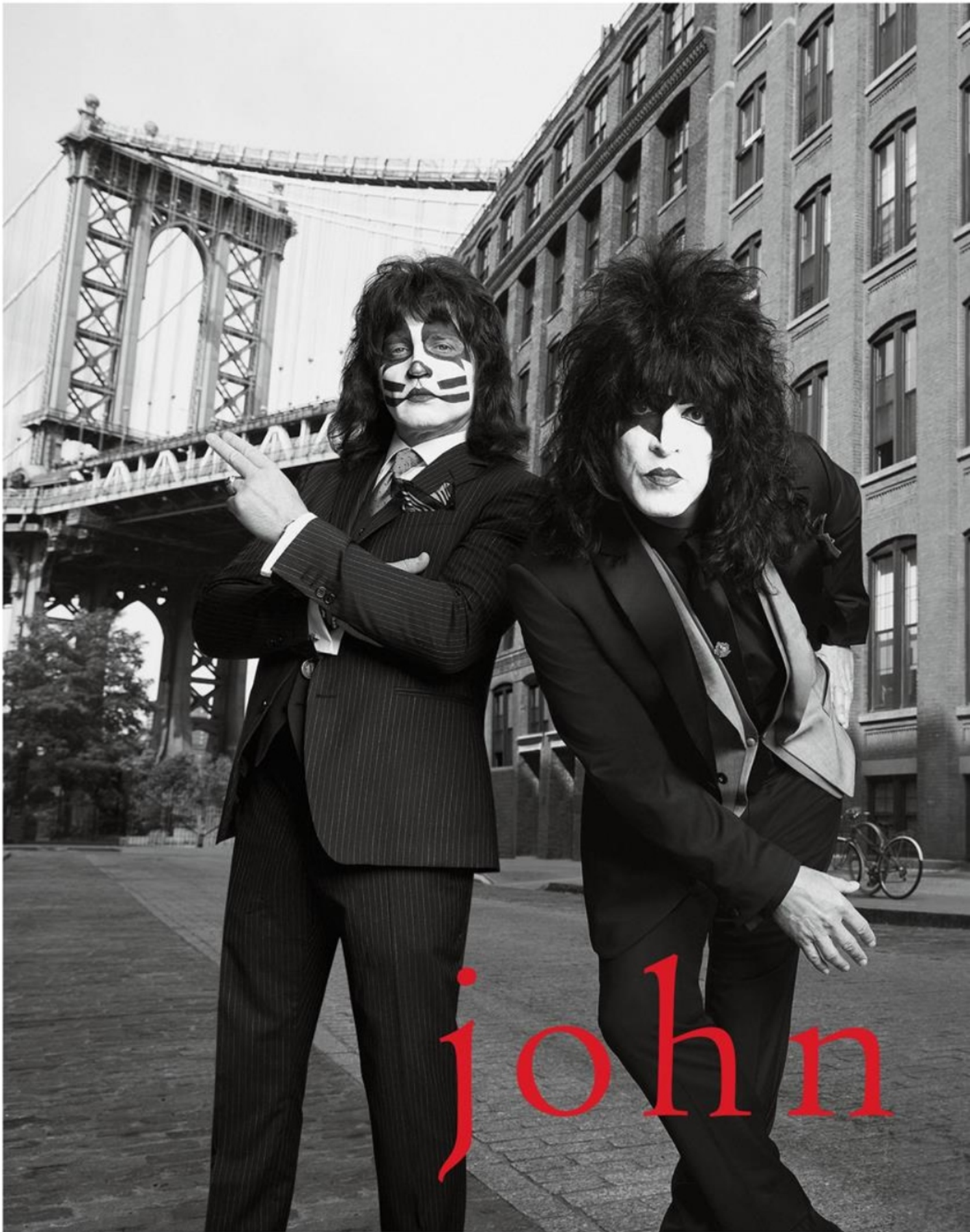




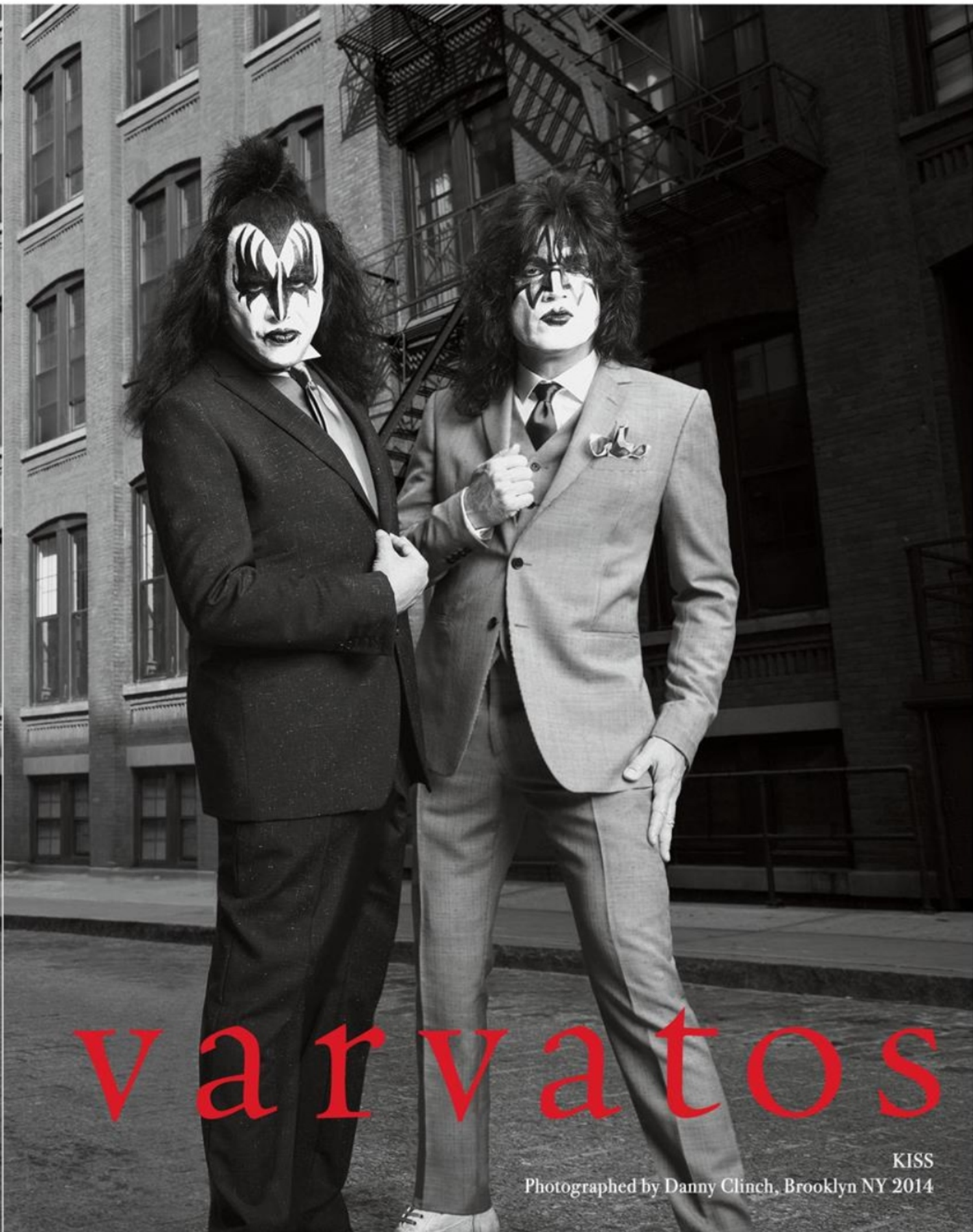
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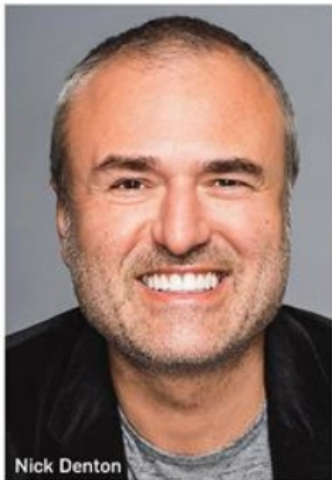
No time of year rewards our primal sensibilities like spring. After a winter of shoveling driveways, wearing fleece and longing for sunshine, we're rewarded with blue skies, green grass and short skirts. Welcome to our field guide to the best season of the year. First, we have a story about one of the most primal men we know: Khosrow Vaziri, better known as the Iron Sheik, one of the most polarizing pro wrestlers in WWE history. In *I Will Make You Humble!* **Keith Elliot Greenberg** traces Sheikie's days as a star, his drug-addled decline and his current incarnation as a social-media darling—his Twitter feed reads like Charlie Sheen on steroids. We're all familiar with the power of a good orgasm, but could it be the key to enlightenment? A company called OneTaste claims so, selling admission to clinics where dozens of women climax at once (yes, you read that right). For *Pleasure Seekers* **Molly Oswaks** infiltrates a meeting to see if it's science or bunk. **Ty Burrell** brings out our inner goofball as Phil Dunphy on *Modern Family*. In *20Q* we find out how he went from living in his van to enjoying the success that had eluded him for years. Our *Playboy Interview* picks the brain of a man who is reinventing modern media: **Nick Denton**, founder of the Gawker blog empire, breaker of scandals from Rob Ford's penchant for crack to Brett Favre's penchant for dong photos. Denton justifies his approach to gossip and journalism and explains why he's right and mainstream media is wrong. **A.J. Baime** and **Ken Gross**, two of the luckiest guys we know, careened around the world in the latest marvels of automotive engineering to find our 2014 Car of the Year. Just looking at these dynamos will get your testosterone pumping. We then have *Tea Ceremony*, a fictional tale of young lovers and uncontrollable lust from **Stuart Dybek**. He maps a fleeting romance in subtle detail. In *The Billion-Dollar Battle for Snapchat*, **Karl Taro Greenfeld** reports from the hotbed of Silicon Valley. When a trio of Stanford frat brothers develops an iPhone app worth billions, the partnership implodes, and the ensuing lawsuit unveils the nasty endgame of students who graduate with not only degrees but tech fortunes. **Vince Beiser** travels to War, West Virginia in *Prescription for Death* to reveal how painkillers have wrought addiction, deceit and murder in small-town America. Finally, we lighten things up with *Sheer Delight*, our annual guide to lingerie and the ravishing ladies born to wear it, shot by the inimitable **Michael Bernard**. Sex, drugs, fortunes won and lost, fast cars and beautiful women: They call it spring fever for a reason. Find out why inside.



Keith Elliot Greenberg



Molly Oswaks



Nick Denton



Karl Taro Greenfeld



Vince Beiser



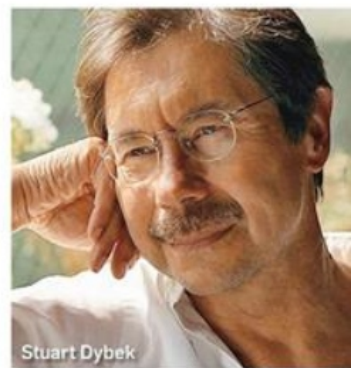
Ty Burrell



A.J. Baime



Ken Gross



Stuart Dybek



Michael Bernard

A man and a woman are the central figures in this advertisement. They are both wearing light blue denim shirts and darker blue denim jeans. The woman, on the left, has voluminous, curly brown hair and is looking towards the man. The man, on the right, has wavy brown hair and is looking back at her. His shirt is unbuttoned at the top, revealing his chest. The background is a solid, vibrant green. In the top left corner, there is a red rectangular logo with the word 'DIESEL' in white, bold, sans-serif font, and the tagline 'FOR SUCCESSFUL LIVING' in a smaller font below it. At the bottom of the image, large, bold, white text reads 'WE ARE CONNECTED #DIESELREBOOT'.

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PLAYBOY

CONTENTS

FEATURES

62 PRESCRIPTION FOR DEATH

After murder strikes in a small West Virginia town, **VINCE BEISER** traces a tragedy with the pain-killer epidemic at its core.

72 THE BILLION-DOLLAR BATTLE FOR SNAPCHAT

The company is worth a fortune, but **KARL TARO GREENFELD** uncovers a problem: the frat brother who claims the killer app was his idea.

84 I WILL MAKE YOU HUMBLE!

KEITH ELLIOT GREENBERG catches up with the most colorful wrestler in WWE history, the formidable Iron Sheik.

100 2014 CARS OF THE YEAR

From the hills of France to the freeways of Los Angeles, **A.J. BAIME** and **KEN GROSS** put rubber to road to find this year's best cars.

106 PLEASURE SEEKERS

MOLLY OSWAKS takes us inside OneTaste, an orgasmic-meditation school that claims it has found a new path to spiritual rebirth.

118

The
Lingerie
Issue

PHOTOGRAPHY, THIS PAGE AND COVER,
BY MICHAEL BERNARD

INTERVIEW

57 NICK DENTON

The blog magnate tells **JEFF BERCOVICI** how he conquered the internet and why hypocrisy is the only modern sin.

FICTION

82 TEA CEREMONY

Between a couple's bouts of passion and a curious waitress's fortune-telling, **STUART DYBEK** redefines the meaning of young love.

20Q

110 TY BURRELL

STEPHEN REBELLO quizzes America's favorite TV dad on the joys of neurosis and why he'll never look cool on a motorcycle.



COVER STORY

After appearing in our sexy lingerie pictorial, model Jennifer Humphrey enjoys a moment of relaxation. Our Rabbit, of course, wouldn't dare miss the fun.

PLAYBOY

CONTENTS

88



PLAYMATE: Britt Linn

PLAYBOY FORUM

51 SLEEPERS AWAKE

As technology's march continues to erode the value of sleep, **JONATHAN CRARY** ponders the meaning of rest in a restless society.

51 READER RESPONSE

Praise for poet Donald Hall's meditation on death; America's energy future; a sharp rebuke of climate deniers.

SERVICE

76 TOP SHELF

Let us be your spirits guide. These are the best gins, rums and bourbons your money can buy, plus tips and recipes from mixologist Thomas Waugh.

COLUMNS

46 YOU ARE NOT ALONE

JOEL STEIN campaigns to keep the NSA, girlfriends and wives out of a man's NSFW digital life.

47 THE HIDDEN COOLNESS OF CAT LADIES

Why date a cat lover? Plenty of reasons. **HILARY WINSTON** defends the unfairly maligned stereotype.

114



FASHION

114 MIXING BUSINESS WITH LEATHER

JENNIFER RYAN JONES selects the smartest oxfords, wingtips, chukkas and more to hit the pavement this spring.

PICTORIALS

66 GREEK GODDESS

In ancient Greece, a siren like Zoi Gorman would have been sculpted in marble. These stunning photos reveal why.

88 NO VACANCY

Sultry Miss March Britt Linn provides ample reason to hang out a **DO NOT DISTURB** sign. Check in to our hotel-room fantasy.

118 SHEER DELIGHT

Nothing compares with an alluring woman in her most intimate attire.

110



20Q: TY BURRELL

NEWS & NOTES

14 WORLD OF PLAYBOY

Supermodel Kate Moss celebrates **PLAYBOY**'s 60th anniversary at a swinging party in London; popping corks at the Mansion for New Year's; Cooper Hefner embarks for China; we throw down in sunny Miami Beach for Art Basel.

151 PLAYMATE NEWS

Brande Roderick quenches our thirst; Amanda Cerny and Jaclyn Swedberg make Hollywood waves.

DEPARTMENTS

- 7 PLAYBILL
- 19 DEAR PLAYBOY
- 25 AFTER HOURS
- 42 REVIEWS
- 49 PLAYBOY ADVISOR
- 98 PARTY JOKES



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GAVIN BOND, SASHA EISENMAN, TONY KELLY, JOSH RYAN *senior contributing photographers*; DAVID BELLEMERE, MICHAEL BERNARD, MICHAEL EDWARDS,

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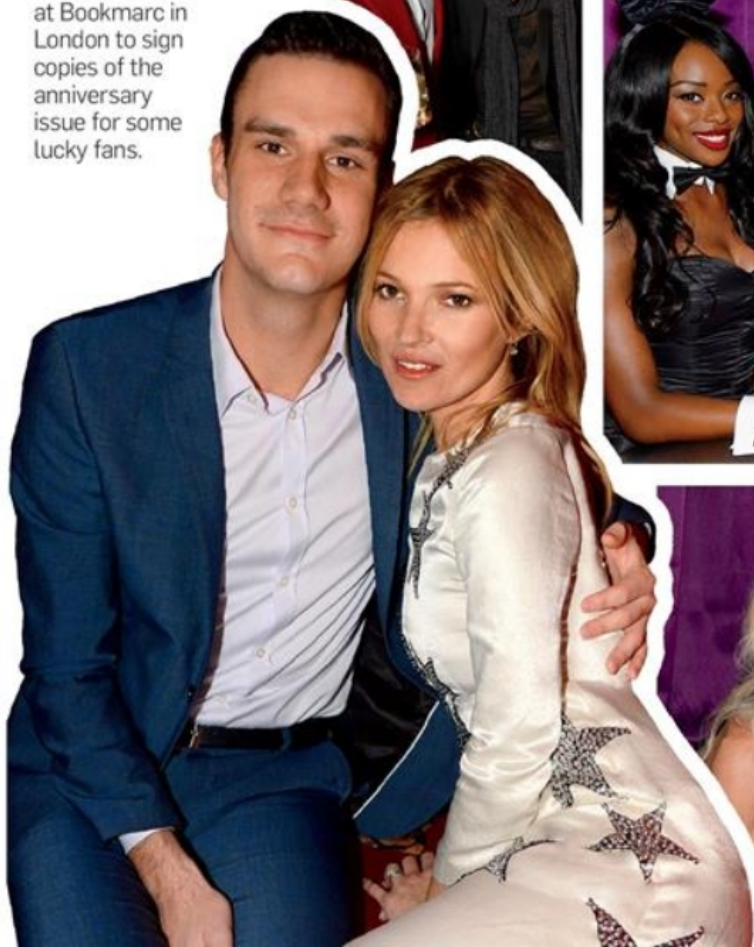
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THE WORLD OF PLAYBOY

HEF SIGHTINGS,
MANSION FROLICS
AND NIGHTLIFE NOTES

A STAR-STUDED 60TH ANNIVERSARY

"It started with Marilyn Monroe on the cover of PLAYBOY 60 years ago—an icon of her time. Now we have Kate Moss, the biggest supermodel in the world," said our editorial director, Jimmy Jellinek. "She's the perfect partner to help us launch the next 60 years." And with that we celebrated our diamond-anniversary issue at the Playboy Club London in an elegant affair hosted by our cover girl and fashion designer Marc Jacobs and attended by stars of the fashion, music and movie worlds. Those who raised a glass to PLAYBOY's success included Miuccia Prada, Sienna Miller, Rosie Huntington-Whiteley, Rita Ora, Harry Styles, Donatella Versace, Tom Jones, Noel Gallagher and Cooper Hefner. Prior to the party, Kate made an appearance at Bookmarc in London to sign copies of the anniversary issue for some lucky fans.



HAPPY NEW YEAR 2014

New Year's Eve is always a joyous occasion at the Playboy Mansion, but this December 31 was more than just a countdown to midnight, as Hef and Crystal celebrated their one-year wedding anniversary. Stars Redaric Williams, Smokey Robinson, Jon Lovitz and Berry Gordy, along with Playmates Kennedy Summers, Carrie Stevens, Gemma Lee Farrell and Audrey Aleen Allen, toasted 2014 and the Hefners.



ART BASEL

Nice chassis. At the Art Basel Miami Beach exhibition Piston Head: Artists Engage the Automobile, artist Richard Phillips unveiled his second collaboration with us, *Playboy Charger*. If only everything could be unveiled alongside Playmates Jessa Hinton and Alison Waite.



BIG IN CHINA

Cooper Hefner hosted a 60th anniversary party at MINT in Shanghai. "The Playboy lifestyle isn't just the American dream but a universal aspiration," Hefner says. "I look forward to seeing the Rabbit celebrate life and freedom around the globe for the next 60 years."





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BEN AFFLECK'S FANS AND FOES

Michael Fleming is obviously not a fan of Ben Affleck's (*Playboy Interview*, January/February), and it shows. Fleming must have asked about *Gigli* at least five times, and he kept bringing up Affleck's other flops such as *Daredevil*. A lot of people would have told Fleming off and ended the interview, but Affleck was a good sport. Then Fleming had the nerve to ask if it was annoying that people always focus on his flops. I found the questions in poor taste. As an interviewer, Fleming should have been more impartial.

Jamie Kaczmarek
Chesterfield, Michigan

Why does Ben Affleck feel the need to explain in excruciating detail the intellect and emotion that go into portraying a comic book character? Batman ain't Hamlet. Affleck is to acting what Ripple is to fine wine: He's a screw top all the way.

Woody Murrah
Lumpkin, Georgia

MISSING KEYS

Rick Moody's essay about the lack of quality in today's pop music (*In Search of the Lost Rock & Roll Icon*, January/February) was without a doubt well-researched and accurate, but I think it was an oversight not to mention Alicia Keys as one of the few quality artists of this era. Keys makes an honest effort to generate music that blends pop, jazz and R&B—something that is rare today.

Michael Griffin
Las Vegas, Nevada

SAINT MCCLOSKEY

The article on Jim McCloskey (*The Truth Shall Set You Free*, December) was

DEAR PLAYBOY

Summers Lovin'

I have been a subscriber for about 20 years, but I have never suffered from love at first sight until I saw Miss December. There's no need to wait; Kennedy Summers is PMOY 2014.

Bob Fuller
Raleigh, North Carolina

Miss December Kennedy Summers is absolutely gorgeous. She is by far the best-looking woman ever featured in your magazine—pure class and a blonde beauty. She has my vote for Playmate of the Year.

Frank Lazerini
Barberton, Ohio



a revelation and beautifully written. His willingness to take on the "misfit cases" is astonishing. The time and patience he must have should never go unnoticed. McCloskey deserves the Nobel Peace Prize. Bravo.

Chris Beaver
Moundsville, West Virginia

Thank you, Neal Gabler, for your great article on Jim McCloskey and Centurion Ministries. I only wish the world had more people like McCloskey in it. So many good people sit behind bars because of wrongful convictions and horrible plea deals offered by prosecutors who cannot acknowledge their faults and inaccuracies. Thank you, Mr. McCloskey, for exposing a small

percentage of them. May the ghosts of the innocent haunt them all.

Shane McCormick
Shreveport, Louisiana

MMM, BRAINS!

I was so disturbed by the idea suggested in Chuck Palahniuk's short story (*Zombie*, November) that my brain stopped functioning properly.

Alex King
Fort Myers, Florida

MOLLY AND THE LAW

Frank Owen's article (*Chasing Molly*, November) provides yet another solid reason for legalizing all drugs. Give users a fighting chance in life by providing them access to FDA-controlled

DAILY NEWS
NEW YORK'S HOMETOWN NEWS

EXCLUSIVE
Hey, Bill de Blasio: You're full of s#!*

● Commish rips new mayor
● Blasts phony pol 'friends'

RAY KELLY BLOWS UP

The December *Playboy Interview* with outgoing NYPD commissioner Ray Kelly caused a stir with our readers (see comments at right), as well as with New York pols and the press. The *Daily News* covered the story five days in a row.

● Crime will increase if and when stop-and-frisk is effectively eliminated. Will that be a coincidence? I think not.

● It's hard for me to believe that the interviewer, Glenn Plaskin, was impartial, given that the majority of the questions he asked are framed as an excuse to mention details that are politically convenient to Mr. Kelly.

● Drop Ray Kelly off in Harlem with no bodyguards and let's see how much

the people "love" him there.

● It's easy to brush off stop-and-frisk when you're not affected by it. When it does happen to you, it's life-changing. I know because it happened to me in my own neighborhood. Now I have two types of people to fear when walking down the street: criminals and criminal cops. Sometimes I want to say to people like Ray Kelly, "I'm sorry I was born the wrong color." If I had a choice, I wouldn't have chosen this.

● "Full of shit," huh? That's like Rob Ford calling someone an addict.

● It's strange that in New York, a liberal haven, the police think fighting racism is extreme. Sad times for the Big Apple.

● In response to seeing his fellow marines getting killed, Kelly says it was "not as traumatic or as jolting as I thought it would be." If that didn't bother him, then he certainly doesn't give a fuck about people

complaining about civil rights.

● Kelly claims that the NYPD is banned from stopping people based on race, but its systemic spying on Muslims and Arabs proves otherwise. However, these details are too politically inconvenient to Mr. Kelly's image.

● I'm all for saving lives, but the struggle of being a cop is that you have to live within the constraints of a free society.

Online comments from PlayboySFW.kinja.com.



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substances instead of forcing them to swallow, snort or shoot poison sold by lowlife scum.

Fred Bilello
Laughlin, Nevada

FEARLESS IMAN

The images of Iman in the November issue are beautiful, but some of them appear to be photoshopped. Did the photographer really get a cheetah and an elephant to stand still next to Iman?

Gordon King
Laconia, New Hampshire

Yes, Peter Beard photographed Iman posing among real wildlife. Had today's Photoshop technology been available when the pictorial was shot in 1985, just imagine what we could have done.

HELMUT AT HIS BEST

Congrats to PLAYBOY for the outstanding photo spread featuring the work of Helmut Newton (December). He captured stunning women in the most stimulating poses. Please feature more women like this.

Frank Binetti
Norwalk, Connecticut

GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

I found Steven Chean's article (*Talkin' 'Bout Your Generation*, December) quite thought-provoking. However, I was offended that Chean considers Lena Dunham a shining example of Gen Y. The women on her show *Girls* are narcissistic, foolish and shallow, and the men are freakish and oafish. As a Millennial, I admit that members of my generation sometimes act like entitled brats, but I think the majority of us are hard workers who are attempting to make sense of our media-saturated world. Many of us have been tempered by 9/11, two wars and a brutal recession that made Millennials the largest unemployed age group in the country. But Chean's bottom line about Gen Y is his saving grace: We are a connected generation still trying to make a connection. That summary hit the nail on the head.

Andrew Rokita
Wilmington, Delaware

Including Dick Cheney and Ronald Reagan in a list of villains demonstrates intense, delusional partisanship.

Brooks Mick
Yorktown, Virginia

We also include Michael Moore and John Edwards as villains. Does that count too?

THE NOT-SO-FUNNY PAGES

I have been reading PLAYBOY for nearly 50 years and have always enjoyed the various columns, articles and especially the cartoons. However, I have serious objections to the idea that rape is funny. I direct your attention to one of the

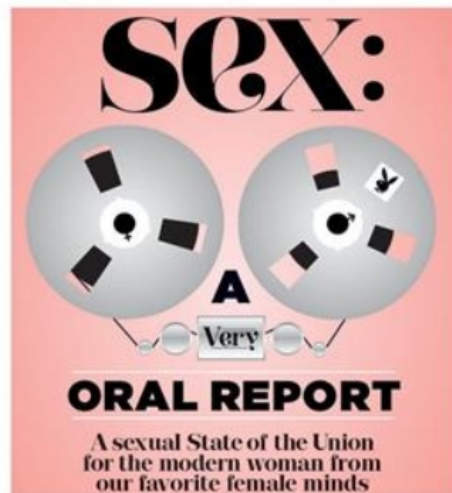
cartoons in the November issue. Do you really think rape is okay?

Sandra Tyra
Lancaster, California

Anyone who has read PLAYBOY over the past 60 years knows we would never condone rape in any way. We apologize to anyone who was offended by the cartoon.

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS

I love the article *Sex: A Very Oral Report* (January/February). I agree with Naomi Wolf: There are very few safe places where a woman can explore her sexuality, especially within the context of dating. We hear men complain that women don't want sex as much as men do, but I've found in my interactions that I usually want sex more. Unfortunately, it seems men view my high sex drive as an undesirable trait for a serious relationship. Just because I enjoy sex does not mean I am a wanton harlot. I would prefer to be in a monogamous relationship, but I often feel as if I'm being made to choose between my desire for a satisfying relationship and my desire for



a satisfying sex life. I want to find a man who isn't going to let my sexual appetite determine my value as a woman and a life partner. Until then, I have my toys.

Wendy Bee
Los Angeles, California

I don't think this article really answers the question of whether women want more sex, but it is a good read. I thoroughly enjoyed what these women have to say, and I share similar ideas.

Maryen Balderas
Redlands, California

WEIGHT PROBLEMS

Raw Data (January/February) says the average weight of an NFL linebacker is 300 pounds. I think not.

Dan Mecca
Angola, New York

You're right. We meant lineman, not linebacker. And we're buying a new scale.



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PLAYBOY

Afterhour

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BECOMING ATTRACTION

JACLYN BETHAM

• "I'M A WOMAN with curves," says actress Jaclyn Betham (Tyler Perry's *The Haves and the Have Nots*), lounging in her Los Angeles home. Those toned curves come from the years Jaclyn spent as a ballet dancer before pursuing acting. "The idea of what's sexy is finally changing," she says. "It's fun showing the world how beautiful that can be." We're glad to help.

Photography by MICHAEL EDWARDS/
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DRAMA KINGS

DON'T BE FOOLED BY THE TESTOSTERONE—YOUR FAVORITE TV SHOW IS A SOAP OPERA. WELCOME TO THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE MALE TELENVELA

Every afternoon, soap opera fans endure another tragic case of amnesia, kidnapping or demonic possession. They don't even get cranked up over it, and not because they have all those chill holistic menopause herbs: Old ladies don't pretend to be hard.

Pulling this off in prime time is trickier. Many of the most popular and critically lauded shows on TV center on the romantic and family entanglements of men. Many of these shows are also goofy as hell. But it takes a megamale setting such as a biker-gang bar or a boardroom to make us feel less like we're watching "our stories" and more like we're partaking in "prestige drama."

The setup is simple: Give a character a job that has historically required testicles—sheriff, outlaw, soldier, spy, executive, congressman—and he can do insane things and emote like crazy. Hell, he can even break into an actual soliloquy.

Strip down the most compulsively watched TV shows and you'll find daytime soaps in manly repackaging. *Mad Men* has had an actual "I didn't know I was pregnant" twist. *Justified* could, like any soap, be alternatively titled *Each Week We Will Shoot an Attractive Person*. *Sons of Anarchy* is basically a *Dynasty* episode about the importance of helmet safety. And don't forget our friend the meth cook, whose personality goes from good to evil depending on whether he wears his special hat.

Such beloved shows as *The Sopranos* and *The Wire* used soap to virtuoso effect. Since they went off the air the melodrama has multiplied, like so many ducks in a swimming pool. Half the stuff that hap-

pens on your average cable serial could be accompanied by a *Phantom of the Opera*-style pipe-organ blast. It's a drawer full of...*positive pregnancy tests!* (Blammmmm!)

These shows rely on the idea that anything can sound serious when it's filtered through a reassuringly thick mustache. Of course, most of them have better writing,

acting and art direction than their daytime counterparts (not to mention way more up-to-date hairdos), but the spirit of the entertainment they offer is the same. And you know what? That's okay. It's just as much fun to watch a muscular gentleman with a perfectly symmetrical face bawl, "My familyyyy!" as, say, a lady wearing a bad wig

pretending to be her look-alike lesbian cousin. Don't be mad at your favorite show because it knows this.

Alas, the outcry over this surge in pathos may mean the testosteronevela is already on its way out. But hopefully it will come back someday, starring different but equally good-looking actors. —Julianne Smolinski



BEYOND CONDOMS

GET LOST, LATEX. A COMPETITION TO REINVENT THE CONDOM PRODUCES SOME STIMULATING PROPOSALS

• When latex condoms hit bedrooms in the 1930s, they were game changers. Since then, companies such as Trojan and Durex have added improvements including ribbing and warming lubricants, but condoms' basic design hasn't changed much in the past 80 years. They're still uncomfortable, unforgiving and downright difficult to put on in the dark. Enter Bill and Melinda Gates. Last year their Gates Foundation challenged scientists to build a better condom. More than 800 applicants responded, and 11 proposals were chosen to receive \$100,000 grants to manufacture prototypes. Here are five promising contest winners from around the world that hope to make it to your nightstand.—*Nora O'Donnell*



INDIA

Super Strength

→ Ready for manhood of steel? A team in India proposes a condom that contains graphene, an incredibly tough, elastic material that conducts heat. Graphene is more than 200 times stronger than steel, and researchers claim it can be incorporated with latex to reduce condom thickness and improve sensation without compromising strength.



SOUTH AFRICA

It's a Snap

→ Chances are you've put on a condom incorrectly at some point, which is why scientists in South Africa

are designing a unique applicator for traditional latex condoms. Called Rapidom, the prototype is pure

ingenuity: You simply crack open the package, roll on the condom and snap off the applicator in a single motion.

USA

Bovine Bop

→ Things that make you go moo: A scientist in San Diego is developing a condom that resembles a sausage casing. Crafted of raw collagen from cow tendons and ligaments, this hydrated second skin creates a more natural sensation. Move along, vegetarians.

Cling Wrap

→ Researchers in Los Angeles are introducing a stronger but thinner condom made of polyethylene. The

hypoallergenic material clings to (but doesn't squeeze) your manhood, thereby reducing the risk of limpness. The condom also comes with tabs on each side, allowing men to pull on—rather than roll on—protection.

Shape Shifter

→ In Oregon, a scientist is making a condom out of an elastic polymer that comfortably forms to a man's member when it comes into contact with body heat. Gives "memory fabric" a whole new meaning.

TOTAL TURNOFF

GOOGLE UNPLUGS YOUR VIRTUAL SEX LIFE

• Tits & Glass lasted only a few hours. Then the app, which allowed Google Glass users to swap sexy videos, was removed. It appears Google wants its virtual-reality eyewear to remain rated PG. "New gadgets will be used for sex no matter what the creators think," says Johannes Grenzfurthner, founder of the Arse Elektronika sex and tech conference. Case in point: Tits & Glass developers and adult-film star James Deen plan to make the first virtual-reality porn—filmed with Google Glass, of course.—*Damon Brown*





KING JAMES

BEASTIE BOYS, MILEY CYRUS, CRANK YANKERS AND THE WILD WORLD OF TODD JAMES

• “I was four when I first drew a naked woman,” says New York artist Todd James. “I remember I was in my room and on a piece of paper I tried to work out how to draw the boobs, because it requires depth—one’s behind the other.” As a teen he developed his art under the graffiti moniker REAS and designed a logo for the Beastie Boys; his work has now been included in some of the most influential exhibitions of the past 20 years.

Today James’s paintings feature bright blasts of color, naked women lounging—with cats, Somali pirates, military weaponry—and playful titles such as *Soxy Banana*

Banza and Captain Kitty Is So Pretty. Pop culture fans may know his work from the Jimmy Kimmel-produced comedy *Crank Yankers*, for which he designed the puppets, or from Miley Cyrus’s provocative 2013 MTV Video Music Awards performance, for which he designed the bear costumes.

James’s work demonstrates that creativity and wit can co-exist in modern art. “Most contemporary art has a sense of humor in it. I think comedians and artists have that commonality. They use humor as a way to express tough subjects,” he says. “It’s pure entertainment for me first.”
—Evan Pricco



FRED

PORTLANDIA RETURNS FOR ANOTHER HELPING OF HOMEMADE, FULLY BAKED COMEDY

Be warned: Your artisanal hobbies and asinine habits are still fodder for *Portlandia*, IFC’s hit sketch show. Fred Armisen and Carrie Brownstein’s biting satire has sharpened since Armisen quietly left *SNL* this past summer to dedicate himself full-time to poking fun at the foibles of Portland. Season four of *Portlandia* is, as Armisen puts it, “a new beginning,” and it’s clear the duo can still tailspin a precious topic into a deranged case study. Want to put a bird on it? Don’t even think about it.—Nora O’Donnell

PLAYBOY: *Portlandia* turns a satirical mirror on many of our idiosyncrasies. Is there a particular sketch that really hit a nerve with viewers?

CARRIE: Countless people have approached us about the sketch in which the characters Doug and Claire binge-watch all of *Battlestar Galactica*. People related to that kind of escapism. They identified with living vicariously through a TV show in a compulsive way.

PLAYBOY: The show has been accused of ruining everything from brunch to decorative birds by shaming us into changing our clichéd behaviors. What is your reaction?

CARRIE: Fred and I and many of us exist in communities that are self-aware and self-critical. We’re aware of the things that seem precious. We might want to hit our head against the wall because we’re enacting these things, but we still do it because we’re just living. I don’t think we’re literally ruining things. I think we’re adding awareness by being part of a conversation. A lot of graphic-designer friends e-mailed me after seeing the “Put a Bird on It” sketch and said, “Oh, that’s the last bird I’m going to draw.” And I thought, *Great!*

PLAYBOY: *Carrie, do you think you would be doing comedy if you hadn’t met Fred?*

CARRIE: I don’t know what I would be doing. I think a lot of creative endeavors now come from underground, organic forces that stem from friendships and other unlikely origins. These unique voices have had to write themselves into existence. I don’t know any other way I could be doing comedy, but I’m glad this new paradigm exists.

PLAYBOY: *Fred, this is the first season of Portlandia since you left SNL. How does it feel?*

FRED: It’s been nice because I can focus on *Portlandia*. When we shot season four, I didn’t have to stress about going back to New York for *SNL*. I felt very present, like I could take the time to look at the details and take care of them. I’m still friends with everybody at *SNL*, and I have no regrets. Now I’m able to watch the show as a viewer and enjoy it. This season of *Portlandia* feels like the beginning of something.

PLAYBOY: *Some great actors are returning this season, including Jeff Goldblum, Steve Buscemi and Kyle MacLachlan. How did MacLachlan come to be the mayor of Portland?*

CARRIE: Kyle met with us in Los Angeles and took a leap of faith. He totally created that role. His willingness and excitement to do something a little weird and absurd really opened up the world of *Portlandia* to other people. We owe so much to him.

FRED: He has all the right sensibilities when it comes to improvising. It’s like being in a band with someone with the same musical tastes.

PLAYBOY: *Will we ever find out his character’s name?*

CARRIE: Probably not.

PLAYBOY: *He’s just going to be Mr. Mayor?*

FRED: What makes you think the mayor is a he?

PLAYBOY: *That would be a very Twin Peaks twist. What kind of themes will you be exploring on the show this season?*

CARRIE

FRED: Early on we had this idea of human bandwidth, as in the number of things you can have going on at the same time and your capacity to control them. I don't know how much of it ended up on screen, but it's in there somewhere.

PLAYBOY: Let's talk about your relationship. Has there ever been a time when the person you were dating felt jealous of the friendship between the two of you?

FRED: For me, maybe. I don't know if it ever came to a confrontation, but it might have happened a little with the people I've dated.

CARRIE: Oh, I didn't know that. Anyone who knows us knows that Fred and I are creative partners. We're best friends, so you have to deal with that.

FRED: I think it can happen whenever someone has a platonic relationship with a person of the opposite sex. There are always moments when there's some tension and it eventually goes away. You need time for people to get over any tension. It's a common, natural thing. It's not threatening by either party. It's just part of relationships.

PLAYBOY: If you had to live the rest of your lives together as characters on *Portlandia*, who would you be?

CARRIE: I would choose [feminist bookstore owners] Toni and Candace because they're friends and they exist in a place that's not incredibly cloying.

FRED: I agree. There's a calmness to Toni and Candace. They're very motionless. Moving around as much as the other characters would be exhausting. Being Toni and Candace would be a nice way to spend our 60s and 70s.

PLAYBOY: What will the real-life Fred and Carrie be doing in 30 years?

CARRIE: Ideally, still working.

PLAYBOY: Not playing cards together in a retirement home?

FRED: We would never do that. [laughs]

Q+A

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RIDE THE LIGHTNING

TAKE OFF ON THE WORLD'S MOST HIGH-PERFORMANCE ELECTRIC MOTORCYCLE

F For two years in a row, the all-electric Empulse RR from Oregon-based Brammo won the racing series world championship for e-bikes. The prototype (you can't buy it yet) is proof of "what's possible using racing as a way to rapidly develop technology," according to lead designer Brian Wismann. What's so special about it? To find out, we hit Thunderhill Raceway in northern California. Prepare for some white-knuckle speed.



1

LIVING COLOR

→ The color scheme is inspired by the leopard-print camouflage used by the Luftwaffe's Afrika Corps during World War II. The shark mouth recalls the one on the P-51 Mustang, the war's greatest fighter plane—a nice American twist for a hot American bike.

2

SUPER POWER

→ The Empulse RR's electric motor delivers 173 horsepower and 166 foot-pounds of torque. The motor (developed by Parker Racing) is mounted underneath the swingarm, leaving space for the big battery pack, located where a traditional gas engine would normally sit.

3

SPEED RACER

→ At Laguna Seca this past summer, this prototype racer set a lap time half a second faster than the quickest gas-powered superbike you can buy now, Ducati's 1199 Panigale R.

FUEL GAUGE

Whether you plug it in, fill it up or both, your vehicle costs money to operate. Here's the estimated fuel cost of an L.A.-to-NYC road trip—cheeseburgers and hotels not included.

Los Angeles

L.A. to New York on a Zero S electric bike (recharging costs)

\$27.92





4 POWER UP

→ The fearsome velocity is delivered to the rear wheel seamlessly through a single-speed direct drive. Like other electric bikes, the Empulse RR requires no gear shifting, hitting zero to 60 in under three seconds.

5 SMOOTH RIDE

→ Simple power delivery combined with the explosion-free electric power train refines the riding experience to its essence, without the vibration and reciprocal inertia inherent to internal-combustion engines. Result: terrific feel and quicker steering.

6 DOWN THE ROAD

→ As with cars that carry lithium-ion batteries, this bike's only faults

are its weight (467 pounds) and range. The 14-kilowatt battery accounts for the weight, and it can carry only enough juice to complete about five laps in all-out racing. Continued research and on-track experimentation will change all this, keeping that rear Dunlop tire pushing harder for longer.

CHARGED UP

Three wildly cool electric bikes to put in your garage now

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MISSION R

- An electric sport bike capable of a three-second sprint to 60 and a top speed of 160 mph.

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ZERO S

- This streetfighter can near 100 mph, with a per-charge range of more than 100 miles of city riding.

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BRAMMO EMPULSE R

- The street version of the racer (left). Slick speed, 121-mile city range.

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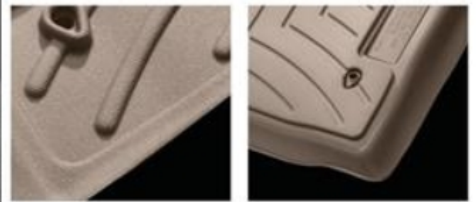
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PASSING MUSTARD

THE FIVE BEST CONDIMENTS FOR ADDING MAJOR FLAVOR

• No disrespect to ketchup and mustard, but there's a world of insanely delicious ingredients taking over menus everywhere, and you should add them to your arsenal. Think of them as chef-level shortcuts that can easily be deployed to kick up your culinary game.

1 KIMCHI

→ Five years ago few could have predicted that Korean fermented cabbage would become a supermarket staple. But try one funky, spicy, crunchy bite of the stuff and you'll know why it's a favorite of

Asia-obsessed chefs and food-truck entrepreneurs. **Try:** chopped up and added to instant ramen; on a burger; with steak tacos.

2 SRIRACHA

→ Easily the reigning king of condiments, sriracha has gone from cult status to Lay's potato chip flavor. Like ketchup, it's the perfect balance of sweet and tart but with the added kick of chili heat. **Try:** anytime you'd use Tabasco; on hot wings; on a

sandwich; in salad dressing; mixed with mayo as a french fry dip; with soy sauce as a pork rib marinade.

3 HARISSA

→ This North African chili-and-garlic paste is deeply flavored with a slow and low burn and typically served with Moroccan food. One small tube will last for months in the fridge and can be used any number of ways.

Try: added to Texas red chili; as a dip for lamb chops; slathered on chicken thighs before you grill them; with fried eggs and toasted pita bread.

4 KEWPIE MAYONNAISE

→ If there's such a thing as hipster mayo, this Japanese ingredient is it. The packaging is Tokyo kitschy, and stoner chefs were among its early champions. Compared with Hellmann's, it's richer and more deeply flavored (thanks to an unapologetic dose of MSG). **Try:** in deviled eggs; mixed with sriracha and tossed with shrimp; anywhere you'd use regular mayo.

5 SMOKED PAPRIKA

→ If everything's better with bacon, then everything's better (and healthier) with Spanish smoked paprika. Made from peppers smoked over hardwood, it's the easiest shortcut to smokehouse flavor without the fire hazard. **Try:** sprinkled on steak, chicken or pork before you grill it; in paella; in scrambled eggs.



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HOT DRAM

SKIP THE SHOTS THIS ST. PATRICK'S DAY. THE BEST IRISH WHISKEY IS PERFECT FOR SIPPING AND MIXING

If you associate Irish whiskey with green beer and hastily tossed-back shots, count yourself among the many unfortunates who have been missing out on the subtle pleasures of this fine spirit. While bourbon and scotch get all the glory, Irish whiskey languishes on the sidelines. The best bottles—most often aged longer than the standard stuff and frequently single malt—can be smooth and rich, without the bite of their more famous brethren. Spend a little more cash and you'll have a whiskey that's perfect for savoring neat, over a little ice or mixed into a craft cocktail.



GO IRISH

These Irish whiskeys will once and for all banish the shot glass from your St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

1.
Bushmills 10 Year
→ Bourbon barrels give this approachable single malt a chocolaty sweetness. Drink over ice.

\$39

2.
Redbreast 12 Year
→ This superbly smooth unblended whiskey is made in a pot still, the most exacting method of distillation, and then aged in sherry casks. Ideally sipped neat.

\$49

3.
Tyrconnell
→ One of the drier expressions of Irish single malt. Also available in versions that have been finished in sherry, port or Madeira casks.

\$39

RECIPE

- 2 oz. Jameson Black Barrel Irish whiskey
- ½ oz. Élixir Combier
- ½ oz. Luxardo maraschino liqueur
- ¼ oz. Pernod absinthe
- 3 dashes Bitter Truth creole bitters
- 3 dashes Bittermens orange cream citrate
- Lemon peel, 1-inch piece

Combine liquid ingredients over ice in a mixing glass. Stir until ice cold, about 30 revolutions. Strain into a pre-chilled cocktail glass. Squeeze lemon peel yellow side down over drink to flavor it with citrus oil.



New and Improved IRISH WHISKEY COCKTAIL

This complex and aromatic drink from Jack McGarry at the Dead Rabbit in New York uses Jameson Black Barrel, a smooth and rich aged blended whiskey that's ideal in craft cocktails.

New

Potassi-yum



Introducing POM Coconut. All the antioxidants of pure POM juice with the hydrating power of coconut water. So you can have all the replenishing benefits of electrolytes, like potassium, without giving up any of the flavor. Yum.



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GYM CLASS HEROES

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1
SPRAY ANYTHING
Dry Goods athletic spray powder, \$14

→ There's no shame in wanting to keep the boys dry. This point-and-shoot talc makes the job swift and clean.

2
FINAL FOUR
Lab Series PRO LS All-in-One face treatment, \$29

→ Save room in your dopp kit with this product that soothes, repairs, moisturizes and controls shine on your face.

3
CREAM OF THE CROP
Dermologica soothing shave cream, \$19

→ This shaving cream is designed to moisturize your face, because even tough guys can have sensitive skin.

4
TAKE A SOAK
Jack Black Body Rehab scrub and muscle soak, \$35

→ Eucalyptus smells awesome; Epsom and sea salts soothe muscles and loosen knots. It's recovery in a jar.

5
BREAK A SWEAT
Brut Active Sport antiperspirant and deodorant gel, \$3.50

→ Keep at least some of that CrossFit sweat at bay by applying this before and after your workout.

6
IT'S A WASH
Kiehl's Cross-Terrain All-in-One Refueling wash, \$18

→ Because nobody wants to mess with a soggy bar of soap in their gym bag. Made

with invigorating menthol and soothing aloe vera, this works on both hair and body.

7
WIPE OUT
Ursa Major Essential face wipes, 20 pack, \$24

→ Pickup games happen. Keep these cleansing and moisturizing wipes at the ready in your glove compartment.





ANCHOR MANAGEMENT

PIRATE, PUNK OR PREPPY, THESE CLOTHES AND ACCESSORIES ARE NAUTICAL BY NATURE

• Every era has its icon of the moment. For a while the handlebar mustache was popping up on everything from coffee shop signs to taxicabs to fake tattoos to T-shirts; before that it was the skull and crossbones. These days it's all about the anchor. And with so many anchor-inspired fashions out there made for dry land, you don't have to be a bona fide boater to wear one.

▲
Vineyard Vines leather belt with brass buckle, \$99.
Miansai leather bracelet, \$65.
Ravi Ratan sterling silver cuff links, \$250.
▼



1 **HELLO, SAILOR**

→ Here's the best and cheapest way to wear a signature design from legendary tattoo artist Norman "Sailor Jerry" Collins—without the pain.

Sailor Jerry anchor tee, \$32

2 **TIP-TOP TOP-SIDER**

→ In its ubiquity the boat shoe has lost nearly all aquatic meaning. Here's one cool way to remind people of its origins.

Sperry Top-Sider canvas boat shoes, \$90

3 **HANKIE PANKY**

→ The bandanna is the most versatile piece of fabric you can buy: napkin, tourniquet, headband, etc. This one anchors the argument.

Onassis nautical-print bandanna, \$68



Doi Suthep Temple

THAI ONE ON

CHIANG MAI IS THAILAND'S ONE-STOP PLEASURE MECCA

• Think your Thailand travel options are limited to (1) getting your Bangkok creep on and praying that back-alley bender doesn't come with a lifetime gift, or (2) spending sweaty afternoons watching newlyweds suck face in Phuket? Think again and jet to Chiang Mai, a mountainous city with neighborhoods equal parts crazy and captivating. Best of all: no mention of *The Hangover* for miles.

1. Old City

→ This section of Chiang Mai, dubbed the Old City for its temples and other remnants of yesterday, is 21st century raucous. Play hard to get with street vendors hawking cheap yet delicious pad thai, and bargain for legit handwoven silk at the maniacal

night bazaar. Grab a 40 of Chang beer at the Playhouse Bar and set the table for a drunken night of beer pong. (Note: Don't get pong hustled by the two notorious, sexy Thai women who have made many an American bro look foolish.)

2. Nimmanhaemin Road

→ This sophisticated street, only a five-minute tuk-tuk ride from the Old City and lined with boutiques, restaurants and spas, is the ideal setting for an elegant evening. Avoid those pesky Ducatis slashing around corners when you duck onto Soi (side street) 9, home of Café Mini, a culinary jackpot no larger than an East Village studio. Chef Moss Veerawat is in back, crafting James Beard-worthy Italian-themed small plates such as New Zealand lamb rack with rosemary sauce. Wash down the meal with a sweet, milky iced coffee from Wawee next door before pounding Jägermeisters across the street at the neon-lit Monkey Club, where scantily clad Thai bartenders sling shots for local hipsters thrashing to vintage Chicago house music.



Chiang Mai, Thailand



Café Mini, Nimmanhaemin Road



Passion-fruit juice for sale on the street

4. Outside the City

→ Rent a motorbike on Huay Kaew Road and floor it up the winding route to Doi Suthep-Pui National Park. Lock up your bike, trek down the nature path—or lack thereof—and scope out the Monthathan

waterfall before reaching the pristine temple, Wat Phra That Doi Suthep. Hoof it back to the main road and flag down a strange-looking covered pickup truck with benches in the

flatbed—it's called a *songthaew*—to fire you back down the mountain. Shower time. You'll soon be picked up by Pantawan Cooking School and driven to an open-air teak house where a local couple—Pan and Tawan—will teach you to make killer pad thai and veggie spring rolls. Trust us, this will be the end of your love affair with nasty Thai takeout. —Dan Hyman

TAKE A TUK-TUK

• Taxis are cheap in Thailand. They're also deathly slow. For short trips, hop into a **tuk-tuk**, a motorized tricycle cum glamorized go-kart with a bench seat in back that makes a Mini Cooper look like a Humvee. Negotiate a flat rate up front, take rides only in vehicles sporting yellow government-issued license plates, and hold on.



DEVICE SQUAD

SHAKE OFF THE WINTER FUNK WITH APPS THAT MAKE LAZING AROUND WITH NETFLIX SEEM LIKE RECKLESS BEHAVIOR

• Your cell phone needs to get out more. Yes, with today's apps you can manage your March Madness pool, order a pizza and land a date all without leaving the sofa. But the smartphone's greatest asset will always be its get-up-and-go. In other words, if your iPhone has turned you into a well-connected couch potato, you're doing it wrong. Here's how a cell signal and a thirst for adventure can crank up your weekend.—*Shane Michael Singh*

START

TURN OFF

▶ Shed the week's tension with **Headspace**, a meditation app that introduces the art of introspection in 10-minute audio clips. Trust us, it's mindless.

AZUMIO SLEEP TIME

• Track your sleep pattern and sound the alarm when you're at your most rested.

UP AND AT 'EM

SPIN CYCLE

▶ Hibernation season is over. Grab your bike and let **MapMyRide** be your guide. With its massive stock of trails, there's plenty to blaze.

SHOOT UP

▶ Once you crest the cliff, capture the fervor with the **1 Second Everyday** app, which cuts video into a slick memory reel. Insta-wha?

NET GAIN

▶ Take a breather and catch up on your March Madness bracket with **Team Stream**, which alerts you about your teams' wins and woes.

STAY LOCAL

HIT THE ROAD

CROWDSOURCE

▶ Revel with like-minded locals via **Meetup**, which unites strangers at events around town, from sports to mixers to live music. Want a plus-one? Dating app **HowAboutWe** can find you a gal who's as stoked as you are for that 1980s tribute band.

REST STOP

▶ Highway lodging is for amateurs. **Hotel Tonight** serves up bougie boutiques and five-star stays from Vegas to Vail at discounted rates.

EXIT STRATEGY

▶ Sure, GPS gets you from point A to point B, but **Waze** makes navigating unfamiliar territory a breeze with real-time updates on traffic, construction and detours.

VENMO

• Whether you're splitting gas or the check, Venmo is the easiest way to pay back friends.

SATE-ISM

▶ All that fraternizing has left you famished, so log in to **OpenTable**, where you can size up nearby eats and reserve a spot in seconds. It makes haggling with the hostess a thing of the past.

SIR MIX-A-LOT

▶ Pre-parties live and die by playlists, so play DJ with **Spotify Premium**. The deep library lets you queue the latest from Macklemore and Avicii, as well as classics from Run-DMC and Led Zep. Party on.

GRAB A TABLE

FIND MY IPHONE

• You got sloppy. It happens. As long as the battery has juice, Find My iPhone can locate your lost goods from a laptop.

▶ With the recent craft-beer boom, choosing the right draft has become a game of chance. Open **Untappd** to compare tasting notes and get tips on bars and brews from your buds. Prefer wine? Try **Delectable**. Cheers.

▶ Save the 12-pack for your cousin's BBQ. Dim lights and sexy beats call for finer spirits, and the **Mixology** app has every recipe you need to be a cocktail craftsman. How about a high-octane dark and stormy to kick things off?

OWN THE NIGHT

WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS

▶ Get a 10-20 on nearby singles looking for a nightcap with dating app **Tinder**. Find a match. Exchange hellos. Do your thing.

PICKUP GAME

▶ Break the ice by inviting a table of ladies to play **Heads Up!**, a bar-friendly take on charades that's a lot less corny. Loser buys shots.

EASY RIDER

▶ With **Uber**, no one's stuck being the DD. The black-car service arrives at your door in minutes for only a few bucks more than a cab.

FINISH

NIGHT BEFORE

MORNING

AFTERNOON

NIGHT



MOVIE OF THE MONTH

THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL

By Stephen Rebello

• Director Wes Anderson's fantastical *Grand Budapest Hotel*, set in the period between the two world wars, features Ralph Fiennes as a sophisticated concierge who arouses the suspicions of a policeman (Edward Norton) after an elderly hotel resident (Tilda Swinton) dies and bequeaths the concierge a valuable painting. The

movie's lavish scale and locations in Berlin and Görlitz are matched by a cast that includes Saoirse Ronan, Jude Law and many Anderson company members, among them Jeff Goldblum, who plays a Freud-like psychoanalyst. "It's a hilarious movie about a pack of underdogs who team up to do something wonderful," says

Goldblum. "The characters show rare gallantry and gentility in a world of brutality, and the script is as intricate and beautiful as Russian nesting dolls. Wes was all over the set, to the point of moving the tiniest prop on a desk to create his vision of this magical world he's creating with his collaborators. It was a dreamy experience."



TEASE FRAME

Parker Posey

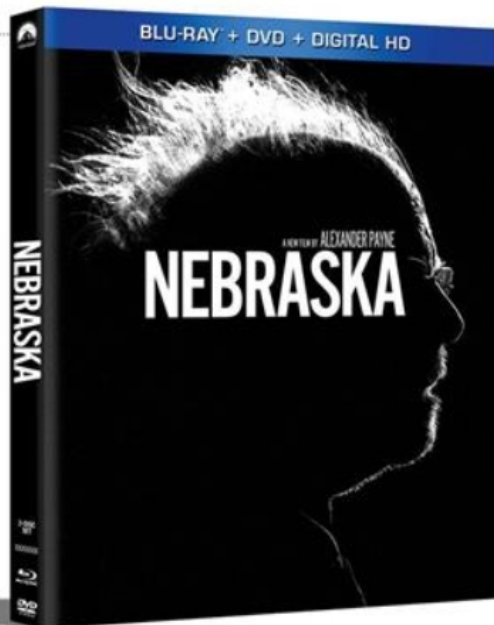
→ Indie queen Parker Posey plays a professor's bored wife who writes an erotic novel in 1998's *The Misadventures of Margaret* (pictured). See her next as a scheming social climber opposite Nicole Kidman's Grace Kelly in *Grace of Monaco*.

DVD OF THE MONTH

NEBRASKA

By Bryan Reesman

• Director Alexander Payne sends Bruce Dern on a bizarre quest through a landscape frozen in time in this film that deconstructs heartland stereotypes. A boozing patriarch who thinks he has won \$1 million, Dern's character seeks to travel from Montana to Nebraska to claim his winnings. His son (Will Forte) joins him on his deluded final shot at small-town glory, resulting in father-son bonding, an awkward family reunion and temporary celebrity. (BD) **Best extra:** *Making of Nebraska*, about the road trip. **YYY**




SULLIVAN'S TRAVELS

300: Rise of an Empire's Sullivan Stapleton goes Greek for sequel



Q: In the epic 300: Rise of an Empire you play the Greek general Themistocles, who fights the Persian armies at sea at the same time they're fighting on land in 300. How did you channel your inner Greek warrior?

A: It was grueling to prepare for that role. I spent 90 minutes a day practicing with swords and another 90 at the gym. I cut out all the good food and nice things to drink.

Q: How is this 300 most different from the last?

A: This one takes place on the water, so the battles are really different. It also has a bit more of how and why the battle was started and more of the politics. I can't wait to hear the reactions.

Q: Including that of 300 star Gerard Butler?

A: I hope he enjoys it. Those were big shoes to fill.

Q: How would you have survived in the time depicted in 300: Rise of an Empire?

A: I would have survived, mate, and done all right. I survived filming this movie, right? I've got the abs to prove it, and they're immortalized on film. It makes me happy knowing that they were always under there somewhere.—S.R.

MUST-WATCH TV

THE RED ROAD

By Josef Adalian

• Sundance's latest series moves at a fast clip: Episode one of *The Red Road* introduces two murder mysteries, a *Romeo and Juliet*-style love story and an accidental death poised to lead to even more violence. At the center of it all are a Native American ex-con

(*Game of Thrones*'s Jason Momoa) and a small-town sheriff (Martin Henderson) who share a (very dark) past. There are no heroes or villains here, just a lot of people making incredibly bad decisions. Thankfully their mistakes make for riveting viewing. **★★★★**



RESURRECTION

• TV's latest show about the undead imagines what might happen if long-lost loved ones were to suddenly start showing up on their relatives' doorsteps—decades after leaving this mortal coil. But unlike *The Walking Dead*, the newly awakened souls on *Resurrection* aren't looking for a trip to the all-you-can-eat brains buffet. They actually seem normal,

which only adds to the tension and mystery: How (and why) did these folks return from the dead? And is there a reason this appears to be happening only in one small town in Missouri? If you felt burned by *Lost* (which, coincidentally, was also on ABC), be warned: This show could easily turn into a frustrating dead end. But there's enough

quiet creepiness here to provide hope that *Resurrection* could become TV's next great mystery. Based on the early episode we've seen, it's worth the gamble. **★★★**

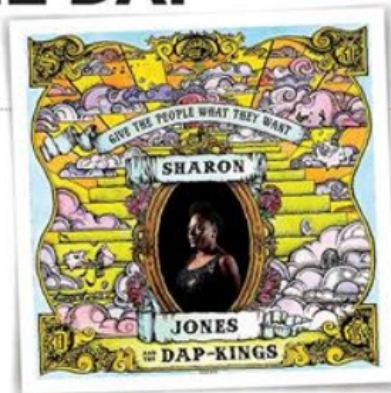


ALBUM OF THE MONTH

SHARON JONES AND THE DAP-KINGS

By Rob Tannenbaum

• Last year surgeons cut out Sharon Jones's gallbladder and parts of her pancreas and small intestine after she was diagnosed with cancer. But the 57-year-old soul dynamo sounds whole on *Give the People What They Want*, the best album of an underdog career. Her music expresses a personal resilience: Overlooked by record labels, Jones toiled as a corrections officer and



was in her mid-40s when she released her first album. Amid R&B horns and shoop-shoop harmonies, she rep-

rimands a no-good man on "You'll Be Lonely" by demanding r-e-s-p-e-c-t. Cancer messed with the wrong broad. **★★★★**

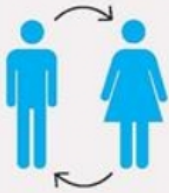
GAME OF THE MONTH

TITANFALL

By Jason Buhrmester

• *Titanfall* (360, PC, Xbox One) is here to blow up everything—buildings, giant robots and video games as we know them. The blockbuster new title from a co-creator of the *Call of Duty* franchise torches the idea of a traditional shooter game. Instead, the action takes place strictly online, where players join multiplayer squads on a war-torn futuristic world and engage in intense firefights. Jet-packed soldiers run across walls and jump in and out of giant, armed robots called Titans. It looks and plays like the future of gaming. **★★★★**





38%
of online daters encounter profiles of people they already know.



54%
of online daters feel someone else "seriously misrepresented themselves in their profile."

BIG BANG



Women are twice as likely to reach orgasm during sex in a relationship as opposed to sex during a hookup.

Letter of the Law

From November 1928 to September 2013, the letter



was illegal in Turkey.

Up in Smoke

86% of Chinese five- and six-year-olds were able to identify at least one cigarette brand, compared with 50% of Russian children.



ONE FOR THE ROAD

11% of people admit to having had sex while driving.

Play It Again

Young women drink faster when music is playing, according to a U.K. study that used vodka and "Stress" by the band Justice.



Nuts to That

Men with smaller testicles are more attentive to their children, according to a study published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* that looked at 70 fathers of one- and two-year-olds. Dads with smaller testicles were also rated by their partners as better fathers.



TRUE BELIEVERS

According to Public Policy Polling, the percentages of Americans who believe the following:

- 13%** President Obama is the Antichrist.
- 15%** The government controls minds via TV.
- 7%** The Moon landing was faked.
- 4%** Shape-shifting reptilians control the government.
- 51%** Lee Harvey Oswald did not act alone.
- 14%** The CIA distributed crack in the 1980s.
- 29%** Aliens exist.
- 14%** Bigfoot exists.



KEEP IT IN YOUR PANTS

59% of men believe it's acceptable to check text messages at a business lunch.

Only 34% of women agree.

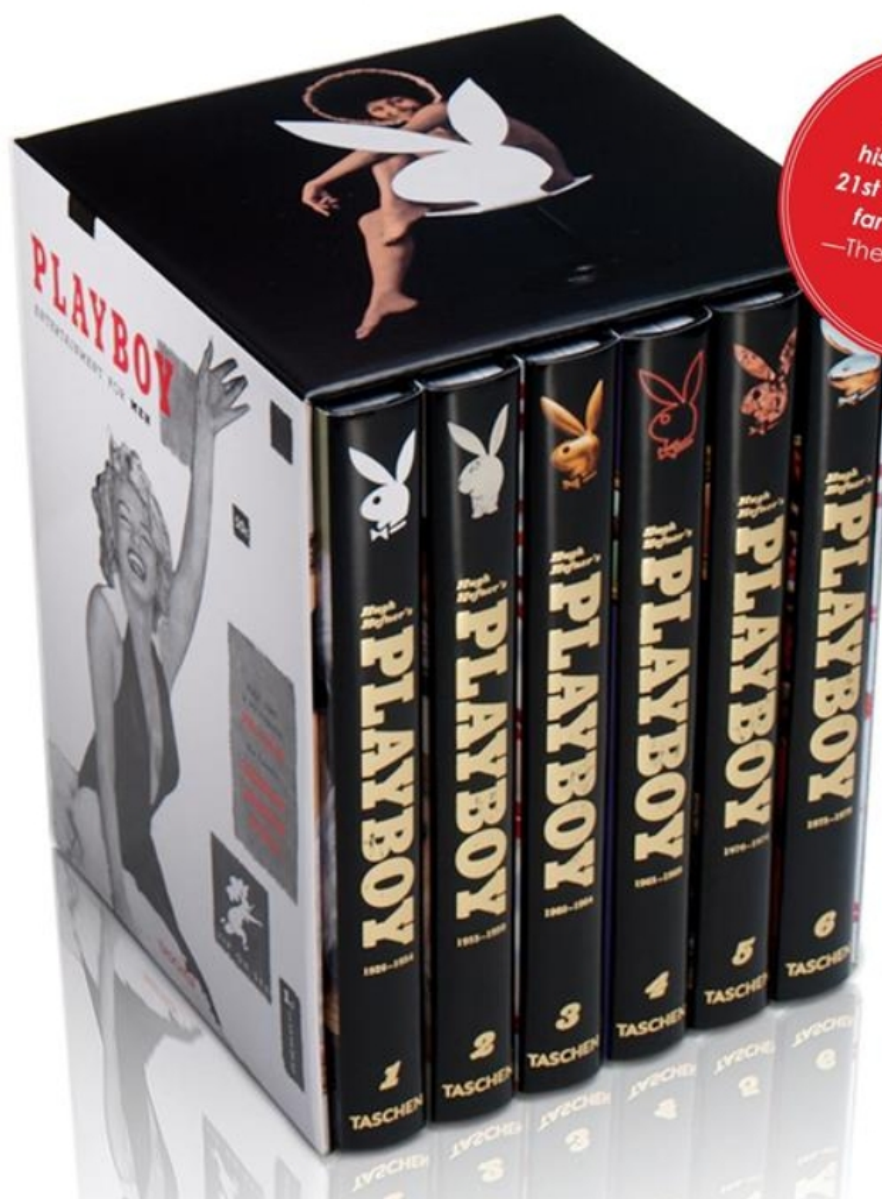
But 66% of people under 30 say it's okay to text or e-mail in the presence of co-workers.



WE MEAT AGAIN

The sperm of men who eat a great deal of fish is of a higher quality than that of men whose diets include a lot of red meat. Men who eat one piece of bacon or sausage a day have 30% fewer normal sperm than those who don't.

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 **TASCHEN**



YOU ARE NOT ALONE

THE NSA IS THE LEAST OF YOUR PROBLEMS. YOUR GIRLFRIEND ALREADY KNOWS ALL

There's no need to worry about the NSA collecting your e-mails or Facebook collecting your data, unless you have something to hide. Or have a penis. Because if you have a penis and haven't done something wrong, you're not thinking hard enough about all the things you've ever done. Now you remember. And so does the internet.

The new surveillance state is a disaster for men. Yes, all that NSA snooping is probably helping the government stop terrorists. And Google selling our web history to advertisers undoubtedly keeps us from seeing ads for things we don't need, such as tampons and John Mayer albums. But this massive data collection is also a digital bread-crumbs trail for our girlfriends to follow.

I'm not even talking about cheating. Or sneaking out to drink. Or to gamble. Or to smoke crack cocaine while we're supposed to be mairying Toronto. We do horrible things all day long that mean so little to us we don't even remember them. Cardinal Richelieu said, "If one would give me six lines written by the hand of the most honest man, I would find something in them to have him hanged." And Cardinal Richelieu was a dude. A woman would need only one line.

When I started dating my now wife in the digital innocence of the late 1990s, I left her in my office with my computer on and my e-mail program open. Because I'd never cheated, I was fine with her looking at my e-mails. Until she did.

She found an e-mail I'd sent to an ex-girlfriend, and she was furious. This confused me since I hadn't written anything bad. Except I had and didn't even know it. I wrote about how I'd read the class-notes section of our college alumni magazine to see if she'd gotten married. Which, I came to realize after hours of fighting and crying with my now wife, was indeed deeply flirty. Also deeply pathetic.

Even medical records have been stolen and posted online. Yes, it's happening mostly to celebrities, but we're next. And when we talk about medical records, what we're really talking about is women finding out we have herpes before we find the right moment to tell them, which is when we're fake crying over the story of our cheating, herpes-ridden ex-girlfriend, who may or may not exist.

Here's everything your girlfriend could know: If you have an alarm system that provides a website or an app, she has a record of every time you leave and enter your house and what door you used, so there's no more being a backdoor man. She can find out from a quick search the price of any houses you've owned, how much you owe on them, if you've been divorced, your political donations and your criminal record. If she suspects you're cheating, she can ask you to install

≡ BY JOEL STEIN ≡

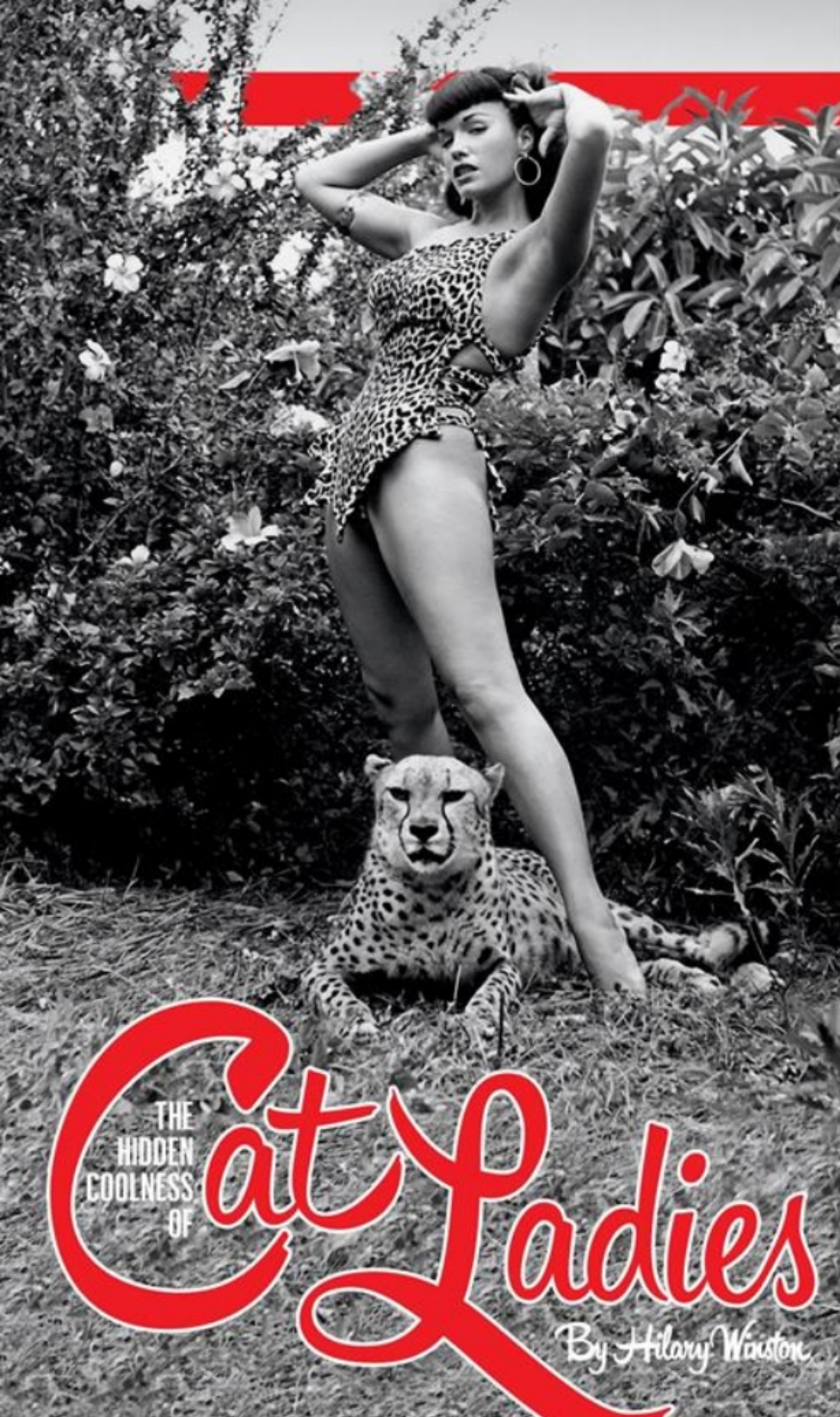
the Find My Friends app on your phone so she can always see exactly where you are. Turning the Find My Friends app off is way more suspicious than just letting it show that you're at the Mustang Ranch. You can at least claim you were driving through the middle of Nevada when your car broke down on a pile of herpes.

This isn't just paranoia: Women really are using technology to compile dossiers on us. The Lulu app allows women to numerically score men they've dated and assign them hashtags such as #NeverSleepsOver, #FuckedMeAndChuckedMe and #AlwaysPays. It's turning the world into a small liberal arts college where if you mess up once, you never get the chance to mess up all over someone else. Though if I know anything about women, the guys who are going to get the most action are the ones hashtagged "FuckedMeAndChuckedMe."

Technology is a cage keeping us from being our natural outlaw selves. We can't drive through tollbooths when we discover we don't have exact change, because cameras are shooting our license plates. If you mouth off to a cop, he can't even beat you silly with a club without being videotaped. Thanks to that rewards program card, your drugstore knows everything you buy there, as does your credit card company, which sells it to huge data-mining firms. We are on electronic leashes, and that is not a very masculine look.

We're just a few years from a world where everyone wears Google Glass, allowing people to look at us while our photos pop up in the corner of their eyes like mug shots, listing all the horrible things we've done: tried to convince a girlfriend to have a threesome she clearly didn't want; added an extra day in Las Vegas to a business trip that wasn't in Las Vegas; worked as a theater director in college. All the data will lead to so much shaming that we'll be aware of every impure instinct, sweating to tame each one. All this civilizing will take the Tom Sawyer out of us, and we'll slowly transmogrify into soft, unattractive Stepford men. Our species will die out as we drink nonfat lattes and ask each other how our day was.

Sure, you can hide your e-mail through a Hushmail account, pay with Bitcoins and surf the deep web, but that's like telling everyone you're doing something majorly shady when you're doing something just a tiny bit shady. Instead, we all need to roll back our digital dependency and reclaim a little mystery. Get in the habit of turning off our phones for a couple of hours every day. Keep the GPS off unless we're lost. Don't post everything we do on Twitter and Facebook because then it looks weird when we don't. It's either that or we behave ourselves. And that's not going to happen. ■



THE HIDDEN COOLNESS OF

Cat Ladies

By Hilary Winston

SURE, THEY HAVE A BAD REP. BUT MAYBE YOU'RE OVERLOOKING THE OBVIOUS CHARMS OF FELINES AND THEIR FRIENDS

My single guy friends tell me there are no good girls to date. There are good girls to sleep with but none to date. This infuriates me, because guys are all looking for the same girl. The "perfect" girl who rolls out of bed, throws on jeans and looks amazing. She doesn't need makeup, just ChapStick. She never works late, is never too tired and never has a period. She never has any sort of problem that requires emotional support. She's easygoing. She loves beer. And sports. And your friends. Well, guys, that girl doesn't exist—actually, she might, but not in the quantity required to meet the needs of every single guy in America. So the advice I give my male friends is that it's time to get creative. Maybe you're overlooking someone.

A few years ago I had minor surgery. A guy I'd been dating only a few weeks came with me to the hospital because I had to be put under. Being under around a new boyfriend made me nervous. I was worried I'd say something insane, like "I love

you." And follow it up with "It's not the anesthesia. As soon as I get this IV out, let's drive to Vegas and get married." Unfortunately I didn't say either of those things. Instead, after the anesthesiologist had gotten me good and stoned, I told my new beau I wanted to go to a nearby cat shelter. He said it wasn't a good idea; I already had two cats. I begged him. I told him I wasn't going to get another cat; I just wanted to look! Apparently, from what the nurses told me, I was pretty adamant. He suggested we do it another time. Annoyed, I told him, "Fine, but if I ever have a million dollars, I'm going to buy a boat and fill it with a hundred cats." Then I fell asleep. Now, this is one of the stories that has earned me the nickname Cat Lady. It's enough to turn the page, right? Blow right past me. I get it. I once had a guy break it off after he saw my dead cat Emmett's newly minted gravestone on my kitchen counter. But should this really have sent the guy running? I don't think so. I think cat ladies are "perfect" ladies in the rough—and I can prove it.

A truly easygoing person isn't defined by wearing only ChapStick. An easygoing person is someone who doesn't compare herself to anyone else. Now, we live in a dog world. The internet has created a sort of cat renaissance, but for the most part, cat ladies are swimming upstream, going against the pet-owner grain. And *that* is the kind of girl you want. Why would you want a dog lady? She always has to go home and let her dog out. It gets jealous and bites. It has to be walked. It barks. You always have to stay at her place. Cat ladies are cool. We're not up at the crack of dawn to drag you on a hike with our dumb dog. We're cuddlers! Cats are soft. And tired all the time. We, and our cats, like to sleep in and be lazy. We don't have to get up and let our cats out. Cats shit in boxes! You can't get lazier than that.

Cats are also the most aloof pets. This aloofness makes them independent. And cat owners admire this independence because they themselves are independent. You don't want a woman who has to be attached at the hip. And guess what—Cat Lady can't be attached at the hip, because she has a reason to go home in the morning. Actually, I have two reasons. But don't worry. If you want to go away for a weekend, I can go. And unlike Dog Lady, I won't bring my cats. I'll leave them at home, because cats can take care of themselves, like their owners.

Cat ladies are willing to clean up urine, vomit and feces that didn't come from them. You can't show us anything we haven't seen. We're unflappable. I gave my cat Emmett insulin shots every 12 hours for six years. We're caretakers. If you're sick, I'll give you medicine. If you're good, I'll give you a treat. If you're drunk and piss your pants, I'll throw them in the laundry and pretend it didn't happen. Cat ladies will take care of you. They *want* to take care of you.

And I'd like to remind you: "Doggy" is a style, but if you're good at it, they say you're a "tiger in the sack."

Now, I'm not a crazy cat lady, just a cat lady. So if a girl calls her cats "fur babies" or has a cat stroller (I had one for a short time before I realized it was a mistake), then maybe it's not going to work. But have an open mind about cat ladies. A lot of qualities you're looking for in a woman could be in your own backyard...literally. One of her cats could have escaped and she might be looking for him back there. Or she could be at your gym or office or living in your building. Maybe she's buzzing the Chinese take-out guy in right now. Go find her! Just bring a lint roller.



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Whenever I'm hungover, my sex drive goes to the redline. I recover quickly but get turned on by damn near every woman I see; I'm not able to keep it down. I assume this is the result of a biochemical reaction after my body processes a large amount of alcohol, but I've never heard of this happening to anybody else. Is there a logical explanation behind my morning-after craze?—R.H., Moscow, Idaho

You're not alone. The "horny hangover" is prevalent enough to warrant an entry in the Urban Dictionary, but woefully little research is out there to explain the cause. Some people theorize that a horny hangover comes from the residual disinhibiting effects of the previous night's alcohol. Others think it has something to do with the more primitive state a hangover puts us in: Our complex thinking diminishes, and basic needs such as food and sex come to the fore. The "horny flu" is a phenomenon similar to your hangover. Think of them as maladies with benefits.

I inherited an old bottle of Kentucky bourbon and am curious about its value. It's an unopened gallon of Old Charter that was bottled in 1917. I showed photos of it to a clerk at a liquor store, and he said it could be worth a great deal of money. What do you think?—B.M., Augusta, Georgia

Very old bottles of spirits have become a hot commodity with collectors, bartenders and thieves. Last year, \$26,000 worth of rare Pappy Van Winkle bourbon was stolen from a warehouse in Kentucky. Intact booze bottles that predate Prohibition are particularly rare. A few top mixologists at fancy bars in London, Tokyo and New York charge well-heeled patrons more than \$100 for a cocktail made with vintage spirits. As for your bottle, the Old Charter brand has been around since 1874 and is now owned by Buffalo Trace Distillery, one of the largest bourbon companies in the U.S. According to Mike Veach, bourbon historian at Louisville, Kentucky's Filson Historical Society, if the bottle is authentic and hasn't been opened and refilled, it could bring \$500 at auction.

Glass dildos seem like an accident waiting to happen. Why are they even made? Glass strikes me as an antiquated material to be using in the 21st century.—J.A., Evanston, Illinois

Quite the opposite: Glass dildos offer quality (there's nothing smoother), cleanliness (they're nonporous) and environmental friendliness (glassmaking uses less energy than plastic or rubber manufacturing). For a pro's take

PLAYBOY ADVISOR



When my girlfriend and I have sex, we talk about the sex she had with her husband when they were married. At my encouragement, sometimes she has phone sex with him while we're fucking (he doesn't know I'm in the room). We both find this incredibly erotic, and our sex life is off the charts. Is this a prelude to something bigger down the road, or do we just enjoy the fantasy part of it?—E.S., New York, New York

It certainly sounds like it's working for you for now, but have you considered the possibility that your girlfriend may end up gravitating back to her ex? We ran your situation by Los Angeles-based psychologist Melissa Tufeld, who points out your sex play has actually moved beyond pure fantasy. "There are three people involved," she says. "Depending on if and how things progress, you could end up being the third wheel." In the meantime, Tufeld smartly adds, "Just don't cough."

on glass dildos we talked to Shellie Yarnell, owner of Crystal Delights, a leading manufacturer of American-made glass sex toys. Yarnell has designed and manufactured glass objects ranging from a trophy for the Feminist Porn Awards to a torch-shaped dildo for the big-budget (at least for porn) production of Spartacus MMXII. (Check out her wares at CrystalDelights.com; the company also has a product line that benefits cancer charities.) You want something handblown (rim shot!) and made out of borosilicate, also known as Pyrex, which Yarnell says makes "the most san-

itary adult toy you could ever buy." Unlike rubber or plastic, glass toys can be thoroughly sterilized, won't cause irritation in people with latex or plastic allergies and can be heated in warm water to be made more comfortable for use.

Recently I've seen a lot of advertisements for affordable jewelry made with lab-created diamonds. Would it be wise to purchase an engagement ring that uses one of these diamonds, since I can get a larger stone for less money? Or would it be better to go with a real diamond? I don't want to look cheap. I love my girlfriend very much; I just don't have the income to provide a natural stone of the size I feel she deserves.—M.R., Boise, Idaho

We wish diamond companies were as romantic as you are. Much of the mystique surrounding natural diamonds comes from the idea that they are rare—and much of that scarcity has been created by diamond conglomerates that historically stockpile supplies to drive up prices. Lab-engineered diamonds are identical in chemical composition and clarity to natural, mined diamonds and indistinguishable without laboratory testing. If you do go the synthetic-diamond route, you can be confident that it is in fact a diamond by all scientific measures. Plus, it was created in a lab and not mined through the backbreaking labor of workers in countries with questionable human-rights track records.

I'm a 24-year-old man who, ever since puberty, has had a fetish for women's panties—thongs, G-strings and bikini-style in particular. I never steal panties, but I do use my girlfriend's when I'm alone. I know there are websites and magazines dedicated to this, but I want to know if any women enjoy the same fetish and if there are websites for women looking for guys who love panties. My ultimate fantasy is that a woman will put her panties in my mouth while I take her from behind. Am I a freak?—M.Q., Richmond, Virginia

You're not a freak, but as you said, you have a fetish, which most sex researchers define as a sexual preoccupation with a body part, a material or an object. This is distinct from paraphilia, which is basically a fetish that leads to socially unacceptable behavior. You say you don't steal panties, but it doesn't sound as though you've admitted your attraction to undergarments to your girlfriend. Telling her about it, rather than trawling the internet, should be your first step toward exploring the

ultimate fantasy you describe. It's commonly thought that a fetish becomes a barrier to true intimacy if you're more focused on the object than on your partner. Pantyphilia is common enough to have inspired a number of websites that are happy to profit from your fetish and sell you undies purportedly worn by women, though how you can prove their authenticity is beyond us (and good luck complaining to the Better Business Bureau if you get a pair with the distinct stink of male body odor).

I see tons of "Work From Home" ads on Craigslist and message boards that tell me I can make up to \$500 a week if I'm self-motivated. Are any of these pitches legit, or are they all scams?—W.P., New Orleans, Louisiana

Five hundred bucks is chump change compared with the \$1,800 a week one such ad promised us. We clicked the link and found ourselves at a website that claimed it would tell us how to make money, but only after we paid, which is how many of these companies work. The Federal Trade Commission estimates that only one in 55 of the work-from-home ads you see online, in newspapers and elsewhere is legitimate. Even the "legitimate" ones require you to pay out-of-pocket start-up costs that you may never recoup; you take on all the risk. And those are the operations that aren't technically criminal. Others take your credit card billing information and charge you repeatedly for goods and services they don't provide. The scams are so prevalent that the FTC maintains a website to help consumers avoid being ripped off by these companies. The URL is a mouthful, so google "FTC business opportunity scams" to learn more about it.

I often get very wet while having sex, which for a woman is awesome because I've never had to use lubricants. Unfortunately, my significant other has been complaining that he is unable to climax because I'm too slippery down there. I'm also confident that my girl parts are tight. Although I cannot control how wet I get, I wipe myself as much as possible during the act. Is there anything else I can do to help him climax? Is this a typical male complaint?—L.D., Indianapolis, Indiana

You're not the first person to reach out to us on this matter, but women who have the opposite condition outnumber you by far. That said, some women produce more fluid at various points during their menstrual cycle. Pay attention to the calendar to see if there's a pattern, and then take advantage of the low-flow days. You might also want to try gripping your boyfriend's cock with your thumb and first two fingers for added friction at the entrance of your vagina. Think of this as a sort of drier, tighter vaginal extension. It could take some practice to get just right, but with patience the added pressure of your fingers will stimulate him to the point of climax.

On the advice of my doctor, several months ago I began exercising daily to improve my cardiovascular health. But

when I factor in the time it takes to drive to and from the gym and to do the workout itself (an hour-long workout with weights and treadmill), plus the cost of a gym membership, I can't help but think I'm spending way too much time and money. Now I don't have any free time to hang out with my family in the morning or see friends at night. Frankly, I'm afraid I'll give up altogether and slip back into my sedentary ways. Any advice on how to stick with it? I can't afford a personal trainer to keep me motivated.—D.P., Kingston, New York

It sounds as if you've developed a pretty good baseline fitness and don't want to backslide completely. Fortunately for you, one of the side benefits of our overscheduled, over-worked culture is the boom in "microworkout" DVD series you can watch at home. The newest are P90X3 (a half-hour version of the popular P90X series) and Focus T25, an intense 25-minute workout program. Lest you think this is just infomercial opportunism, recent studies have shown that short, intense workouts can provide the same cardiovascular benefits as longer, more moderate fitness regimens.

My wife and I have been together for six years. She really enjoys sex, likes vibrators and toys, and has orgasms easily and often. When we met, the subject of anal sex came up, and I was surprised by her extremely strong dismissal of it—she said if I wanted to have anal sex, I should do it with a man, not her. So I figured that was that. However, I noticed that when we had sex, she really enjoyed having her ass played with. Fingering it always brought a powerful orgasm—I'm talking claw-the-sheets-and-scream-into-the-pillow type of thing. As time has gone on, she has let me slip my cock into her ass from time to time, usually after she has had some drinks, and it is obvious she enjoys it. Now here comes the strange part: Afterward, we never talk about it, as though it never happened. I find this odd. Any ideas?—G.O., Wichita, Kansas

We think her initial negative reaction to the idea might have to do with her not yet knowing or trusting you in the early stages of your relationship. Now that she's secure in the longevity of your partnership and satisfied with your sex life, she's clearly open to more ideas and confident you're not going to leave her for a guy. That said, we don't see much point in exploring the why of it with her. Why jeopardize a good thing? Ask yourself which you prefer: anal or analysis? We think we know what your answer will be.

What style dress shirt does President Obama wear? I like the way the collars sit—not too wide, not too pointy. I'd like to get one with cuffs that button. Where should I look?—M.C., San Antonio, Texas

The collar style President Obama is most often seen wearing is called a medium-spread or point collar, as it points downward more

dramatically than wider styles, such as spread and semi-spread collars. J. Crew's Ludlow point-collar dress shirt (around \$80) is well made and very similar to what you describe.

I have been celibate for one year, and a friend of mine has offered to provide me with oral sex. He says if you do only oral, with no penetration, you remain celibate. Is this true, or is he just trying to get into my pants? I have known him for about six years, and he has never made a pass at me, not even close. We have even slept in the same bed. What should I do? Will I still be celibate?—T.H., Portland, Maine

Of course you won't be celibate. Since you're using the word "celibate" and not a phrase like "hard up" or "off the market," we assume you're abstaining from sex for religious reasons. But we're wondering what religion would leave you unclear about the definition a full year into it. A little *Celibacy 101: In traditions ranging from Buddhism to Christianity to Hinduism, the basic idea is that celibacy eliminates the distraction of lust and the desire for physical gratification, thereby helping practitioners focus solely on their spiritual growth. That means abstaining from sexual activity of all kinds: vaginal, oral, anal, masturbation, even simply making out. By sleeping in the same bed with your friend, you've already been pushing the limits. Before you abandon celibacy altogether, we suggest you first figure out exactly what you're looking to gain from it. And yes, your friend is just trying to get into your pants.*

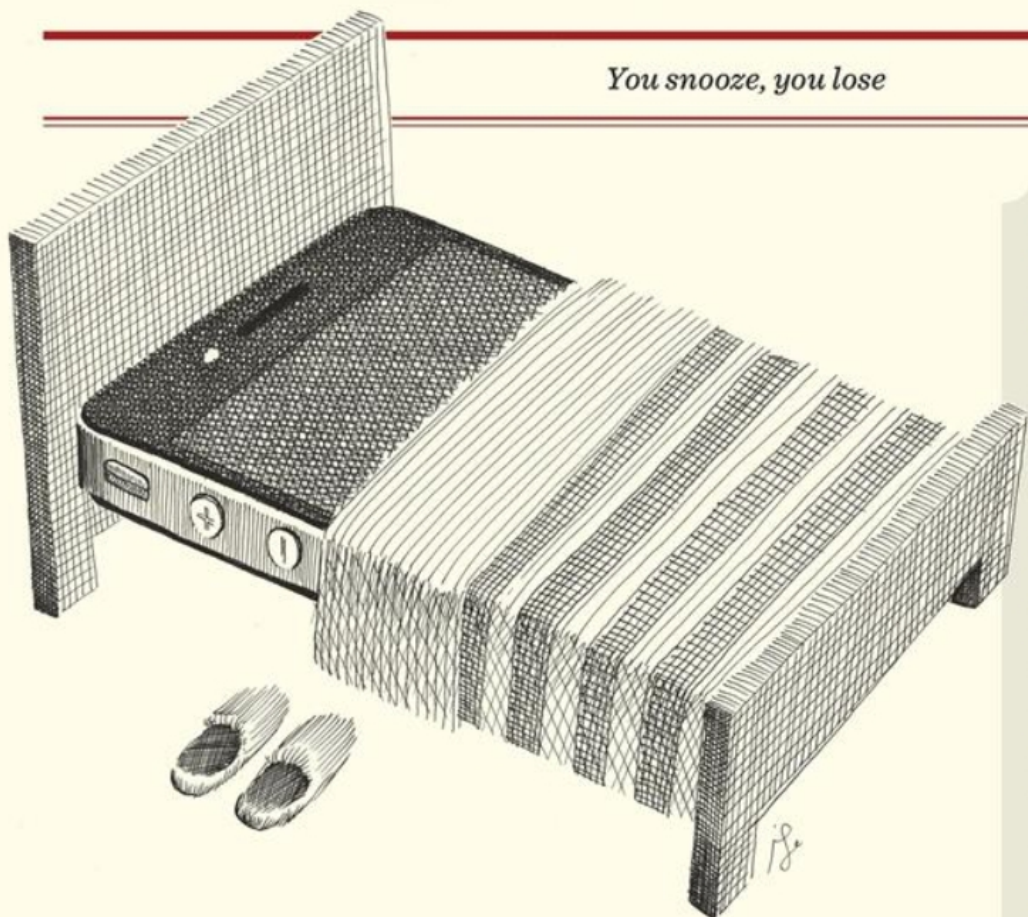
Several years ago I purchased knives at a culinary store, and they were not cheap. I use a sharpening steel before and after each use, hand wash them and keep them in protective covers when they aren't being used. Obviously, after years of use, they are starting to dull. I don't want to ruin the blades with a cheap knife sharpener you can buy at any store. Would you please give me some direction as to how to properly sharpen them so that it's done correctly and I get my lifetime guarantee out of them?—D.O., Edmonton, Alberta

Ask local restaurants to recommend a good professional sharpener in your area. Failing that, consider buying the Edgecraft Chef's Choice 120 three-stage electric sharpener, which goes for around \$150. It grinds, hones and sharpens. Use the grinding stage sparingly, as it can take considerable metal off your blade over time. With light maintenance, some of our knives are more than 10 years old and still slice and dice like they're brand-new.

For answers to reasonable questions relating to food and drink, fashion and taste, and sex and dating, write the Playboy Advisor, 9346 Civic Center Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90210, or e-mail advisor@playboy.com. The most interesting and pertinent questions will be presented in these pages each month.



You snooze, you lose



SLEEPERS AWAKE

In today's 24/7 world, sleep is the last refuge of the human

BY JONATHAN CRARY

For 21st century military planners and strategists whose primary concern is total dominance, any distinction between night and day is irrelevant. It's no surprise that DARPA, the advanced research division of the Pentagon, spends large amounts of money to discover ways to enable soldiers to go without sleep. In laboratories across North America, scientists are conducting experimental trials of sleeplessness techniques, including neurochemicals, gene therapy and transcranial magnetic stimulation. The near-term goal is to find ways for a combatant to go without sleep for seven days—and in the longer term perhaps two weeks—while preserving high levels

of mental and physical performance. Existing means of producing sleeplessness have inevitably been accompanied by troublesome cognitive and psychic side effects, such as reduced alertness. This was the case with the widespread use of amphetamines in most 20th century wars and more recently with drugs such as Provigil. The quest now is not to find ways to stimulate wakefulness but to reduce the body's need for sleep.

The quest now is to reduce the body's need for sleep.

The larger goal of this research is to enable human beings to more closely mimic technological devices and networks. The corporate-military complex wants to develop forms of "augmented cognition" that will supposedly enhance many kinds of human-machine

READER RESPONSE

DEATH BECOMES US ALL

As a philosophy student, I often come across thinkers who try to make sense of their own mortality. Death is perhaps *the* central question that underlies both philosophy and religion. Cicero once said, "To study philosophy is nothing but to prepare one's self to die." More broadly, perhaps simply to live is to prepare oneself to die. Many people have talked about death, but few have so poignantly expressed death's inescapability and ultimate acceptance quite like Donald Hall ("Buying the Farm," January/February). In a way that's more beautiful than anything I've read before, Hall thoughtfully



writes about what most people are too afraid to discuss. In the back of our minds we know that death is our fate, and for most it is a terrifying thought. Hall lightheartedly writes about his own soon—though hopefully not too soon—demise and also helps us understand that perhaps death isn't so bad after all. Maybe our death is all about perspective. We see death everywhere, but when



READER RESPONSE

it comes to speaking of our own death, the conversation usually stops. "Death is not the worst that can happen to men," Plato said, and Donald Hall shows us just how right Plato was. Thank you for running an incredible piece by an incredible writer.

Zachary Gekas
New York, New York

ORANGE IS NOT THE NEW BLACK

In December's *Reader Response*, Rodger Alan Gibson makes an absurd comment. He says, "Gays aren't the new blacks; felons are." While I agree that the justice system is messed up—and that you and other felons are getting a raw deal—the comparison of felons to blacks (or gays) is ridiculous. Again, we must talk about choices. Being black isn't a



choice. Neither is being gay. But three times you chose to break the law? Yes, the law may be wrong, but those choices were made by you. Man up. You weren't born with those three strikes. You decided that you wanted to continue breaking the law. You chose to be a felon.

Joe LaBonte
Converse, Texas

THE FUTURE IS RENEWABLE

I'm gratified to see serious conservative opposition to the Keystone XL pipeline ("Don't Drill on Me," December). This development underscores the hope that the most myopic people in our culture can see that



IN AN ERA OF AROUND-THE-CLOCK MARKETS AND INCESSANT WORK, THERE IS LITTLE TIME FOR US TO DREAM OR EVEN TO LIVE.

interaction. As history has shown, the broader society inevitably assimilates war-related innovations; the sleepless soldier becomes the forerunner of the sleepless worker or consumer. When aggressively promoted by pharmaceutical companies, products that induce sleeplessness would first become a lifestyle option and eventually, for many, a necessity.

Around-the-clock markets and a global infrastructure for unceasing work and consumption have existed for some time, but soon we will be forced to coincide with them even more intensively. Only recently have our personal and social identities been reorganized to conform to the uninterrupted operation of markets, information networks and other systems.

A 24/7 world refashions human life into a duration without breaks, defined by the principle of continuous functioning. It is beyond clock time. It is a time that no longer passes.

Behind the banality of the catchphrase, 24/7 is a reordering of experience severed from the rhythm of human life. It connotes an arbitrary, uninflected schema of a week, devoid of varied or cumulative experience. To say "24/365," for example, would not be the same, for this suggests an extended

temporality in which something could actually change, in which unforeseen events might happen. The 24/7 reality resembles a social world, but it is actually an abstract model of performance and a suspension of living that doesn't disclose the human cost required to sustain it. It must be distinguished from what philosopher Georg Lukács and others in the early 20th century identified as the empty, homogeneous time of modernity, the metric or calendar time of nations, finance and industry, from which individual hopes and projects were excluded. What is

new here is the sweeping abandonment of the assumption that time is coupled to any long-term undertakings, even to fantasies of progress or development.

This makes 24/7 a time of indifference, against which the fragility of human life is increasingly inadequate and within which sleep has no necessity or inevitability.

In relation to labor, it renders plausible, even normal, the idea of working without pause, without limits. It is aligned with the inanimate, inert and unaging. As an advertising exhortation it announces the absoluteness of availability and hence the boundlessness of our desires. We are long past an era in which we accumulated mainly things. Now our bodies assimilate an ever-expanding overload of services, images and chemicals to a toxic or even fatal threshold.

The 24/7 reality doesn't disclose the human cost required to sustain it.

The long-term survival of the individual is undesirable if it includes even the possibility of interludes without shopping or its frenetic promotion. In related ways, 24/7 is inseparable from environmental catastrophe because it entails permanent expenditure and endless waste. It disrupts the cycles on which ecological survival depends.

But sleep—with its profound uselessness, intrinsic passivity and incalculable loss of productivity and consumption—will always collide with the demands of a 24/7 universe. The portion of our lives that we spend asleep, freed from fulfilling a proliferation of false needs, subsists as one of the great human rebukes to the voraciousness of contemporary culture. Sleep is an uncompromising interruption of capitalism's theft of our time. Most of our seemingly irreducible appetites—hunger, thirst, sexual desire and, recently, the need for friendship—have now been commodified or financialized. Sleep, however, is an interval of human time that can't be colonized and harnessed to an engine of profitability (sleeping pills and mattresses notwithstanding). It thus remains an anomaly and the site of crisis in the global present. Despite the scientific research in this area, sleep frustrates any strategies to exploit or reshape it. The inconceivable truth is that no meaningful monetary value can be extracted from sleep.

Given the immensity of what is at stake economically, we shouldn't be

surprised that there is now an erosion of sleep everywhere. Throughout the 20th century, steady inroads were made against the time of sleep. The average American adult now sleeps approximately six and a half hours a night, down from eight hours a generation ago and (hard as it is to believe) 10 hours in the early 20th century. In the mid-20th century the familiar adage that we spend a third of our lives asleep

seemed to be axiomatic, but now it is a quaint assumption that continues to be undermined. Sleep is a ubiquitous but unseen reminder of the premodern agricultural world that began disappearing 400 years ago. But that world has never been fully vanquished. Sleep embeds in our lives the rhythmic oscillations of solar light and dark-

ness, activity and rest, work and recuperation. Such oscillations have been eradicated or neutralized elsewhere.

In spite of its insubstantiality and abstraction as a slogan, the implacability of 24/7 is in its impossible temporality. It is always a disparagement of the frailty and limits of human time, with its blurred, meandering textures. It effaces the relevance or value of respite and variability. Its celebration of perpetual "on-demand" access conceals its eradication of the periodicity that shaped most cultures for several millennia. The daily pulse of waking and sleeping, and the longer alternations between days of work and a day of worship or rest, became a seven-day week for ancient Mesopotamians, Hebrews

Sleep is an unseen reminder of the premodern agricultural world.



READER RESPONSE

short-term gain can lead to real pain. Hydrocarbon solutions for energy are not what we need in the 21st century anyway. It's time for the oilers to retire their 19th century tech or opt to implement renewables. The argument is not about technological advances or scale anymore. Stanford professor Mark Z. Jacobson made this clear in a recent interview with David Letterman. "It's a social and political issue, primarily," Jacobson



said. I say the U.S. needs an initiative as sweeping as the Apollo program to bring renewables on line quickly, enacted with the same zeal and commitment that put men on the moon. Clearly a huge economic windfall awaits nations that take the lead in renewable-energy technology. The U.S. needs to step up now. Munich has made a clear policy decision to be powered by renewables by 2025. If the U.S. doesn't commit to leading in this arena, then it will be at the back of the pack, buying tech from those that do, and our country will miss out on all the economic gains from new jobs. Jacobson says power from renewables is doable by midcentury. There is no downside to solar and wind energy powering the world. It's inevitable.

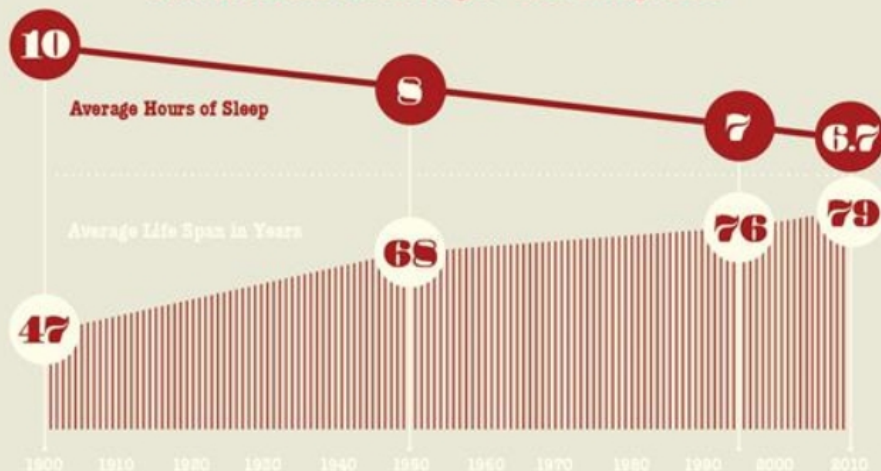
Will Brown
Berwyn, Pennsylvania

WIND OF CLIMATE CHANGE

If Joseph Kutch seriously wants to provide adequate criticisms of scientists and progressive political activists such as Al Gore, it would

WAKING LIFE

Americans live longer but sleep less

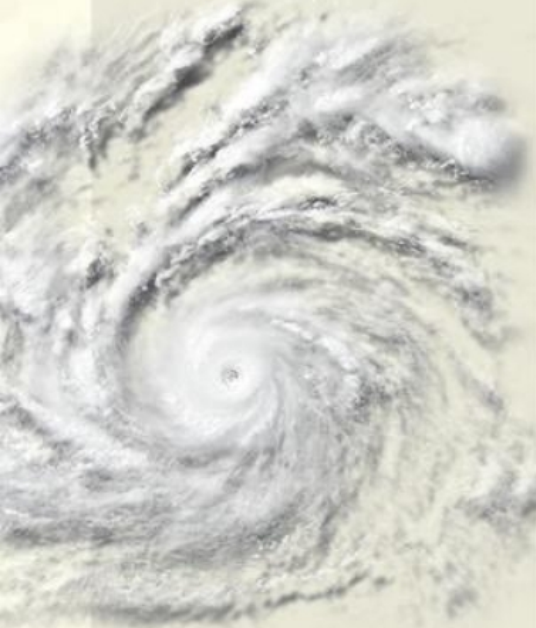


Sources: Centers for Disease Control; National Sleep Foundation



READER RESPONSE

be worth his while to do extensive research on the subject of man-made global warming (*Reader Response*, January/February). If he had done so, he would have discovered that around 1970 six times as many scientists predicted global warming rather than global cooling. Since then our vast pool of more accurate data, collected by more sophisticated research methods, has virtually eliminated the sensationalistic myth of global cooling. Prior to 1970, records did indicate cooling trends, and some scientists did anticipate another ice age happening within the next few centuries. Also, the knowledge that certain aerosols created by man might cause such cooling was a contributing factor for this prediction. But current data have shown that areas of cooling during that time were more frequently in northern regions. Since then, the possibility of an impending ice age has lost almost all validation. Out of 68 different studies (done between 1965 and 1979)



this supposed cooling trend was predicted by only 10 percent of climate scientists, while 28 percent took no stance and 62 percent correctly predicted warming. The only reason this cooling myth remains alive is because the media (including Hollywood) have sensationalized a faulty theory. Today 97 percent of climate scientists



A BUSY STREET IN TOKYO'S GINZA DISTRICT: HUMAN TIME NOW LIMITS OUR ABILITY TO SHOP AND WORK AROUND THE CLOCK.

and others. The weekend is the modern residue of those long-standing systems, but even this marking of time erodes in 24/7 homogeneity. Naturally these earlier distinctions (individual days of the week, holidays, seasonal breaks) persist, but their significance is being erased by the monotonous indistinctions of 24/7.

Of course, people will continue to sleep. Even sprawling megacities will still have nocturnal intervals of relative quiet. But sleep is now an experience cut loose from notions of necessity and nature. Instead, like so much else, it is defined only instrumentally and physiologically. Recent research has shown that the number of people who wake themselves up at least once a night to check messages is growing exponentially. One seemingly inconsequential but prevalent phrase is *sleep mode*. The notion of a machine in a state of low-power readiness remakes the larger sense of sleep into just a deferred or diminished condition of operability and access. It supersedes an off/on logic. Nothing is ever fundamentally "off," and there is never an actual state of rest.

According to the logic of global capitalism, sleep is an irrational and intolerable affirmation that there might be limits to how compatible we can be

with the allegedly irresistible forces of modernization. One of the truisms of what passes for contemporary wisdom is that there are no unalterable givens of nature. Even death, we are told, will be overcome when we download our minds into digital immortality. To believe that there are any essential features that distinguish living beings from machines is, we are told by celebrated critics, naive and delusional. Why should anyone object if new drugs could allow us to work at our jobs 100 hours straight? Wouldn't flexible and

reduced sleep time allow us more personal freedom? Grant us the ability to customize our lives in accordance with our individual needs and desires? Wouldn't less sleep allow more chance for "living life to the fullest"?

One might object that human beings are meant to sleep at night, that our bodies are aligned with

the daily rotation of our planet and that seasonal and solar-responsive behaviors occur in almost every living organism. To which the reply would likely be: This is just pernicious New Age nonsense. Within the globalist neoliberal paradigm, sleep is for losers.

As the major remaining obstacle to the full realization of 24/7 operations, sleep cannot be eliminated. But it can be wrecked and despoiled. And the methods and motivations to accomplish this wrecking are fully in place. With the collapse of regulated forms of capitalism in the United States

*Sleep is now
an experience
cut loose
from notions of
necessity.*

and Europe, rest and recuperation are no longer necessary components of economic growth and profitability. Allotting time for human rest and regeneration is now simply too expensive within contemporary capitalism. Sleeplessness is the state in which producing, consuming and discarding occur without pause, hastening the exhaustion of life and depletion of resources. The injuring of sleep is inseparable from the ongoing dismantling of social protections in other spheres. Just as access to clean drinking water has been programmatically diminished around the globe, with the accompanying monetization of bottled water, we can see a similar construction of scarcity in relation to sleep. All the encroachments on it create the insomniac conditions in which sleep must be bought (even if we are paying for a chemically modified state that only approximates actual sleep). In 2012 nearly 60 million pills such as Ambien or Lunesta were prescribed to Americans. Millions more bought over-the-counter sleep products.

Clearly, no one can ever shop, game, work, blog, download or text 24 hours a day, seven days a week. However, since no moment, place or situation now exists in which we cannot shop, consume or exploit networked resources, there is a relentless incursion of nontime into every aspect of our lives. There are now, for example, almost no circumstances that cannot be recorded, displayed or archived as digital imagery or information. The promotion and adoption of wireless technologies, and their annihilation of the singularity of place and event, are simply aftereffects of new institutional requirements. In its despoliation of the rich textures and ambiguities of human time, 24/7 urges an unsustainable and self-liquidating identification with its phantasmic requirements. It solicits an open-ended but always unfinished investment in the many products for facilitating this identification. This new model may not eliminate experiences external to or unreliable on it, but it does impoverish and diminish them.

Located somewhere on the border between the social and the natural, sleep ensures the presence in the world of the phasic and cyclical patterns that are essential to life and incompatible with capitalism. Because capitalism cannot limit itself, the notion of preservation or conservation is impossible. Against this background, the restorative stillness

Sleep ensures the presence in the world of the phasic and cyclical patterns that are essential to life.

of sleep counters the deathliness of all the accumulation, financialization and waste that have devastated anything we once held in common.

Within the immense domains of sleep, damaged but abiding at the heart of life, are a multitude of dreams. But one thread of dreaming supersedes all others: It is of a shared world whose fate is not terminal, a world without billionaires that has a future that is neither barbaric nor post-human, one in which history can take on forms other than worn-out nightmares of catastrophe. It's possible that in many dif-

ferent places, in many disparate states, including reverie and daydream, the imaginings of a future without capital-



LONDON OFFICES AT NIGHT: SHOULD WE OBJECT IF NEW DRUGS ENABLE US TO WORK AT OUR JOBS FOR 100 HOURS STRAIGHT?

ism begin as dreams of sleep. These would be intimations of sleep as a radical interruption, as a refusal of the unsparing weight of our global present, of sleep that—at the most mundane level of everyday experience—can always rehearse the outlines of what more consequential renewals and beginnings might be. ■

Jonathan Crary, professor of modern art at Columbia University, is author of 24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep.



READER RESPONSE

(excluding deniers and industry minions who work for big oil) predict continued warming. Although changes in both the Earth's tilt and orbit have been observed, scientists have now determined that another ice age, supposedly scheduled within the next few centuries, is unlikely. We now know that the accumulation of man-made greenhouse gases is much greater than any cooling caused by changes in the Earth's tilt, orbit or volcanic activity. The resulting changes in solar output could cause slight cooling but not when human activities are factored into the equation. Not only is man-made global warming real, but scientists have diligently explored all other possible causes that might explain it. Current data have provided valid evidence that humans are indeed the culprits. Kutch might do well to consider the loss of human lives and the countless billions of dollars of damage caused by storms of increasing size and power such as the hurricane that recently devastated the Philippines. The increase in man-made CO₂ emissions has likely helped make such record-breaking and increasingly frequent storms possible. Now more than ever we need an increase in taxes, government regulations and academic research. Denial campaigns have delayed the public's acceptance and support for effective political action to diminish the effects of global warming. Deniers have succeeded only in putting all of our futures at risk—including theirs.

Peter Johnson
Superior, Wisconsin

SHAKE THE DISEASE

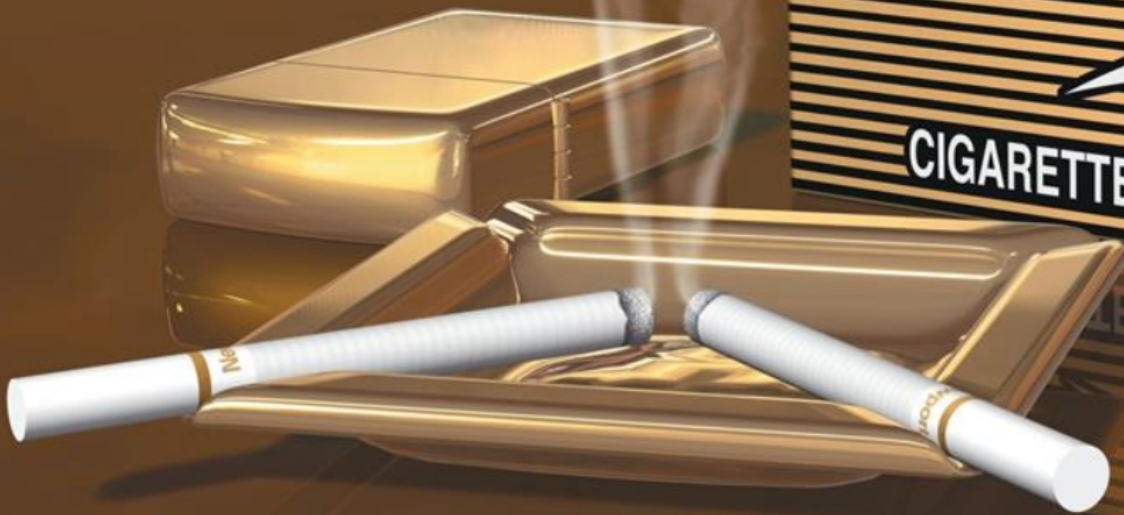
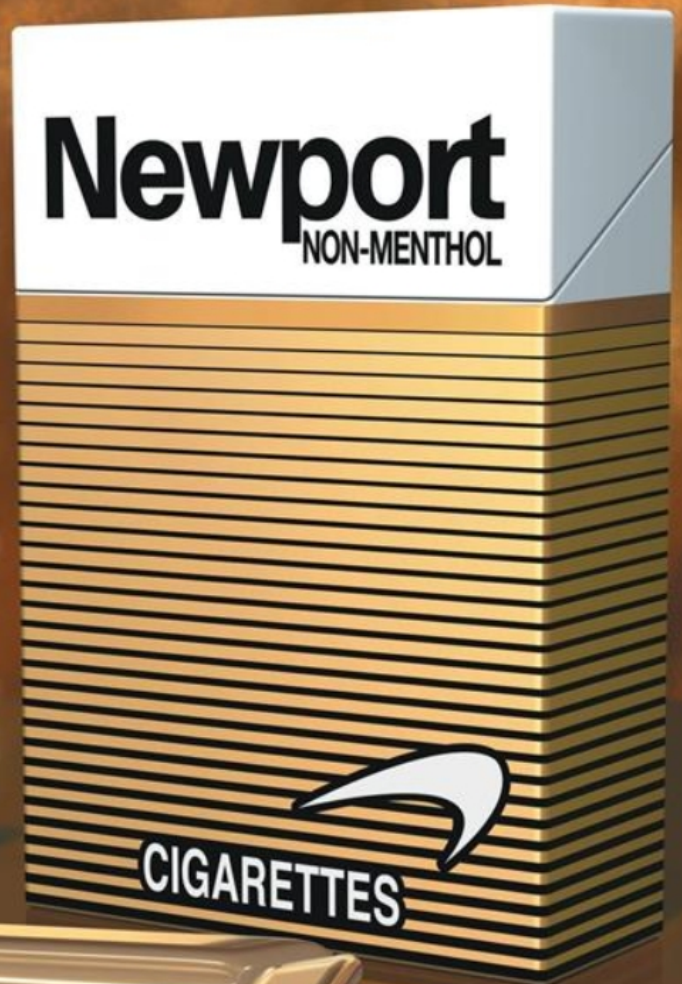
Violations of personal liberties are like simple infections ("The Surveillance Industry," October). When an unwanted host enters a body, it triggers an immune response to fight the intruder. Just as the antidote is made from the venom, so will liberty be restored from its violations.

Rinaldo Pilla
Venafro, Italy

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

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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: NICK DENTON

A candid conversation with the internet maverick about his growing Gawker empire, the end of privacy and how crowdsourcing will cure cancer

Manti Te'o had a fake girlfriend. Rob Ford smoked crack. Brett Favre texted photos of his junk to a young woman. That these and countless other onetime secrets are now public knowledge is thanks to Nick Denton, the founder and owner of a network of news-and-gossip websites called Gawker Media. When Denton, a U.K.-reared financial journalist, founded it in 2002, he was already a successful entrepreneur twice over, having started and sold *First Tuesday*, which produced networking parties for young professionals in technology and related fields, and *Moreover Technologies*, which automated the process of aggregating news headlines for websites. The two sales netted around \$90 million.

Denton's third company started as one site: *Gawker*, a nasty and funny blog about New York's cultural and financial elite as viewed by the resentful underclass. A sensation from its launch, it spawned sister sites covering gadgets (*Gizmodo*), sports (*Deadspin*), women's issues (*Jezebel*) and other subjects. Operating outside the journalistic establishment and its constraints, *Gawker Media* writers were the first to break the scandals around Te'o, Ford and Favre. They also published the photo that forced " Craigslist congressman " Chris Lee to resign and got their hands on a prototype of the then top-secret iPhone 4—a scoop that drew

considerable heat from law enforcement and a furious personal response from Steve Jobs.

Despite the hundreds of millions of page views these and other stories have yielded—translating into an estimated \$40 million in annual ad revenue—Denton isn't satisfied. *Gawker's* reliance on journalists is, he believes, a fatal weakness, one he means to correct with a new system called *Kinja*, which he is currently in the process of refining. Part publishing platform, part social network, *Kinja* aims to do nothing less than turn *Gawker Media's* 80 million monthly readers into willing accomplices, a virtual nation of gossip reporters. In fact, *PLAYBOY* is also an accomplice, regularly republishing articles from both the magazine and its digital platforms on *Kinja*.

To pry secrets out of the man who exposes the secrets of others, *PLAYBOY* tapped respected media writer **Jeff Bercovici**. He reports: "When I first sat down with Denton, he had some personal news he was happy to share: He had just gotten engaged to his boyfriend, Derrence Washington, a handsome African American actor. The two live together in a vast and somewhat severe loft apartment in SoHo, where we conducted much of this interview (when we weren't eating Thai food at a nearby restaurant). A trim 46, Denton dresses in casual but stylish clothes of gray

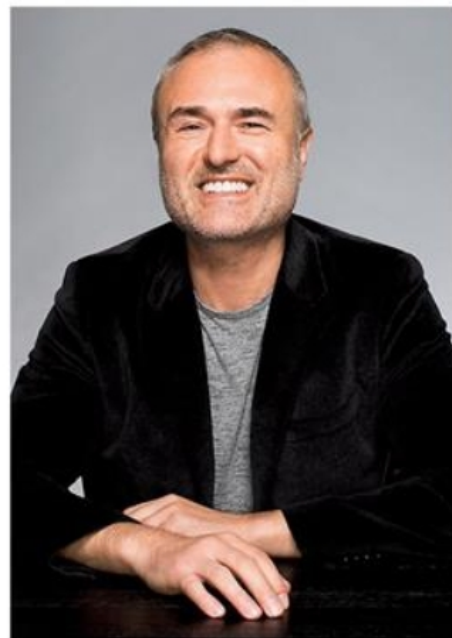
and black and keeps his salt-and-pepper hair cropped short. Feared and reviled by so many, in person he is candid and voluble, with no shortage of opinions and no fear about betraying his own privacy."

PLAYBOY: You've said the mission of *Gawker* is to publish the stories that journalists talk about with one another in private but never write.

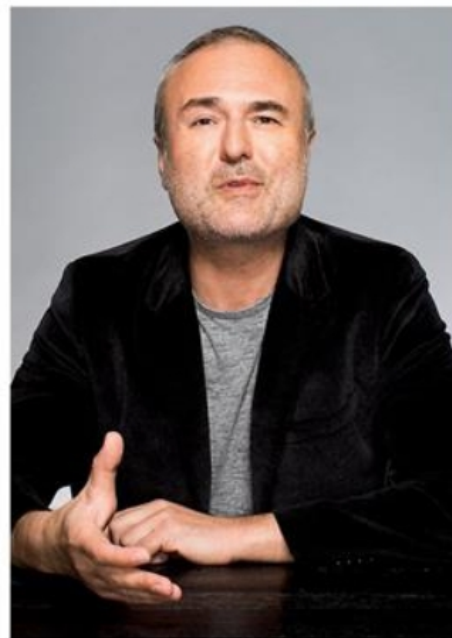
DENTON: Yeah, the founding myth of *Gawker* happens to be true. I was a journalist at the *Financial Times*. Whenever you work at a newspaper, particularly a newspaper with high standards, you're struck by the gap between the story that appears in the paper the next day and what the journalist who wrote that story will tell you about it after deadline. The version they tell over a drink is much more interesting—legally riskier, sometimes more trivial, and sometimes it fits less neatly into the institution's narrative. Usually it's a lot truer. The very fact that a journalist will ask another journalist who has a story in the paper, "So what really happened?"—now, just think about that question. It's a powerful question. It's the essence of all meaningful gossip. That's why this



"Every infringement of privacy is sort of liberating. Afterward, you have less to lose; you're a freer person. Shouldn't we all want to own our own story? You could argue that privacy has never really existed."



"Who gives a fuck about wearable computing? That's just a detail. I mean improvement in biotech, curing cancer, efficient travel into orbit, solving carbon emissions. All these other problems will be solved by the internet."



"The *New York Times* will exist. I think the *Times* has bottomed out, and now it will be able to put on more in digital revenue than it loses in print. Or I hope so, because I like the *Times*. There should be at least one or two survivors."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARIUS BUGGE

discussion system, Kinja, is so important. It actually allows us to fulfill our original objective, which is to treat everybody equally, to find interesting stories wherever they are, not just if a celebrity is involved. That's not economical with paid journalists doing all the work. We need reader help. If we're covering you, we need your colleagues to rat you out or your exes to put in bits and pieces. It has to be a collaborative effort.

PLAYBOY: So Kinja is your bet that in 10 years we will all be part of a crowdsourced gossip press reporting on one another.

DENTON: The Panopticon—the prison in which everybody is exposed to scrutiny all the time. Do you remember the website Fucked Company? It was big in about 2000, 2001. I was CEO of Moreover Technologies at the time. A saleswoman put in an anonymous report to the site about my having paid for the eye operation of a young male executive I had the hots for. The story, like many stories, was roughly half true. Yes, there was a young male executive. Yes, he did have an eye operation. No, it wasn't paid for by me. It was paid for by the company's health insurance according to normal procedure. And no, I didn't fancy him; I detested him. It's such a great example of Fucked Company and, by extension, most internet discussion systems. There's some real truth that gets told that is never of a scale to warrant mainstream media attention, and there's also no mechanism for fact-checking, no mechanism to actually converge on some real truth. It's out there. Half of it's right. Half of it's wrong. You don't know which half is which. What if we could develop a system for collaboratively reaching the truth? Sources and subjects and writers and editors and readers and casual armchair experts asking questions and answering them, with follow-ups and rebuttals. What if we could actually have a journalistic process that didn't require paid journalists and tape recorders and the cost of a traditional journalistic operation? You could actually uncover everything—every abusive executive, every corrupt eye operation.

PLAYBOY: What are the implications for the broader society? What does America look like from inside the Panopticon?

DENTON: When people take a look at the change in attitudes toward gay rights or gay marriage, they talk about the example of people who came out, celebrities who came out. That has a pretty powerful effect. But even more powerful are all the friends and relatives, people you know. When it's no longer some weird group of faggots on Christopher Street but actually people you know, that's when attitudes change, and my presumption is the internet is going to be a big part of that. You're going to be bombarded with news you wouldn't necessarily have consumed—information, humanity, texture. I think

Facebook, more than anything else, and the internet have been responsible for a large part of the liberalization of the past five or 10 years when it comes to sex, when it comes to drinking. Five years ago it was embarrassing when somebody had photographs of somebody drunk as a student. There was actually a discussion about whether a whole generation of kids had damaged their career prospects because they put up too much information about themselves in social media. What actually happened was that institutions and organizations changed, and frankly any organization that didn't change was going to handicap itself because everyone, every normal person, gets drunk in college. There are stupid pictures or sex pictures of pretty much everybody. And if those things are leaked or deliberately shared, I think the effect is to change the institutions rather than to damage the individuals. The internet is a secret-spilling machine, and the spilling of secrets has been very healthy for a lot of people's lives.

PLAYBOY: The secret-spilling-machine part seems self-evident. As for the liber-

Look at Steve Jobs. Did he or did he not advance human civilization? Was he not an agent of progress? He's like one of those Victorian figures.

alizing part, there's a lot of data that says essentially the more information people have, the more entrenched they become in their own views—the more they suffer from confirmation bias.

DENTON: Obviously sometimes you go on Facebook and it's totally one-note and there's no real discussion or argument. You can have a debate on Twitter, but I've never seen anyone persuaded there. Twitter is bad for our intellectual health. That's something I would like to do something about. It would be nice to have a civil place for argument. It should be like a good seminar—in an English university, where people actually disagree, not an American one.

PLAYBOY: Is it possible you set a lower value on privacy than most people do?

DENTON: I don't think people give a fuck, actually. There was a moment when I thought some sex pictures of me were about to land. Someone claimed to have some and to be marketing them. I even thought I knew where they'd come from—I'd lost a phone. But it turned out to be a hoax.

PLAYBOY: And you weren't freaked out?

DENTON: It would have been mortifying, but every infringement of privacy is sort of liberating. Afterward, you have less to lose; you're a freer person. Shouldn't we all want to own our own story?

PLAYBOY: You're more willing than most people to organize your life according to principle and see how the experiment turns out.

DENTON: You could argue that privacy has never really existed. Usually people's friends or others in the village had a pretty good idea what was going on. You could look at this as the resurrection of or a return to the essential nature of human existence: We were surrounded by obvious scandal throughout most of human existence, when everybody knew everything. Then there was a brief period when people moved to the cities and social connections were frayed, and there was a brief period of sufficient anonymity to allow for transgressive behavior no one ever found out about. That brief era is now coming to an end.

PLAYBOY: That doesn't jibe with your other theory about how we'll judge one another more kindly when we have no privacy. Human history is not a history of tolerance for deviation from the norm.

DENTON: You don't think there was a kind of peasant realism? You hear these stories about a small town, seemingly conservative, and actually there's a surprising amount of tolerance. "So-and-so's a good guy. Who cares if he's a pig fucker? His wife brought a really lovely pie over when Mama was sick."

PLAYBOY: Do you feel the same about the dilution of our privacy rights when governments are doing it?

DENTON: I feel there are certain efficiency gains, at least in the merging of government databases. But that needs to be counterbalanced by a reciprocal openness on the part of government.

PLAYBOY: So you're okay with the NSA listening to your phone calls as long as you can listen to the NSA's phone calls.

DENTON: I suppose that would be the extreme manifestation.

PLAYBOY: For someone who is half-jokingly referred to as the Dark Lord by employees, you're surprisingly optimistic, even utopian, about the future.

DENTON: I am totally earnest.

PLAYBOY: What do you think about the critique that the technology industry does an amazing job solving the problems of affluent people—especially affluent men in their 20s and 30s, who make up most of that industry's workforce—and a pretty crappy job of solving everybody else's problems?

DENTON: It's a good point but wrong-headed. Look at Steve Jobs. Did he or did he not advance human civilization? Was he not an agent of progress? He's like one of those Victorian figures. That's the tradition he's in. How many of those were there in the late 20th century? Who was big in the 1980s? It was

financial engineers, people like John Malone and Barry Diller. Now, through technology, there's a new generation of builders. Evan Williams of Blogger and Twitter, Larry Page and Sergey Brin of Google, Jeff Bezos of Amazon and of course Steve Jobs.

PLAYBOY: Would you say Steve Jobs is one of your heroes?

DENTON: Yeah, absolutely.

PLAYBOY: And yet you famously antagonized him, buying a prototype of an iPhone 4 that an Apple engineer had misplaced months before it was ready for release, and you published pictures and video of it. What exactly happened?

DENTON: We've always advertised our willingness to pay for information, which is why we were approached when somebody picked up an iPhone 4 prototype in a bar. We negotiated with the people who had the phone. It was a huge break—the first time Apple's very controlled rollout had been derailed by an accident. I forget how much we paid. It was cheap. It was a crazy story. Steve Jobs was on the phone to the editor of Gizmodo, saying, "Give me my fucking phone back." We did two weeks of coverage. The journalist who had seen the phone and reported the story about Apple's secret prototype had his apartment broken into.

PLAYBOY: Broken into?

DENTON: By police. It was Apple's pet police force, some computer task force in Silicon Valley that is notoriously close to the tech industry. It was a great story.

PLAYBOY: Did it bother you, knowing that one of your heroes pretty much hated your guts?

DENTON: He does his job; we do our job. His perfect thing requires both excellence in engineering and user interface and absolute control of the marketing process so that when he goes onstage, his product is a surprise. And our purpose is at odds with his purpose. Our purpose is to get information out quickly according to our schedule, not according to his schedule. So there's a conflict. It doesn't mean we don't respect him. We did respect him.

PLAYBOY: What do you think of his successor, Tim Cook?

DENTON: He has a hard act to follow.

PLAYBOY: Your websites have repeatedly harped on him for being gay but not publicly out. Why?

DENTON: I mean, it's not as if there's anything at all in his public persona or in his pronouncements that is necessarily at odds with his private homosexuality, but I think it would be useful. It would be socially useful for the most powerful man in American business to be seen and widely known as being gay. People would see that if you're gay, you don't have to be a fashion designer or a closeted actor. There are other courses available for you. Just like it's important for women to see successful business tycoons who are women or just to see a range of

options open to them. What about me, somebody for whom traditional gay careers have no appeal whatsoever?

PLAYBOY: You managed to make it without any gay technology role models.

DENTON: Yeah, but maybe at a cost of feeling I had to make accommodations or choices between professional success and personal happiness—forced choices.

PLAYBOY: So by making it harder for leaders to stay in the closet, websites like yours are doing good by our gay sons and daughters. Once again, you side with the camp that says the internet is making our lives better and technology is propelling us toward a better future.

DENTON: It's not quite as simple as that. I think it will be generally good for the cause of social liberalism and recognizing each other's flawed but wonderful humanity. You can make a strong argument that Tim Berners-Lee and the dozen people who were involved at various critical stages of the development of the web did more good than all the foreign aid workers and all the liberal military interventions over the past 50 years. Think of a peasant who has historically

I think technological change is going to be great for the rejuvenation of decrepit economic systems like that of the United States. This society needs a big jolt.

been hoodwinked by middlemen on the price of his harvests, and now you're giving him the information he needs for a stronger negotiating position. Here you have somebody playing around with the operating system of the information economy. Actually, it's sort of accidental; some of the early pioneers didn't realize what they were doing, yet it's far more meaningful than any deliberate effort to help the poor. You could argue that Uber may do more for the planet than foreign aid workers in Mozambique because at some point some version of Uber will allow for more efficient use of resources and a better standard of living.

PLAYBOY: How does a taxi-hailing app help humanity?

DENTON: It's a great example of surge pricing. Any economist would tell you surge pricing is eminently sensible; if you cap prices, you stop a market from working in a way it could work. But it offends people's sense of fairness because surge pricing basically means we are rationing supply of this commodity, transport, at peak times to rich people, people who can afford it. It takes notional inequality

and turns it into something concrete—the poor person is waiting in the rain for a taxi that will never come, and the rich person has a black Mercedes come scoop them up. But it's inevitable. It will happen everywhere, in every market.

PLAYBOY: How can you be so sure?

DENTON: Markets are more efficient mechanisms for the distribution of services. The only thing that happens if you don't have surge pricing in a city like New York is that the limos and the cars dry up at certain times. Then nobody gets anything. And maybe that's the point. Maybe the point is that human beings are not so much concerned with their well-being as with their relative position. If they can't have access to this thing that's in short supply, then they don't want anybody else to either.

PLAYBOY: What about Airbnb? That's a similar model—another so-called two-sided marketplace, except for lodging instead of transportation.

DENTON: It's the same thing, a clear economic benefit from underused resources such as empty apartments or drivers who don't have passengers. I like the idea of completely distributed marketplaces. Ultimately we'll see this idea applied to anything that can be quantified, authenticated, verified—whether it's limo service, media, information, retail. There's only gain to be had from making use of wasted resources. You do have the question of how to allocate the gain, but generally I believe in getting the gain and then arguing about the allocation.

PLAYBOY: What does that world look like, where everything is a perfectly efficient market and we're all both buyers and sellers?

DENTON: It will become more atomized. The Silicon Valley elite will control all the marketplaces. Uber, Amazon, Google—all these things are natural monopolies. There are massive network effects, as economists call them. The more drivers you have, the more passengers you'll get; the more passengers you get, the more drivers you'll have. And there will be room for only one player in every major category.

PLAYBOY: So we're moving back to an age of monopolies?

DENTON: Absolutely, there's no question about that. The political question is what you do about those monopolies.

PLAYBOY: Aren't monopolies inherently inefficient?

DENTON: Well, they result in income inequality, above all, and abuse of power. There's a concentration of power and wealth among the managers, owners and employees of monopolies, and usually the political system steps in to limit the power of those monopolies. But I'm pretty sure we'll end up with monopoly taxation or nationalization. That is ultimately the only answer to the concurrent concentration of power and money in this country—a Google tax.

PLAYBOY: Google will basically bribe the

government not to break up its monopoly?
DENTON: Yeah. Or you can say the government will bully Google to the point that it either pays fines for its abuse of monopolistic behavior—the current random application of justice that seems to be landing on American banks—or you could have a better system. You could have a more systematic approach, which would be to have some kind of monopoly tax.

PLAYBOY: Google would effectively become a sort of government-sanctioned contractor or privatized agency.

DENTON: This is looking at Google as a utility. Look at electric utilities, gas, originally telecommunications, where there were network effects, where there were substantial investment costs or capital-intensive barriers to entry. These are classic criteria of a natural monopoly. It's going to be a monopoly, and to break up those companies would be absurd. If you break up Google, you'll need a whole other search-engine infrastructure. You're going to have to build all those server farms, and you're going to have a whole other team of information scientists working on the algorithms to improve searches. Yeah, you could try to create some kind of competition, but it would be absurd. So if they are natural monopolies, then the only question is, Who gets the monopoly profits, and who gets the monopoly power? Is it going to be the shareholders, or is it going to be society at large?

PLAYBOY: What will be the life-changing or society-changing technologies that we're just starting to see now?

DENTON: The internet is it for this century, maybe the next one too. People ask what comes next too quickly. To the extent there is some kind of message in the valuation that the market has given Twitter, it is that communication, information and media are at the heart of this phase, this cycle, and it's a long, long cycle that could last 50 or 100 years. When you have an innovation as profound as the networking of sentient beings.... Those delusional futurists who talked about Gaia, the planetwide intelligence? They were spot-on. It's totally happening, and everything else comes out of that.

PLAYBOY: By "everything else," do you mean wearable computing, self-driving cars and that stuff?

DENTON: Who gives a fuck about wearable computing? That's just a detail. I mean improvement in biotech, curing cancer, efficient travel into orbit, better device storage, solving carbon emissions. All these other problems will be solved by the internet by harnessing the collective intelligence. Everything else will fall out with that.

PLAYBOY: That definitely sounds utopian. To be clear, you just said the internet is going to solve global warming, correct?

DENTON: Yeah. Intelligence connected to human beings will achieve rates of tech-

nological progress that would have been impossible in previous eras. Of course we'll solve problems more quickly.

PLAYBOY: So the solution to global warming will be a technological fix?

DENTON: It might be a technological fix for capturing carbon or getting off the planet or coming up with nonpolluting fuels.

PLAYBOY: But it's not going to be a political fix?

DENTON: No.

PLAYBOY: It's not going to be everybody growing up and saying, "We need to do this"?

DENTON: Oh, no. I think a good strategy in life is to wait until you have a good solution. Wind power, hybrid fuel trains—these are partial solutions. No one thinks they're viable. No one thinks they're going to solve the problem. They're basically token approaches. Now, sometimes a token approach can get people thinking, and maybe it starts to develop a technology that will ultimately be economically viable, but usually not. Usually it's better to say, "Okay, this is a problem and it needs to be monitored. But we don't have an answer for

I wasn't fully out [as a gay man] until I was out to my parents. If you're not out to your parents, then you have to maintain this protective zone around them.

it right now, so let's come back to it in five, 10 or 15 years, when we might have a better answer." I don't think that's necessarily irresponsible.

PLAYBOY: So you're an optimist about technological change but a cynic about political change.

DENTON: I think technological change is going to be great for the rejuvenation of decrepit economic systems like that of the United States. This country is encrusted with privilege, mediocrity. It has early signs of sclerosis. This society needs a big jolt. It needs a big cleansing.

PLAYBOY: "Cleansing" sounds ominous.

DENTON: I mean in business and politics. I don't think you'll find many people who disagree with that now. This country, even in the tech sector, is full of people who are on this merry-go-round, who know the right headhunters and basically pass each other jobs as if they were a trade union with the sole rights to these positions in which they demand \$500,000 a year. They move around from start-up flip to start-up flip. They're not incompetent; they're just not that good. These are the midlevel scandals. If you

can industrialize gossip, if you can make it truly scale, you can expose all the mediocrity and incompetence. Now you've actually done something.

PLAYBOY: That's Pandora's box. It would be terrifying to open.

DENTON: It would be fantastic. People would actually have to work, and they'd have to be good. It would be great. Do you know how many lies there are? Every single time people are given the latitude to cheat and there's no one watching, no regulator and no mechanism for whistle-blowers, you get lies. Don't you ever get overwhelmed by the sheer amount of bullshit?

PLAYBOY: Is that because of our broken institutions, or is that just human nature?

DENTON: There's an accretion of bullshit, like an accretion of junk DNA in DNA, or fatty deposits in arteries. If you want to move things on without having a completely destructive revolution, you need some mechanism to put a big fucking shock in the system. I came to this country because I thought it was something, you know? And yet I'm more in love with the idea of the United States than I am with the reality.

PLAYBOY: The idea being?

DENTON: Permanent revolution. Nothing is sacred. The United States is distributed; it's resilient. There's lots of redundancy built in, and it's big enough that no establishment can control everything.

PLAYBOY: So the idea you came here for is true, but it's not as true as you believe it will be in the future.

DENTON: The web is a deeply American idea. The web is saving the United States from sclerosis.

PLAYBOY: You're somebody whose intelligence straddles two worlds, the liberal-arts world and the engineering-systems-based world. Did that shape your career?

DENTON: There is definitely a type, like a Mark Zuckerberg, who applies a logical way of thinking to the social grid. I think that's pretty consistent among people who have done well in social media. They're basically geeks who made their accommodation, who actually survived high school. Not instinctively but just through sheer force of will and intellect, they made themselves understand the system—who had the power in high school and who you needed to align yourself with and how to do it.

PLAYBOY: And that's you?

DENTON: I went to this weird school as a kid, a Montessori school run by a couple of American hippies who didn't believe in age-defined streaming. It was a very small school, so basically I had no contemporaries. I had no early socialization. I was with kids quite a few years older than I was. When I first went to a regular school, at the age of 11, I was completely unqualified to handle the environment.

PLAYBOY: What did you do?

DENTON: I was *(continued on page 140)*

I DIDN'T SET OUT TO WIN AWARDS

I dedicated over a decade of my life to make Purity Vodka because I wanted to make a vodka that tastes unlike any other – not just win awards. Though I have to admit, going to Cannes and winning 11 Gold and Master medals in 11 different categories at the Spirits Business awards, definitely brought a smile to my face.

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PRESCRIPTION FOR DEATH

HOW PAINKILLERS DESTROYED THE TOWN OF **WAR, WEST VIRGINIA**

PLAYBOY MAGAZINE

MARCH 2014

PAGE NUMBER

63

John Hatcher is a big guy, six-foot-three and more than 200 pounds. When I met him back in 2011, he was sitting in the fall sunshine on his father's porch in a little town in West Virginia, wearing a blue polo shirt and sporting a neat goatee. All in all, he looked pretty good for a hardcore junkie.

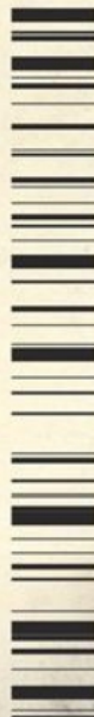
John, then 36, had been hooked for years on prescription pills—mostly painkillers such as OxyContin and Vicodin, opiate-based drugs as potent as their chemical cousin heroin. "I hate being an addict, but I can't shake it," he told me. John hadn't worked in years. He'd stolen from his family to get drug money. He'd once gashed his arm on a nail>>>



WRITTEN BY **VINCE BEISER**



PHOTOGRAPH BY **DAN SAELINGER**



from wrist to elbow and not even noticed because he was so high.

Another time, his father found him overdosed and unconscious on the couch and called for a paramedic, who stabbed John in the chest with a shot of Narcan, right in front of his terrified eight-year-old son.

"He probably wouldn't have survived if I hadn't come home," John's father, Tom, told me then. Tom Hatcher, a silver-haired, ruddy-face gent, was the long-serving mayor of the town of War, named after a settler-Indian battle. We were talking in his cramped office in War's grandly titled City Hall—a three-room former railway station that also houses the town's two-man police department.

War is an impoverished backwater in a narrow valley in deepest Appalachia, a one-time coal-mining hub abandoned by most of the people who once lived there. I was in town to write an article for this magazine about the nationwide epidemic of deaths caused by prescription-pill overdoses.

In the past 20 years, recreational use of pharmaceuticals has skyrocketed across the country, and so have overdose deaths. Prescription pills—especially painkillers—now kill more Americans every year than heroin, cocaine and all other illegal drugs combined. The number of fatal painkiller



overdoses has quadrupled since 1999, topping 16,000 in 2010, the most recent year for which statistics are available. And in McDowell County, where War sits, victims are dying faster than just about anywhere else. The overdose death rate there is 16 times the national average.

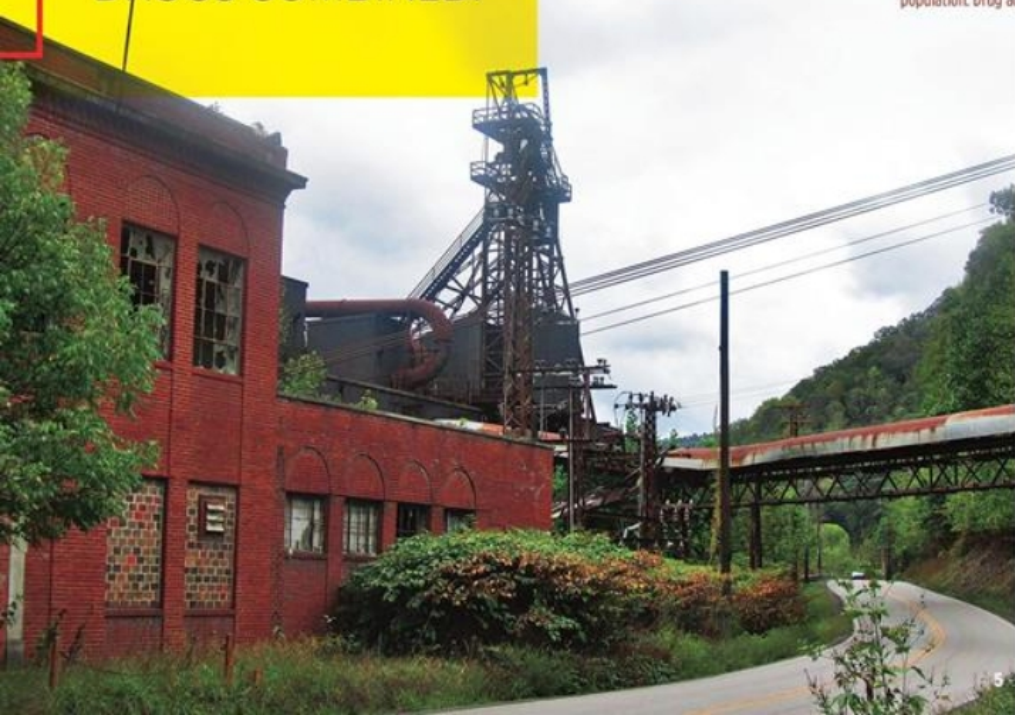
The article I wrote centers on Tom Hatcher's desperate efforts to help both his son and his town. Tom had taken John, along with John's wife, Becky, and

1. Tom Hatcher, mayor of War, West Virginia, in 2011. 2. Tom's daughter-in-law, Becky, with her brother Earl in court. 3. A memorial poster for Tom Hatcher in a Main Street store window. 4. Tom's son, John Hatcher. 5. A derelict coal mine near War. 6. Appalachia in distress: War now has about 1,000 inhabitants, one quarter of its peak population. Drug addiction is epidemic.

their son Jonathen into his home. John promptly stole practically everything of value Tom owned. Tom put John through several rehab programs; none worked. John almost died from overdoses four times. Tom was out of ideas and out of hope. The article ends with him saying, "I think the reality is John will kill himself eventually."

The article sparked a minor ruckus in McDowell County. Lots of folks were upset that Tom had publicly aired the town's dirty laundry—and in *PLAYBOY*, of all places. The local papers and TV stations all ran stories about my article, ensuring that just about *(continued on page 147)*

PRESCRIPTION
PILLS NOW KILL
MORE AMERICANS
THAN ALL ILLEGAL
DRUGS COMBINED.





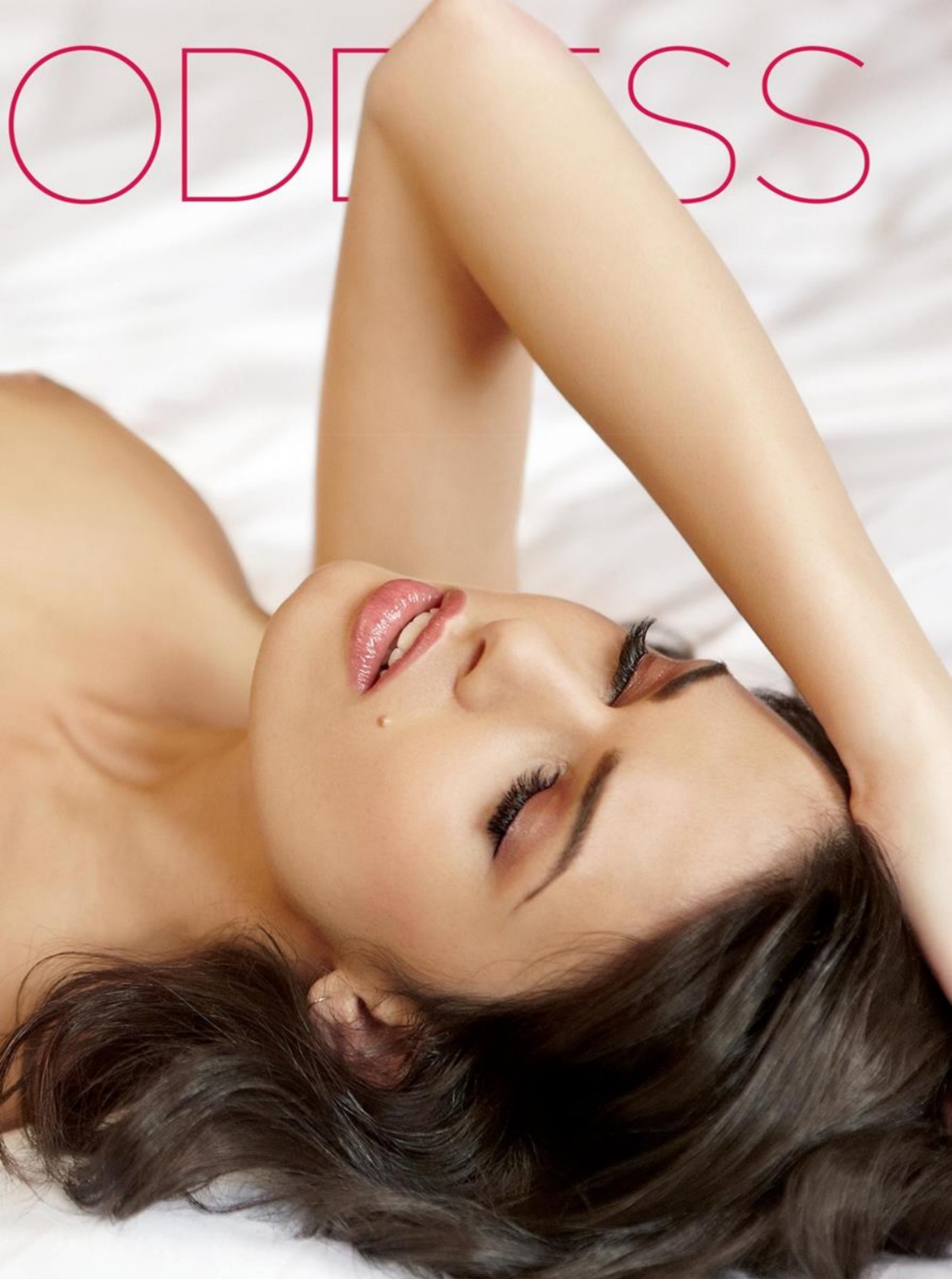
"I know I should be outraged by the erosion of our civil liberties, but I'm actually getting turned on by this."

GREEK G

The lady of the house is home, and she's playing by her own rules



Very often your attitude correlates with your immediate environment. You feel freer on the island of Bali, more tenacious walking the avenues of New York City and most at ease in your own bed. The same can be said of statuesque Greek model Zoi Gorman as she enters a 17th century mansion in Amsterdam. "It's highly luxurious," says Zoi (which means "life" in Greek). "Filled with opulent marble, hand-painted frescos and high ceilings, it is so sensual. I am now Zoi, lady of the house. If I want to stand naked save for high heels and a black-lace garter belt at the top of my spiral staircase, then I will. Who are you to tell me otherwise?" We wouldn't dream of it.



ODDRESS







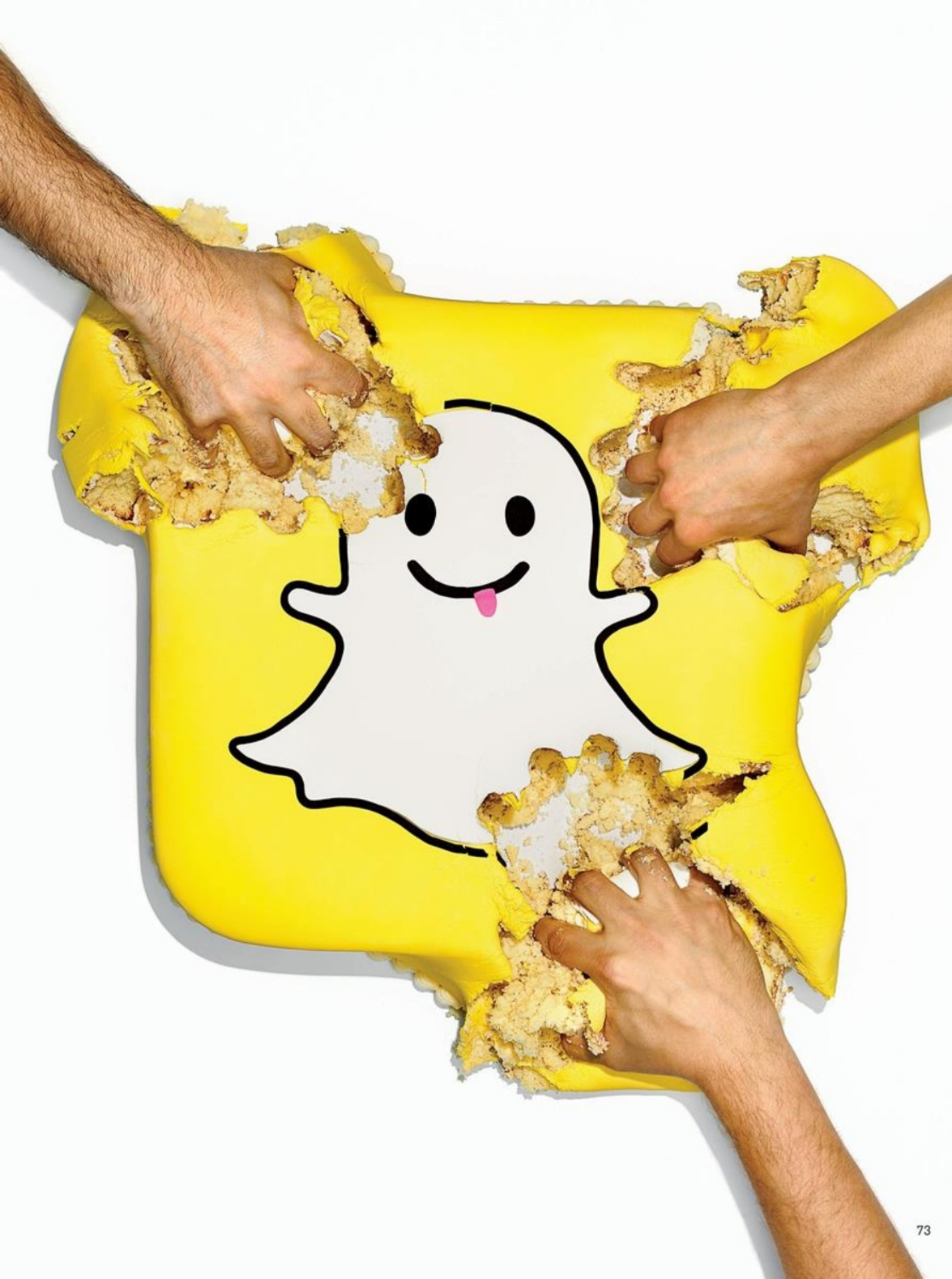


The Billion- Dollar Battle for Snapchat

HOW LONG DOES A SNAPCHAT PHOTO LAST? TEN SECONDS. HOW LONG DOES THE PARTNERSHIP BEHIND THE COUNTRY'S HOTTEST APP STAY TOGETHER? NOT MUCH LONGER

**BY KARL TARO GREENFELD
WITH BILLY GALLAGHER**

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAN SAELINGER



W

When then 18-year-old Evan Spiegel, future founder of Snapchat, the multibillion-dollar mobile-application start-up, set off on the seven-hour drive up Interstate 5 from Pacific Palisades to Palo Alto, California, home of Stanford University, he was embarking on more than a college education. He was journeying into the engine room of America's greatest wealth-producing machine. Long one of the world's elite colleges, Stanford, by the fall of 2008, had also become a noteworthy incubator of young entrepreneurial talent. For freshmen like Spiegel, cruising down Palm Drive past the majestic, 40-foot-tall Canary Island date-palm trees and beneath the white-on-cardinal WELCOME TO STANFORD banner, there was of course the eagerness and anticipation of living away from home for the first time, but there was also a sense that here, in this unique period in history, anything was possible. For a young man to complete his education and embark on a promising career was not only likely but a given; for a young man of Spiegel's temperament

For a young man of Spiegel's temperament, to leave Stanford as anything less than a multimillionaire might be considered a disappointment.



1. Happier times: Reggie Brown, Bobby Murphy and Evan Spiegel celebrate the birth of Snapchat. 2. Where's Reggie? Murphy and Spiegel (front row) celebrate the company's first year. 3. CEO Spiegel during his deposition in response to Brown's lawsuit. 4. Brown giving his deposition. 5. Who needs Silicon Valley? Stanford University finds itself an incubator for the tech world, attracting students less interested in degrees and more interested in launching billion-dollar start-ups.

and talent, to leave Stanford as anything less than a multimillionaire might even have been considered a disappointment. As it turned out, Spiegel would leave Stanford well on his way to becoming a billionaire, though the circumstances of Snapchat's conception and launch would be the subject of a lawsuit, filed by former classmate Frank Reginald Brown IV, that has cost Spiegel friendships and could ultimately cost him hundreds of millions of dollars.

Silicon Valley has always embraced meritocracy, the idea that it is the quality of one's ideas and one's willingness to put in 20-hour days that make for successful start-ups and lasting businesses. Unlike, say, hustlers in Hollywood or on Wall Street, the founders of tech com-

panies are supposedly monastic programmers who toil away in harmonious teams and remain chaste when it comes to fucking over their peers. If that myth has been eroded by the saga of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg and the Winklevoss twins, as described in *The Social Network*, it is now being destroyed by the lawsuits that surround the founding of Snapchat.

Snapchat, a messaging service that allows for disappearing text messages and photos, has become the latest hottest internet start-up, an app that seems to have a significant grip on younger users. It

enables users to send photos and messages to other users or to post photos and messages to their Snapchat network, with little risk that the photos will be circulated on the web because they self-destruct in 10 seconds.

(continued on page 126)

SLIP INTO SOMETHING BOLD.



Maker's 46® begins as fully matured Maker's Mark®. Then it's finished inside barrels containing seared French oak staves – and only during the cold winter months when bourbon



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Top Shelf



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IN THE WORLD
AND HOW TO
DRINK IT**

TRAVIS RATHBONE 
ROBERT HARKNESS 

WE'RE LIVING IN THE GOLDEN AGE OF SPIRITS, BUT WITH SO MANY EXCEPTIONAL BOTTLES OUT THERE, IT CAN BE A LITTLE OVERWHELMING. TO MAKE IT EASIER, WE SURVEY THE BEST BOTTLES IN THE HOTTEST STYLES—AND ENLIST NEW YORK'S COOLEST BARTENDER, **THOMAS WAUGH**, TO SHOW YOU ELEVATED WAYS OF MIXING, MUDDLING AND SIPPING

GIN

THE OTHER WHITE SPIRIT

If you're one of the thousands of vodka drinkers who dismiss gin, it's time to take a second sip. New brands are smoother than the ones you've had before. If you're already a gin fan, update the way you mix the classics. Here Waugh deconstructs the gin and tonic, that deceptively complex cocktail.

RECIPE

The SPANISH G&T

If Spain has a national cocktail, the gin and tonic is it. Restaurants there routinely keep multiple brands of tonic water and gin on hand, and garnish and flavor their G&Ts with way more than a lime peel. Here is Waugh's version of a Spanish G&T. Many of the botanicals typically used in the spirit's distillation make an appearance in the glass, further flavoring the drink.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lime wedge
- 1½ oz. New York Distilling Company's Perry's Tot Navy Strength gin
- 4 oz. Fever-Tree or Q tonic water
- 5 juniper berries
- 5 coriander seeds
- 3 cardamom pods
- 1 star anise pod
- 1 horse's neck lime peel (see below)
- 1 cinnamon stick

DIRECTIONS

Squeeze lime wedge into a frozen 15-ounce brandy snifter and drop it in. Add gin and tonic water, then ice. Add the spices and botanicals to the glass and stir. Garnish with lime peel and cinnamon stick. (Notice we use only one and a half ounces of spirit. That's because it's navy-strength gin,

which is typically 114 proof. The declared reason for its potency comes from the days when it was supplied to the British Royal Navy. If a barrel of the liquid accidentally burst open and soaked the fleet's gunpowder, that is the proof at which the powder could still ignite.)

BEST BOTTLES



BEEFEATER LONDON DRY GIN (\$23)

• The right amount of juniper flavors at just the right price, it combines wonderfully with tonic.



TANQUERAY MALACCA GIN (\$33)

• A limited-release gin with a cult following. Slightly sweet, citrusy and super smooth, it makes a kinder, gentler martini.



PLYMOUTH GIN (\$32)

• With bold juniper flavors and a dry profile, this is a favorite of serious bartenders. Use in pre-Prohibition cocktails.



PERRY'S TOT NAVY STRENGTH GIN (\$38)

• Even though it's 114 proof, this gin is incredibly rich and smooth, with intense botanical aromas. Pour lightly.



BOLS GENEVER (\$37)

• The Dutch invented gin, and their style is more full-bodied, fruity and peppery. Enjoy ice-cold and straight up.

THOMAS WAUGH

Our Bartender for This Evening



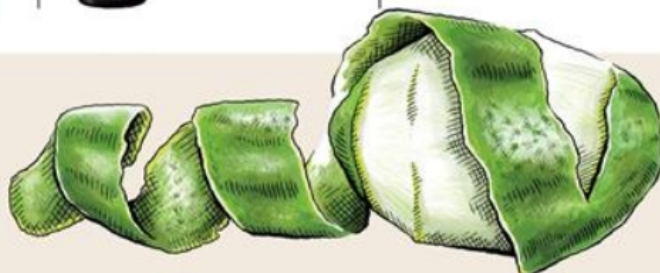
TO HELP US NAVIGATE the oceans of top-shelf liquor available to the modern drinker, we enlisted Thomas Waugh to dispense advice, share recipes and teach us a trick or two. Waugh has tended bar at legendary watering holes Alembic in San Francisco and Death & Co. in New York City. He now runs the bars for Major Food Group, the company behind New York's Carbone, Torrisi Italian Specialties and ZZ's Clam Bar.

WAUGH SAYS:

"Use oversized glassware for a G&T, big enough that you can get your nose down into the glass and pick up all the subtleties, not just of the gin but of the tonic as well. A double old-fashioned glass, a stemless wineglass or a brandy snifter will do the trick."

THE PEEL SESSIONS

The most dramatic and zesty garnish for a gin and tonic is one long ribbon of citrus peel, known as a "horse's neck." Using a sharp paring knife or potato peeler, slowly and carefully remove the peel from a lime in a single spiraling motion.



Rum



THE TIKI TAKEOVER

No disrespect to rum and Coke, that energizing insta-cocktail, but there are other, finer ways to enjoy rum. In the better bars, a modern tiki-cocktail revival is going on: Think no canned juices, higher-quality booze and fewer hangovers. Here's how to mix it up.

BEST BOTTLES



RON DEL BARRILITO THREE STAR (\$32)

• Fruity, woody and delicious. One of the best Puerto Rican rums out there. Use it to upgrade your rum and Coke.

APPLETON ESTATE V/X (\$22)

• This Jamaican rum is funky in a good way. Perfect for a modern take on a mai tai or any of the other classic tiki cocktails.

RHUM J.M VSOP (\$56)

• Fermented sugarcane juice gives this *agricole* rum from Martinique its unique, intense flavor.

RENEGADE RUM COMPANY 1995 PANAMA (\$99)

• Scottish bottler Murray McDavid ages Caribbean rum in oak barrels. The result can compete with fine bourbon and scotch.

CAÑA BRAVA (\$28)

• From the 86 Co., a liquor company started by bartenders for bartenders, this is the ideal white rum to keep on hand for daiquiris (of the Hemingway, not the cruise ship, variety, of course).

~ WAUGH SAYS ~

“Ditch your blender for the best-tasting tiki drinks. Shake your ingredients in a cocktail shaker and pour them over ice that you’ve smashed with a mallet in a clean ziplock bag. The flavors will really come through.”

RECIPES

The COCONUT

When Thomas Waugh makes this tiki-inspired cocktail at ZZ’s Clam Bar in New York City, it turns heads. The blowtorch he uses to ignite the cinnamon stick has a lot to do with it, but the intoxicating aroma of the cinnamon smoke is just as attention-getting. There aren’t many drinks you can almost taste before sipping, but this is one of them.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 coconut
- ½ oz. honey syrup (see directions)
- 2 oz. Angostura 1824 rum
- ½ oz. canned unsweetened coconut milk
- ½ oz. Coco López cream of coconut
- ½ oz. fresh lime juice
- 1 dash Angostura bitters
- 1 cinnamon stick

DIRECTIONS

Drill two holes in top of coconut so a cinnamon stick and a straw can fit in them.

Make honey syrup by combining two cups honey with one cup boiling water. Let cool.

Pour liquid ingredients over ice into a shaker and shake well. Strain and funnel into the prepared coconut.

Fill a medium-size bowl with crushed ice to use as a base to prop up the coconut. (Waugh uses banana leaves as well.) With a torch or lighter, ignite the tip of the cinnamon stick until it burns and releases its aromatic smoke.

The CARDAMOM

Why use just one spirit when you can use three? In this drink from ZZ’s Clam Bar, rum adds depth of flavor, gin adds bite and chartreuse gives it an herbaceous quality. But the essential ingredient is a cardamom tincture that adds a whole other dimension of exotic flavor. Use the leftover tincture to flavor other simple cocktails such as a gin and tonic or a tom collins.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 dashes cardamom tincture (see directions)
- ½ oz. vanilla syrup (see directions)
- 2 oz. Plymouth gin
- ¾ oz. fresh lime juice
- ½ oz. green Chartreuse (regular or VEP)
- 1 tsp. *rum agricole*

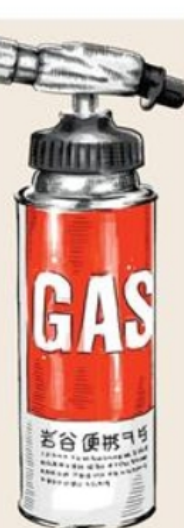
DIRECTIONS

First make cardamom tincture: Smash 15 green cardamom pods with a mortar and pestle. Put in a plastic container with 10 ounces of 151-proof neutral-grain spirit. Let sit for 24 hours and strain the liquid through a coffee filter.

Make vanilla syrup by combining one split vanilla bean

with two cups water and two cups white sugar in a pot. Simmer over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until sugar dissolves. Remove vanilla bean. Let cool.

Pour all ingredients into a cocktail shaker with ice, and shake well. Strain over crushed ice into your favorite tiki mug.



BURN, BABY, BURN

Don’t bother trying to ignite the cinnamon stick garnish on the coconut cocktail with a match: It’s never going to happen. A lighter can work, but for maximum smoke in minimal time, get a butane torch and blast the end of the stick until it ignites. Blow it out and inhale the sweet perfume.

BOURBON

LIQUID GOLD ASSETS

Bourbon is one of America's finest contributions to the world of drinking, and the old ways of distilling and aging it are making a comeback. This is a spirit that is best savored simply: with a cube of ice, a splash of water or nothing at all.



ICE, MAN

To make perfect cubes of ice, freeze water in a loaf pan. Remove block from pan and place on a damp cloth. With a saw, score block at two-inch intervals and chisel into slabs. Score slabs every two inches, then chisel off cubes.



BEST BOTTLES

STAGG JR. (\$50)

• This limited release has complex smoky, clovy, spicy flavors. At 134 proof, it can take a splash of water.

KNOB CREEK SINGLE BARREL RESERVE (\$40)

• Vanilla, spice and toffee come through in this affordable nine-year-old bourbon.

PAPPY VAN WINKLE'S 15 YEAR OLD (\$900)

• If you're lucky enough to find a bottle of this rare benchmark bourbon, snap it up and sell it for a steep profit down the road.

JEFFERSON'S RESERVE (\$50)

• Oaky with butterscotch notes,

this small-batch bourbon is perfectly balanced.

MAKER'S 46 (\$36)

• This follow-up to crowd-pleasing Maker's Mark has even more of the characteristics people love: more caramel, more spice, more smoke.

~ WAUGH SAYS ~

"Don't mess up your perfectly aged bourbon with less than perfect ice. Even if you don't hand-carve your cubes, be sure to use the best water you can get your hands on. Use filtered tap or bottled water to avoid off flavors."



"I'm dressed for the occasion—whatever the occasion happens to be...!"





C E R E M O N Y

Thrown out of a movie theater on a cold night, Gwen and Jack seek refuge in a greasy spoon

The tentative first snow has become a ticking sleet that despite its bone-chill looks molten in the streetlights. Their shoes—his high-tops, her purple suede boots—are soaked from the quest on which he’s led them, up one slushy block and down another, since they were asked to leave the movie theater.

“Are we lost yet?” Gwen asks.

“I swear there’s this neat coffeehouse with a woodstove around here,” Jack says. “I found it by smell last time.”

“If it’s someplace you used to go with Hailey, let’s forget it. Being there would feel creepy to me,” Gwen says.

“You think I’d drag us around freezing because I’m looking for a place I’d been to with someone else?”

“You’re right, you wouldn’t want to violate the sacred memory.”

“Jeez, you’re in a shitty mood. If you think it’s my fault getting us kicked out, I apologize.”

“I was in a great mood. What’s more romantic than getting 86ed for public lewdness and stepping into the first snow of the year? I loved walking in it together. Who drew a snow heart on the window of a car, and who walked away before we could write in our initials?”

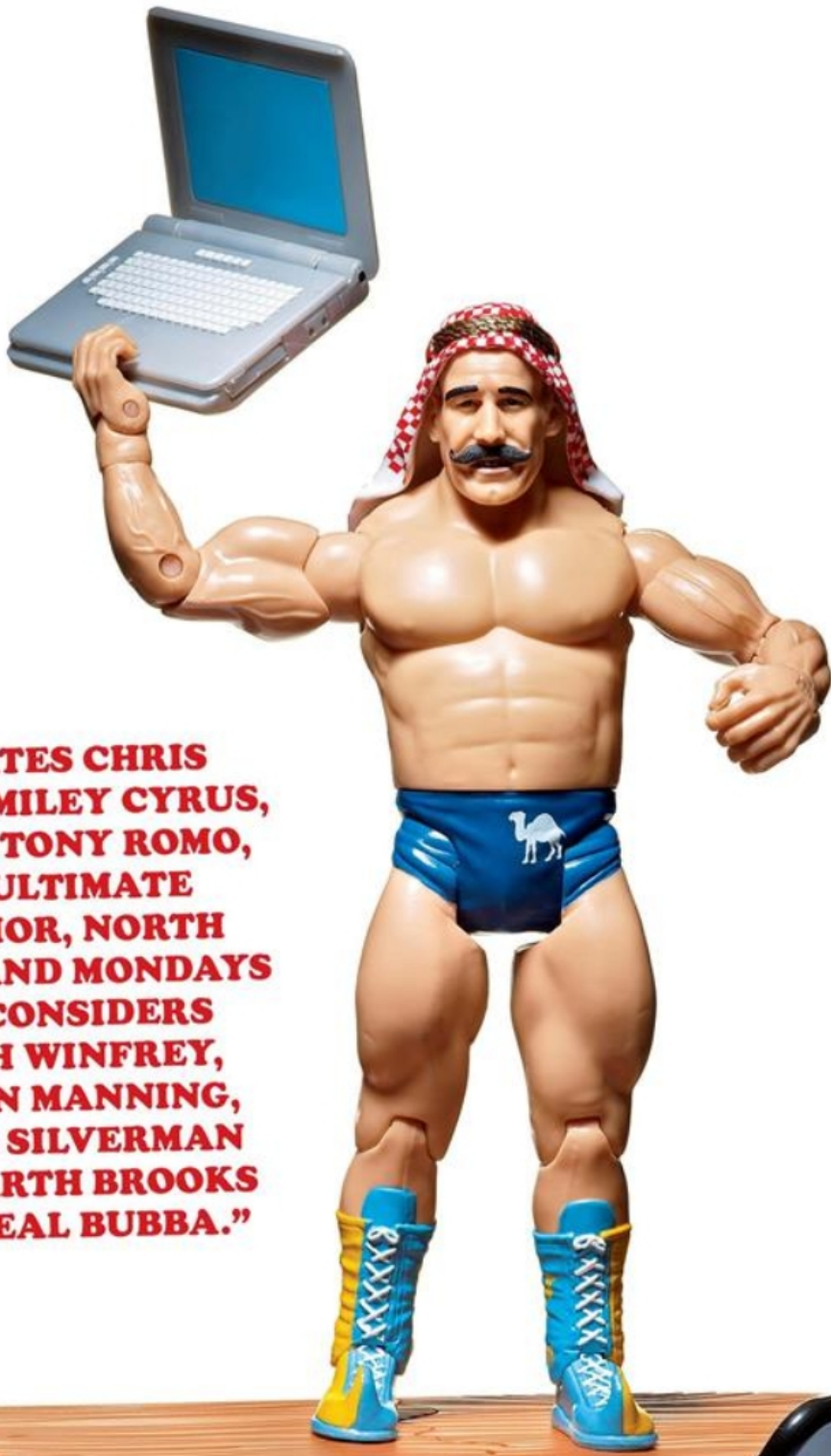
“Sorry, I was freezing. I’m not dressed for this. I needed to keep moving,” Jack says. “Look, there’s something open. We’re saved.”

The restaurant’s windows are steamed opaque. Inside, an illegible sign diffuses pink neon across the slick plate-glass window and the Formica counter. There’s a scorched, greasy griddle smell. The few customers at the counter, all men, eat wearing their coats. Beyond the counter are four empty Formica tables.

“I want to go on record that *(continued on page 144)*”

FICTION BY STUART DYBEK
ILLUSTRATION BY NOMOCO

**HE HATES CHRIS
BROWN, MILEY CYRUS,
SPRITE, TONY ROMO,
THE ULTIMATE
WARRIOR, NORTH
KOREA AND MONDAYS
AND CONSIDERS
OPRAH WINFREY,
PEYTON MANNING,
SARAH SILVERMAN
AND GARTH BROOKS
THE "REAL BUBBA."**



**AFTER YEARS OF WRESTLING FOES
AND DEMONS, THE IRON SHEIK IS
OFF THE MAT AND FEISTIER THAN EVER**

I WILL MAKE YOU HUMBLE!

BY KEITH ELLIOT GREENBERG

Is that the real Iron Sheik?"

Jorel Claudio, a 28-year-old pastry chef, weaves past slow-moving tourists on King Street West in Toronto, contemplating the rough-hewn, barrel-chested man with the black handlebar mustache and red-and-white-checked kaffiyeh lodged in the passenger seat of a BMW at the curb. Before Claudio can approach,

Marc Lacoursière, a 34-year-old graphic designer, asks the Iron Sheik for a favor.

"Tell me to go fuck myself, like you do on Twitter."

The Iranian native's eyes flash as he rolls down his window.

"Get the fuck out of here!" he booms.

Both Claudio and Lacoursière look on in wonder.

To reemphasize his point, the former World Wrestling

PHOTOGRAPH BY LEVI BROWN

Federation (now World Wrestling Entertainment) champion bellows again.

"Get the fuck out of here!"

The small crowd gathered around the vehicle gawks at the Sheik, then back at Lacoursière, who grins.

"That made my day," he says softly. "As a matter of fact, it made my year."

The Sheik has all but forgotten the exchange when his managers, 34-year-old identical twins Jian and Page Magen, help him from the vehicle to a yellow plastic chair on the sidewalk in front of the Belly Buster, a sandwich shop they own.

Resting on his cane (even after replacement surgery a decade or so ago, bone bulges from his left knee, the residual effect of more than two decades in the ring), the Sheik stares straight ahead, as if the coffee shop across the street were the red light on a camera at a WWF event circa 1985.

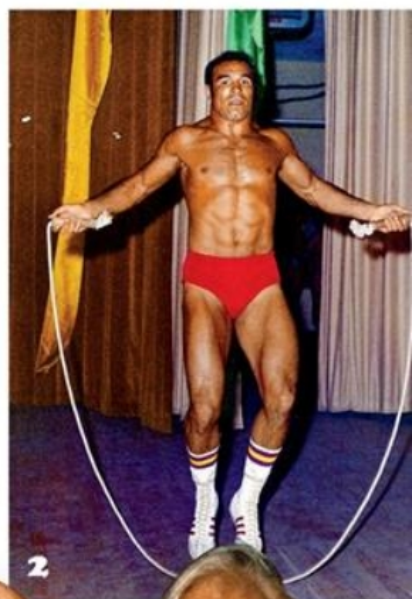
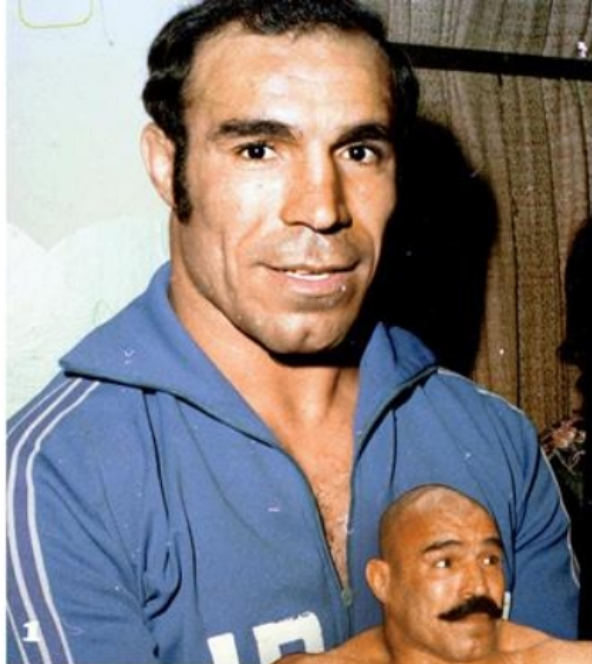
"Six year, nobody beat Mr. Bob Backlund!" he thunders, referring to the man

"We'd be sitting around smoking a joint, and he'd start doing squats. Hundreds of squats. He has the constitution of a rhino."

he dethroned for the title in December 1983. "I beat him at most famous arena, Madison Square Garden! Everybody know I'm the real champion, and I beat Angelo Mosca at Maple Leaf Garden not far from here!"

Heads hang out of a number 510 streetcar as it winds off King Street West toward Adelaide. Not everyone understands his references, but nobody can look away.

"Without Iron Sheik, there be no Hulkamania!" he yells, assuming it's common knowledge that he agreed to lose the title to Hulk Hogan one month

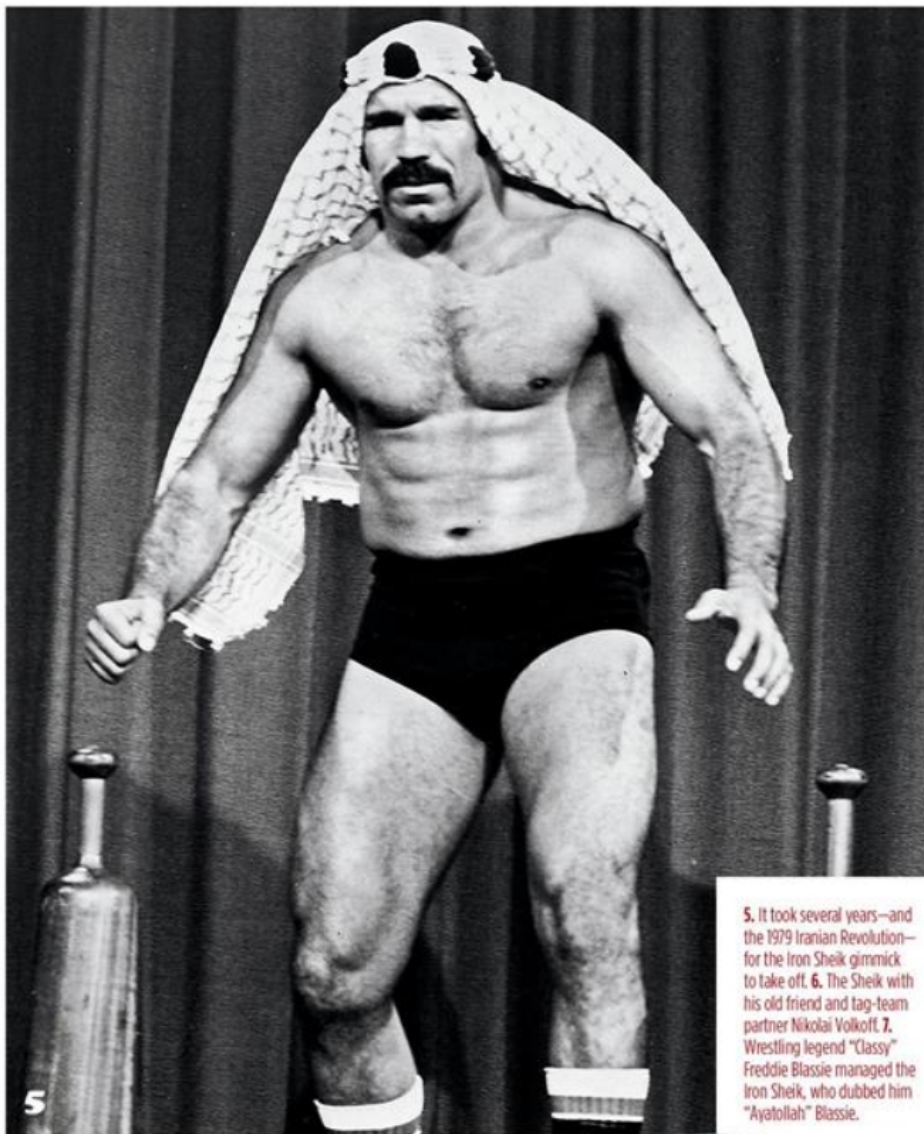


after procuring it in order to provide WWF head Vince McMahon with a tanned, telegenic lightning rod who could expand the company from its Northeastern wrestling territory to an international conglomerate. Then, switching to a real-life grudge, he adds, "But I don't have respect for jabroni Ultimate Warrior!"

In another age, the Sheik would be stuck venting his hostility on a street like this or in a gym or barroom, but social media has given the retired wrestler a wider audience—and an outlet where he can continue being the Sheik. He has more than 367,000 Twitter followers,

1. Khosrow Vaziri represented Iran in wrestling tournaments before moving to the U.S. and becoming the Iron Sheik. 2. Vaziri's early training regimen included jumping rope and juggling 75-pound Iranian exercise clubs. 3. In 1984 he agreed to lose the WWF championship to Hulk Hogan. 4. Vaziri with Chris Taylor of the 1972 U.S. Olympic wrestling team.





5. It took several years—and the 1979 Iranian Revolution—for the Iron Sheik gimmick to take off. 6. The Sheik with his old friend and tag-team partner Nikolai Volkoff. 7. Wrestling legend “Classy” Freddie Blassie managed the Iron Sheik, who dubbed him “Ayatollah” Blassie.



who track his thoughts on everything from wrestling adversaries to the NFL, the NBA, the Premier League, pop culture and politics. When he approves of something, it's the “real bubba” or even “Sheik class,” as in this December tweet: “Nelson Mandela god bless you forever you forever Iron Sheik class.” But when he disapproves (“jabroni” is one of his favorite insults), things really get colorful.

“Tom Brady wife need the #Obamacare after I suplex her.”

“Wednesday please go fuck yourself.”

“Miley Cyrus Ultimate Warrior sister.”

“Tony Romo play great tonight for dumb piece of shit raisin balls grasshopper dick motherfucker.”

A recurring theme: placing a rival facedown on the mat and bending him backward in the painful camel



clutch—the hold the Sheik used to defeat Backlund—then “humbling” him by fucking him in the ass.

“Who talks like that?” Page Magen asks. “Adam Sandler doesn’t. Chris Rock doesn’t. He’s not gay. He’s not a rapist. It’s just an extreme way of saying you disapprove of another person.”

Yet it always gets a pop. “The Sheik’s popularity is based on his utter lack of any sort of social-media graces,” says Ed Zitron, a public relations specialist and author who has written about the Sheik. “He grandstands like wrestlers do. He isn’t perfectly worded. He is just the Iron Sheik, and he is fantastically passionate.”

And the Magens—Persian Jews who run a business that provides entertainment at Toronto-area weddings, bar mitzvahs and corporate events—are determined to make a brand out of the man they consider an uncle. (Their father, Bijan, a former table-tennis champion in Iran, and the Sheik are childhood friends.) In 2010 they brought the Sheik to the Grammys and introduced him to Jay Z and Beyoncé on the red carpet. “Beyoncé actually kissed his hand and asked to take a picture with him,” Jian claims. “I watched Billie Joe Armstrong from Green Day walk past Tony Bennett because the Iron Sheik was there.”

The Sheik’s crossover cult stature is based on something more than nostalgia, a concept the Sheik himself doesn’t fully grasp. When asked why his Twitter following continues to grow, the Sheik gives a tired look.

“I imagine they like it. No?”

“He thinks it’s all from wrestling,” Page says. “But he sees he’s getting a lot of attention, so he dials into it. He told me one day, ‘Even Ray (continued on page 136)

NO VACANCY

CARE FOR ROOM SERVICE? A HOTEL TRYST WITH THE MAGNIFICENT MISS MARCH

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOSH RYAN

Hotel rooms are places where secrets are kept, plots unfold and lovers indulge their fantasies anonymously and with abandon. Unlock this hotel-room door and you're alone with a rising star in the fashion world, a red-hot Mohawked seductress with a brain to match that impossibly alluring body. New Jersey-born model Britt Linn—our first short-haired Playmate in more than 15 years—is on a never-ending adventure. “I want to try everything,” she says, “no matter how weird.” Just one year ago Britt was working as a surgical technologist when a New York model scout found her on Facebook. “I started modeling in September during Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week, and *bam*,” she says, “I’ve been flying by the seat of my pants ever since!” After snagging shoots for

Seventeen and Diesel, she booked her *PLAYBOY* gig and a *Vogue Italia* editorial on the same day. “I burst into tears of happiness,” Britt says. “I’m pretty competitive, and I thought it’d be cool to be slender enough for high fashion but also curvy enough for *PLAYBOY*. And I did it!” Some other things you should know about Miss March: Although she sports a punk-rock vibe, she’s an approachable “goofball” who likes shooting pool with the boys, throwing back shots of Jack Daniel’s and mellowing out to singer-songwriter Ray LaMontagne. She also has an affinity for the carnal. “I’m so sex-driven, it’s not even funny,” she confesses. “I check out guys; I check out girls. I have a crazy sex drive.” So hang the DO NOT DISTURB sign on the door and enjoy your roadside-hotel rendezvous with Britt. Your secrets are safe with us.











MISS MARCH

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH

NAME: _____

BUST: _____

HEIGHT: _____

BIRTH DA _____

AMBITION _____

disco

TURN-ON: _____

with

TURNOFF: _____

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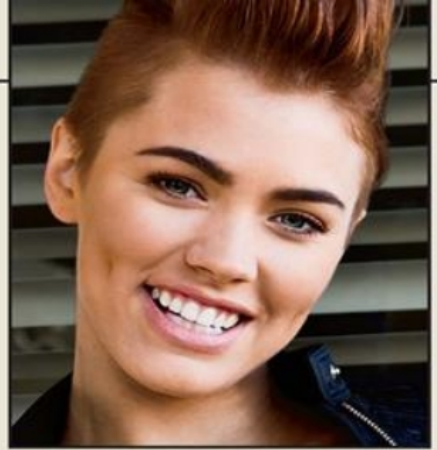
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J
han

Buttlin

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET



NAME: Britt Linn
BUST: 32B WAIST: 23" HIPS: 35"
HEIGHT: 5'10" WEIGHT: 130lbs.

BIRTH DATE: 7/20/1990 BIRTHPLACE: Wantage, NJ ♡

AMBITIONS: To make sure I live-really live-and discover new aspects of myself every day.

TURN-ONS: Humor. If I can't laugh and be silly with a guy, it won't last long!

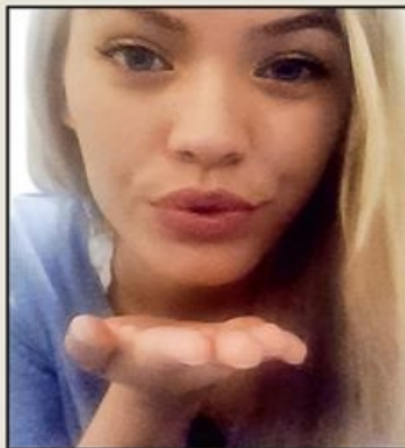
TURNOFFS: A severe ego. I can't stand to be around a guy who shows he's an ass and tears others down.

FUN FACT: I have an insane desire to sing - I do it almost anywhere - on the street, in elevators, on set! I love expressing myself.

WHAT MAKES A WOMAN SEXY: Confidence! I think it's beautiful when a woman is confident in her own skin - pale, dark, tall, skinny, curvy, muscular, WHATEVER! It's ALL beautiful!



Just hangin' around!



Baby Britt ♡ blowing kisses.



Country girl at heart. ☺



PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

When the National Congress of American Indians requested that NFL teams stop using derogatory terms for Native Americans, the Washington Redskins announced they would rename themselves after other local figures.

Effective immediately the team will be called the Washington Foreskins, in honor of all the dicks on Capitol Hill.

After 50 years of wondering why he didn't look like his younger sister and brother, a man finally got up the nerve to ask his mother if he had been adopted.

"Yes, you were, son," his mother said as she started to cry. "But it didn't work out and they brought you back."



When the host asked an attractive blonde party guest if she would like another drink, she bowed her head slightly and said, "No, thank you. My husband limits me to one."

"Why is that?" the host asked.

She responded, "Because after one drink I can feel it, and after two drinks anyone can."

Our Unabashed Dictionary defines *synonym* as a word used in place of one you can't spell.

A doctor had sex with one of his female patients and then felt horribly guilty about it. No matter how much he tried to forget what he'd done, he couldn't; he was overwhelmed with regret and a sense that he'd betrayed a patient's trust. Every once in a while, though, he would hear a reassuring voice in his head telling him, "Don't worry about it. You aren't the first medical practitioner to have sex with a patient, and you won't be the last. And you're single. Just let it go."

Invariably, however, another voice in his head would bring him back to reality, whispering, "But you're a veterinarian, you sick bastard."

Our Unabashed Dictionary defines *work accident* as a baby conceived at a company picnic.

I just found a great job," a man told his wife. "It starts at 10 A.M. and finishes at four P.M., it requires no overtime and no work on weekends, and it pays \$3,000 a week in cash!"

The wife said, "That's unbelievable."

"I know," said the husband. "You start Monday."

It's not the minutes spent at the dinner table that put on weight—it's the seconds.

A young couple on the brink of divorce decided to visit a marriage counselor.

"What's the problem?" the counselor asked.

The wife responded, "My husband suffers from premature ejaculation."

"Do you?" the counselor asked the husband.

"Not really," replied the husband. "She's the one who suffers, not me."

I invited a friend home for dinner," a man announced to his wife.

"What? Are you crazy?" the wife replied. "The house is a mess, I haven't done any grocery shopping, and I don't feel like cooking a fancy meal."

"I know all that," the man said.

"Then why did you invite your friend over?" she asked.

He replied, "Because the poor fool is thinking about getting married."

Tits are proof that a man can concentrate on more than one thing at a time.



Ally Weiman

If size really doesn't matter, why don't they sell three-inch dildos?

A little boy watched with fascination as his mother gently rubbed cold cream on her face. "Why are you doing that to your face, Mommy?" he asked.

"To make myself beautiful," his mother told him.

A few minutes later she began to remove the cream with a tissue. "What's the matter?" asked the boy. "Giving up?"

What do gay men want to find in a partner? Themselves.

Send your jokes to Playboy Party Jokes Editor, 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.



"Look, kid, I don't mind you standing there, but your sign has got to go."



2014 CARS OF THE YEAR

\$51,995

ENGINE: 6.2-LITER V8

HORSEPOWER: 455 AUTO, 460 MANUAL

0-60: 3.8 SECONDS

MPG: 17 CITY, 29 HIGHWAY



IF IT HAS WHEELS AND AN ENGINE, WE HAMMERED IT! HERE ARE OUR PICKS FROM A STELLAR YEAR IN THE WORLD OF AUTOMOBILES

BY A.J. BAIME, KEN GROSS AND THE EDITORS OF PLAYBOY

Years from now, people will look back on 2013 as a historic time for gearheads. It was the year of the sports car. Among the machines unleashed on our roads: the all-new seventh-generation Corvette, the first new Jaguar two-seat sports car in more than 50 years, a new Euro-styled Viper, a slick 12-cylinder Aston Martin, two Porsches (including the German firm's first-ever hybrid supercar) and a pair of seven-figure hybrid Batmobiles from Ferrari and McLaren, each

thumping well over 900 horsepower. Even if you're not in the market for one of these rolling monuments to testosterone, there's still something cool and cutting-edge for you out there. To suss out the best of the best in every category, we prowled the earth's byways, from twisty roads in China to hilly thoroughfares in the south of France to the clogged intersections of Los Angeles and Chicago. Herewith, our annual pick of the top new automobiles.



TADGE JUECHTER
CHIEF ENGINEER, CORVETTE

"What makes the Corvette unique is its bandwidth. It has fuel efficiency for daily commuting, luggage room and comfort for touring, and performance capabilities for track use."

SPORTS CARS



WINNER

CHEVROLET CORVETTE STINGRAY

For the seventh (since its debut in 1953) generation of Corvette, Chevy engineers had their work cut out for them. Against a tide of declining sales, how could they convince 20- and 30-somethings that their dad's idea of a cool car should be theirs too? Chevrolet promised the most performance and mileage out of this new base Stingray, and the company delivered. And the styling? Nuanced yet true to the DNA. All told, this is an unbelievable amount of car for the money. We test-drove it all over California, Illinois and Virginia. People jumped off curbs to snap phone pictures; it's that striking. Specs include a hydro-formed aluminum frame, carbon-fiber panels, a crisp seven-speed manual and a torque-rich V8 with 460 horsepower. Add the Z51 track package and you're unstoppable. And Chevy finally listened to the critics and seriously upgraded the interior. Bottom line: the best Vette ever.

ASTON MARTIN V12 VANTAGE S

Priced less than a comparable Ferrari, the 565-horsepower Vantage S delivers a blazing 3.7-second sprint to 60 mph and a 205 mph top speed. With new electronically controlled suspension, it tackles corners like a sure-footed athlete. And it's an Aston, so it's fantastically beautiful in that 007, just-understated-enough style. Slap some Union Jack livery on this six-liter two-seater and you're licensed to kill.

\$184,995



\$102,485

SRT VIPER They don't call it a Dodge anymore. After Fiat bought Chrysler, the Detroit firm released a new iteration of its legendary brute under the SRT (Street & Racing Technology) badge. The Italians gave the styling some love inside and out. While the car now has traction control, it's still a 640-horsepower, 8.4-liter V10 beast. Driving it is like getting in the ring with Mike Tyson—in a good way. Ice packs not included.

\$52,600



PORSCHE CAYMAN Don't call it a junior 911. The mid-engine, 275-horsepower Cayman is a car all its own, and it's the best all-around performer for its price in the Stuttgart lineup. During our test drive we adored its neutral road manners, refined agility and deft throttle punch delivered by a 2.7-liter flat six with a glorious song. Naturally, the S model is the car you want (50 more thoroughbreds) if you have the extra \$11,000.

SEDANS

ENGINE: 2-LITER TURBO I-4
 HORSEPOWER: 208
 0-60: 6.9 SECONDS
 MPG: 26 CITY, 38 HIGHWAY

WINNER

MERCEDES-BENZ CLA250

The sell is simple: a Mercedes-Benz for less than \$30,000. When we first heard news of the CLA, we found the idea scintillating. Could M-B steal away Chevy and Toyota buyers with a small, affordable sedan? Then we saw the thing. The “predator-like exterior” and “airplane-cockpit-inspired interior” (as the car’s product manager, Heiko Schmidt, puts it) had us at hello. We put the car through its paces in the hills of France’s Côte d’Azur, then tried it out as a commuter at home. The two-liter turbo and seven-speed dual-clutch automatic don’t provide the thrills of more expensive M-B models, but they match anything in the price range. And the standard start-stop and collision-prevention assist are nice touches. In a perfect world we’d go for the AMG version (pictured, \$48,375). But the base CLA is a big winner in its class. At that price, you can buy his and hers.

\$29,900



\$46,025



CADILLAC CTS If the luxury-auto biz were a football game, the CTS would be America’s QB against the German juggernauts. Named *Motor Trend*’s car of the year, the new CTS is visually stunning inside and out. The base two-liter turbo in-line four options up to a \$70,000-plus car with a 420-horsepower, 3.6-liter twin-turbo V6. Bottom line? This is an all-star athlete.



HEIKO SCHMIDT
 CLA PRODUCT MANAGER, M-B

“While the entry price for the CLA is indeed new territory for Mercedes-Benz in the U.S., the CLA is every bit a Mercedes.”

\$104,900



AUDI RS7 With its “sportback” roofline and the eyes of a comic-book mastermind, the A7 is a design triumph for the ages. The new RS version packs a four-liter twin-turbo V8, making this 560-horsepower lightning bolt the most powerful production Audi ever. It can do zero to 60 in 3.7 seconds (that’s Ferrari territory), tops out at 174 mph and is roomy enough to lug six kegs of Franziskaner Weissbier. Sold!

\$17,740



MAZDA 3 The newly imagined Mazda 3—available as either a hatchback or a sedan—is lighter on its toes, longer in its legs and easier on the eyes. You can’t argue with these numbers: 155-horsepower Skyactiv two-liter in-line four, 30 city and 41 highway mpg, and a top speed of 130, all for a base price of less than \$18,000. The nav system and rear cross-traffic alert come standard, and with a stiffer chassis, the ride is a blast. Look out, Ford Focus, the competition is heating up.

GREEN CARS

ENGINE: 2-LITER ELECTRIC HYBRID I-4

HORSEPOWER: 141

0-60: 7.7 SECONDS

MPG: 50 CITY, 45 HIGHWAY



WINNER

HONDA ACCORD HYBRID

Underneath that silver sheet metal, this new Accord packs some serious engineering voodoo. It's basically three cars in one. In EV mode it cruises around at speeds of up to 60 mph without using a single drop of gas—like a purely electric car. Or it can run in hybrid mode using two electric motors, an air-cooled lithium-ion battery pack and a small combustion engine. It also runs in engine mode at highway speeds using a single-gear transmission with just enough punch to let you merge onto the interstate without having to white-knuckle the wheel. Beautifully built in America, it achieves the 50 mpg goal with a price tag under \$30,000. It's the perfect solution for drivers who want comfort in a midsize car, don't want to spend too much money on gasoline and don't go for the wonky styling of other top-selling hybrids. It won't knock your socks off the way a new Vette will, but it will make mincemeat of a Prius when the light changes.

\$29,995



\$41,350

BMW i3 The all-new plug-in electric i3 combines disco packaging with real BMW roadability. You'll enjoy about 170 horsepower, a range of 100 miles, a tiny optional range-extender gas engine you'll probably never need, plus enough torque to scare whoever's in the passenger seat. Clamshell rear doors and plenty of interior space make it a nice option for green-conscious families. Toss the dogs in and head for the beach! With this car's quirky looks, be prepared for gawkers.



KOJI NINOMIYA
CHIEF ENGINEER, HONDA

"The Accord Hybrid development focus included three key concepts: environment, advancement and fun."



\$58,570

TESLA MODEL S The Model S is the first automobile this Silicon Valley start-up built in-house from the ground up. (The Tesla Roadster was based on a Lotus chassis.) It's an all-electric plug-in sedan with gorgeous styling that gets 88 mpg (the electric equivalent) in the city and 90 on the highway. It also gets our nod for the coolest interior on the market, with a 17-inch tablet screen front and center that controls just about everything. This is the car interior of the future, and the future is now.

\$24,985



CHEVROLET CRUZE TURBODIESEL Clean diesel is the green technology of Europe. Finally, General Motors jumps in with an affordable American turbodiesel (the engines are built in Germany) that puts up 46 mpg and 264 foot-pounds of delicious torque, and spits out far fewer emissions than its gasoline brethren. Sure, an Audi A3 TDI is nicer in every way, but you'll pay thousands more for one. Specs: two-liter turbo in-line four, room for five passengers and an 8.1-second jaunt to 60.

SUVS / CROSSOVERS



WINNER

LAND ROVER RANGE ROVER SPORT

Like the previous generation, the new Range Rover Sport combines refined British luxury with ass-kicking off-road capability. Only now it does both even better. Picture this: On an old U.K. airfield, we drove a Sport up a 45-degree ramp into a derelict 747, crawled around obstacles through the empty cabin, then exited down a steep ramp into a mud bath. Why? To prove this truck can motor over anything. And it will handle like a sure-footed sedan around your town's twisty roads. The performance upgrade comes via a new aluminum unibody and improved suspension dynamics. With an option of two all-wheel-drive systems you can choose on the go, no terrain can stop you. We love the V6, but the five-liter supercharged V8 (510 horsepower, about \$80,000) makes you feel as if you're packing jet engines. And the cabin? Beautiful leather, polished aluminum and tasteful carbon-fiber accents; the only thing missing is a champagne bucket. This is the truck you want when the world ends.



\$63,495

ENGINE: 3-LITER V6

HORSEPOWER: 340

0-60: 6.9 SECONDS

MPG: 17 CITY, 23 HIGHWAY

\$69,125



BMW X5 There aren't a lot of good options for vehicles that can seat seven, especially ones that pack an optional 450-horsepower V8, all-wheel drive, an eight-speed automatic transmission and that certain command of the road that a BMW delivers. Yes, the new X5 is here, 15 years after it first appeared. The base model (three-liter, 300-horsepower V6) will run you \$53,725, but we'd opt for the M Sport suspension and the aforementioned V8.

\$21,995



SUBARU FORESTER The new Forester doesn't look much different from the old one, nor does it drive all that differently. Don't fix it if it isn't broken, right? Subaru of America had a fifth straight record year for sales in 2013. A few reasons why: The Forester is easy on the wallet, has room enough for five plus golf bags, gets decent mileage (24 city, 32 highway) and has an all-wheel-drive 2.5-liter flat four that will probably still be kicking long after you're gone.

THE NEW (HYBRID) DREAM CAR

Folks who can afford supercars don't worry about the cost of a gallon of gas. But that hasn't stopped the world's brightest engineers from inventing hybrid dream machines. These debuted last year, proof that it's a wild time for car fans.



FERRARI LAFERRARI

A blazing 950-horsepower hybrid Ferrari with a top speed of 217 mph and a \$1.7 million price tag. Want one? Sorry, all sold out.

PORSCHE 918 SPYDER

Two electric motors plus one midmounted V8 equals 887 horsepower and a 2.5-second zero-to-60 sprint. This gorgeous hunk of insanity will cost you \$845,000.



MCLAREN P1

The Brits won't bow down to the Germans or the Italians. Case in point: this \$1.15 million 903 hp, 217 mph hybrid.



\$99,000

ENGINE: 5-LITER
SUPERCHARGED V8

HORSEPOWER: 550

0-60: 4.0 SECONDS

MPG: 16 CITY,
23 HIGHWAY



CAR OF THE YEAR

F-TYPE

JAGUAR F-TYPE

The first all-new Jaguar sports car in more than 50 years, this is the direct descendant of the C-, D- and E-Types, icons of the golden age of motoring both on the racetrack and in the driveways of the world's most glamorous people. Yes, the new F-Type has a lot to live up to. From the moment we got behind the wheel and felt the engine's throb as it crackled like an F1 car rolling onto a Grand Prix circuit, we were sold. It's the Jaguar we've waited decades to drive. You have a choice of engine packages: a 340-horsepower supercharged V6 (\$65K for the coupe, \$69K for the roadster), a 380-horsepower supercharged V6 (\$77K coupe, \$81K roadster) or a five-liter V8 that gives this monster muscle-car power with sports-car handling (\$99K coupe, \$92K roadster). As a daily drive, the car is elegant and refined, its interior impeccable and distinctly British. But throw this Jag into track mode and it's a different cat. We let it loose on racetracks outside Chicago and Seattle, and the superb hydraulic steering was knife sharp and perfect to the touch. As we snap-shifted the eight-speed transmission, the car danced through corners, its stiff chassis slaloming smoothly through abrupt directional changes. It achieves what all of today's high-end sports cars try to, in spades: It's a wonderful everyday drive and a thriller when you want to put your foot down. After all these years, Jaguar is still the real deal. Welcome back, mate: You're our choice for PLAYBOY's 2014 Car of the Year.



\$92,000

F-TYPE V8S



ENGINE: 5-LITER
SUPERCHARGED V8

HORSEPOWER: 495

0-60: 4.2 SECONDS

MPG: 16 CITY,
23 HIGHWAY

2014 CAR OF THE YEAR



IAN CALLUM
DESIGN DIRECTOR, JAGUAR

"The F-Type reestablishes and nails Jaguar's credentials, its proper heritage and what the brand stands for—and what we've been missing for a while."





By Molly Oswaks

Pleasure Seekers

*The slow-sex
movement's quest
to build a
better female orgasm*

Illustration by Edel Rodriguez



"We're going to move mindfully and thoughtfully, and very soon there are going to be fingers on clits," says Ken Blackman. We're downstairs in the Sutter Room, a large basement-level space at the Regency Center in San Francisco's Nob Hill district. This is day one of OMX 2013, the first-ever Orgasmic Meditation Xperience. It is hosted by OneTaste, the organization for which Blackman works as lead orgasmic-meditation instructor. More than 1,000 people are packed into the room, all of them having traveled from around the globe to attend this three-day pussy-stroking session. Total cost: \$395 a person (not including airfare or hotel accommodations, of course).

The room has a wide stage on the side nearest the door and includes the Sutter Annex off to the left. The blond wood

Moans of pleasure start slowly and then build. Women shriek, and some buck in fits of ecstasy. Someone shouts, "Oh God!"

floors are covered with clusters of yoga mats, buckwheat pillows and white terry cloth hand towels arranged in what OM experts refer to as "nests." The nests are plotted in rows and distinguishable by numbered placards handwritten on lined paper and placed at the top of each mat. Pairs of men and women enter the room and mill about until they have located their assigned nest; some have come

together as partners, others have met for the first time this morning. Those who have been trained in the art of orgasmic meditation and have OMed before wear green wristbands, while first-timers wear red. There are red pairs, green pairs and red-green pairs.

At their nests, the women strip from the waist down and lie on their backs, while the men wait in a line that starts in the middle of the room for their turn at a communal hand-washing station set up onstage. After they've washed their hands, the men—the "stokers," in OM lingo—return to their nests, where they pull on white or blue latex gloves like a line of doctors prepping for surgery. Then the pairs arrange themselves in the nesting position: the woman on her back with her legs butterflyed open, the man

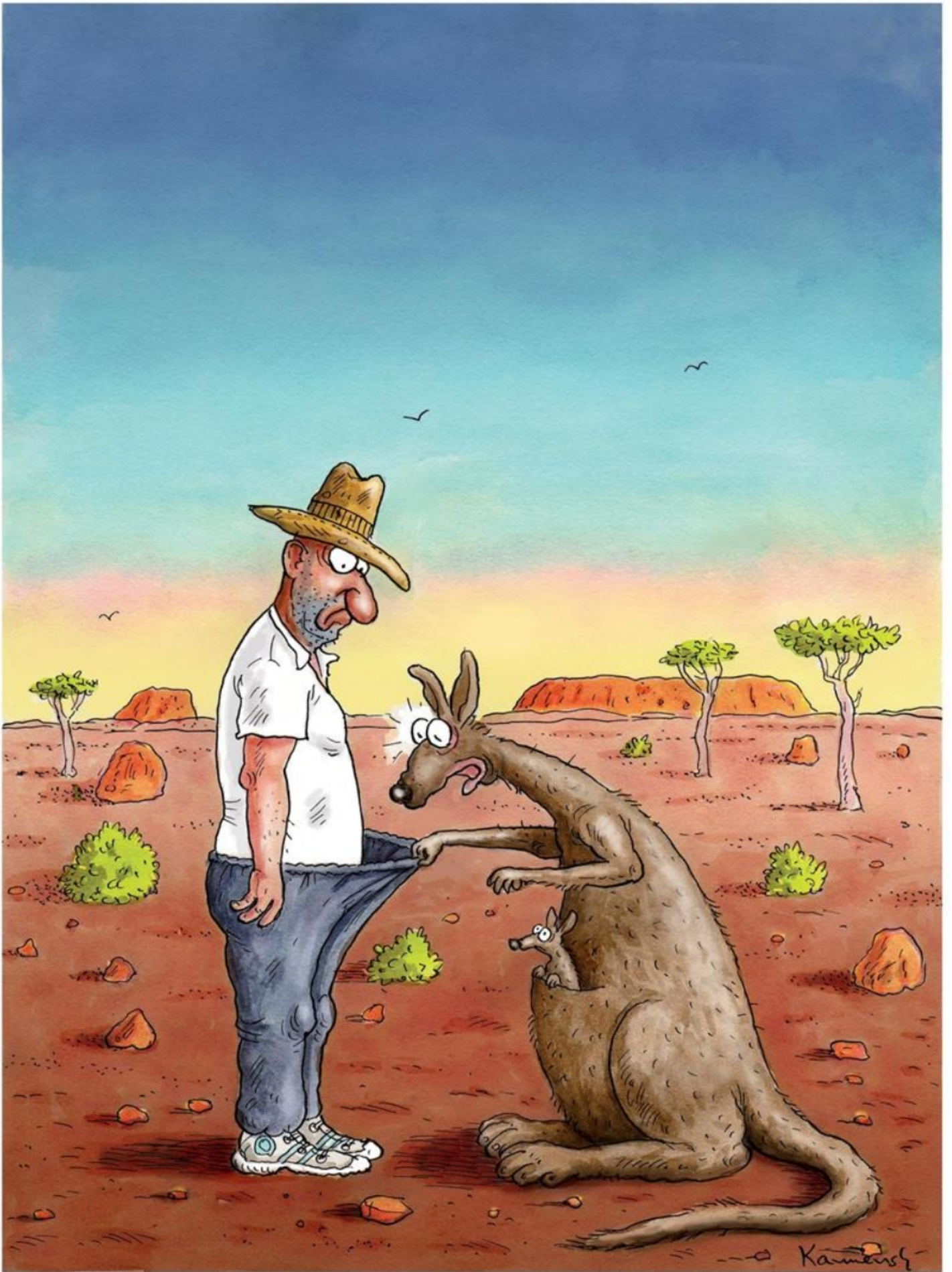
FROM TOP: OneTaste CEO and founder Nicole Daedone, who describes herself as "the nun that gets some," onstage at the Orgasmic Meditation Xperience. At the Regency Center in San Francisco, OM instructors set up "nests" including pillows, towels and OneStroke lube. OneTaste staff members onstage at the OMX conference, which included more than 1,000 attendees.



seated on a pillow at her right side, his left leg bridged over her core, the other straight out underneath her right leg. His right hand slips under her butt so that his thumb rests softly at her introitus (the opening used for penetrative sex), and he places his left hand on her pubic mound, thumb gently pulling back the clitoral hood, the pad of his bent index finger hovering just above the upper-left-hand quadrant of her clit (the one-o'clock spot).

Small glass pots of OneTaste-branded lubricant are available for purchase onstage and in an upstairs gift shop stocked with merchandise including T-shirts (THE PUSSY KNOWS, POWERED BY ORGASM, etc.), a set of small clit-themed stickers designed specifically for an iPhone's small round "home" button, a collection of silver jewelry and a powdered green-algae-type water supplement. The lube, OneStroke, is oil-based and made with ingredients you might find in artisanal lip balm: olive oil, beeswax, shea butter, grapeseed oil.

Rachel Cherwitz, an OM coach who splits her time between New York and San Francisco, crosses the room to a couple settling into a nest and cups her hand beside the woman's mouth. The woman spits out her gum, and Cherwitz rolls it into a stiff white ball between her fingers before tossing it into the garbage. *(continued on page 132)*



"Wow, your baby is so little!"

PHOTOGRAPHY:
PETER YANG

TYSON BURRELL

TV'S GOOFIEST DAD EXPLAINS THE DOWNSIDE OF LIVING IN A VAN, THE UNCOOL WAY TO RIDE A HARLEY AND HOW HE STUMBLED INTO SUCCESS

BY STEPHEN REBELLO

Q1

PLAYBOY: Starring on *Modern Family* the past five years, you've become almost synonymous with your character, Phil Dunphy, the lovably inept, well-meaning, frantic-to-be-cool real estate agent dad. The show's creators and writers have spoken about the inspiration they take from their own family lives and, sometimes, those of the actors. When have you most recently caught yourself doing a Phil Dunphy?

BURRELL: Two days ago I finished a course with Harley-Davidson on how to ride a motorcycle. It's very much a midlife-crisis sort of thing to do. You have a day of class and two days of riding on a Burbank airport tarmac. It was super fun and there were moments

of delusion when I felt pretty cool riding. I did it with three friends, and luckily there wasn't one of us for whom it was like, "Hey, you're really good!" It was more like the battle of who looked least cool riding a motorcycle. Worse, after all that, I'm back to the not-cool part where my bride won't allow me to buy a motorcycle. My friends are all either married or engaged, and their women swatted them down too.

Q2

PLAYBOY: Your TV character has highly entertaining quirks and neuroses, including coulrophobia, or fear of clowns. What are your personal phobias?

BURRELL: I have an irrational fear of heights that shows up

pretty regularly when my wife and I go hiking in southern Utah. There are a lot of overlooks at high elevations that set me off. I also have a fear of public speaking, which I have to overcome regularly. I battle real anxiety about it. I'm kind of neurotic.

Q3

PLAYBOY: Have fame and increased visibility made you more neurotic or less?

BURRELL: More. The show has been a boon for my family and me in so many ways, but the one downside—and it's a small sliver of that pie—is that I'm jumpier in public. I'm already a little self-conscious, and now people sit next to you and record you on their phones. They're not very subtle





“ I HAVE A FEAR OF HEIGHTS. I HAVE A FEAR OF PUBLIC SPEAKING. I BATTLE ANXIETY. I’M KIND OF NEUROTIC. ”

about it. So now I feel more concerned about spilling something or picking my nose. I love going out to dinner with my wife and taking our little girls out, so it hasn’t turned me into Howard Hughes. But it has made me more neurotic in public. Honestly, it’s made me more of a homebody. It’s a small price to pay, though.

Q4

PLAYBOY: When a small price feels like too much, what’s your perfect escape from Los Angeles?

BURRELL: We have a restored Prairie-style house built in 1915 near Salt Lake City. I love Utah, especially Salt Lake City. It’s beautiful and a great place to have

a family. My wife was raised Mormon, and my brother and I bought a bar in Salt Lake City. You know, nothing will bring family to town like a bar. My mom moved there to be closer to our kids and my brother’s kids. I have nephews and some cousins who have moved there too. So we have an extended family that lives all around Salt Lake.

Q5

PLAYBOY: Another of *Modern Family*’s best running jokes is how glassy-eyed and sexually stupid your happily married character becomes around Gloria—played by Sofia Vergara—the voluptuous Colombian-born younger

wife of your father-in-law. Are the writers ever tempted to push that extra-marital plot element beyond fantasy? **BURRELL:** We’ve tried stuff with Phil and Gloria that never makes it on the air. It just felt too cheap. Anyway, Phil would fold like a house of cards. His attraction is completely a reflex. He’s almost like a fish attracted to a shiny lure. *Nothing* would happen. He’s kind of asexual. Sex for him is just sort of daydreamy.

Q6

PLAYBOY: And Ty Burrell himself?

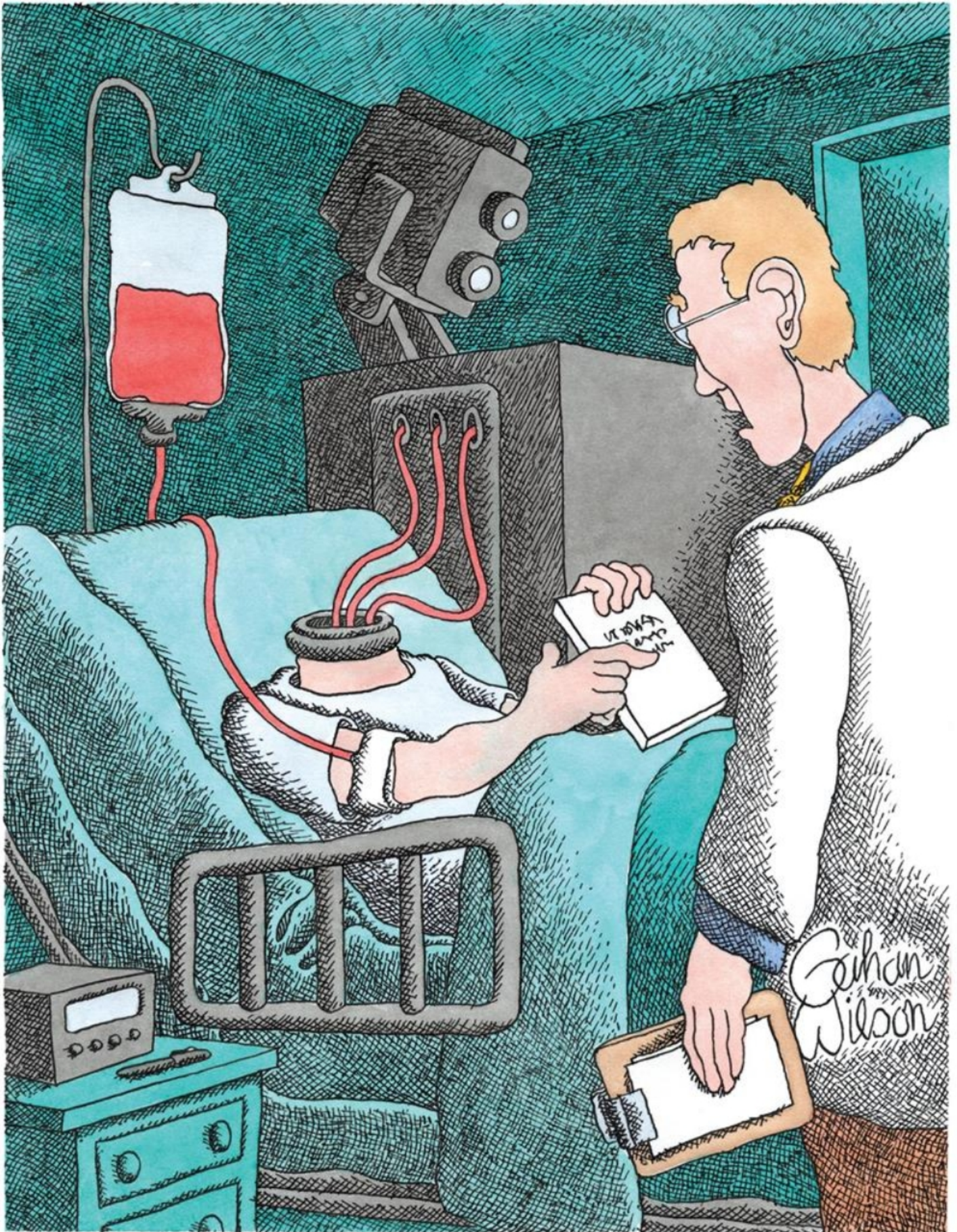
Are you tempted when female fans and admirers throw themselves at you?

BURRELL: It’s either my personal lack of sexual charisma or the fact that Phil Dunphy is just sort of a sweet, asexual character, but I don’t get that kind of attention. Women approach me just looking for a hug. Besides, it really matters whom you’re with. My wife and I have been married 13 years, and we have two great kids now. I know I’ve stumbled into the right relationship.

Q7

PLAYBOY: Your TV character so wants his kids to think of him as the super-cool dad that he pretty much caves anytime he has to discipline them. Was it like that with your father?

BURRELL: My dad was a family therapist who worked mainly with abused kids for children’s services of Oregon. I grew up in the country, in Apple-gate, Oregon, a town of 200 where everybody knows one another. We owned the country store. If my father was really mad at me, occasionally he’d be like, “Knock it off.” But mostly everything was a sort of Socratic series of sarcastic questions, like “Do you think it was a good idea to cheat on that test?” and “Have you enjoyed the repercussions of doing these things?” If I was in love with a girl or something, he’d say, “What do you feel like?” and “Why is it you feel like you’re afraid?” He was a great dad. I hope I’m a great dad too. I’m definitely trying. *(continued on page 130)*



"You'll have a new one the minute we find a suitable donor!"

MIXING

WHETHER YOUR OFFICE IS CORPORATE OR CASUAL, DRESS FOR SUCCESS WITH THESE STYLISH SHOES FOR SPRING

BUSINESS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TRAVIS RATHBONE
FASHION BY JENNIFER RYAN JONES



CORPORATE COOL

With dashing dress shoes, a buttoned-up business environment doesn't have to be boring.

1. OXFORD MAN

► Carlyle lace-up oxfords, by Allen Edmonds. (\$365)

2. GET STRAPPED

► Manach cap-toe, double-monk-strap shoes, available exclusively at mrporter.com, by O'Keeffe. (\$925)

3. SHOW SOME CALF

► Crenshaw cap-toes in calf hide, by Billy Reid. (\$395)

4. CREATIVE LOAFING

► Alfie inverted wingtip tassel loafers, by J.D. Fisk. (\$149)

5. BROGUES, BRO

► Dylan wingtip brogues, available at mrporter.com, by Grenson. (\$380)

WITH LEATHER



1. GET BOOTED

► 12/67 three-eyed chukka boots in tumbled leather, by SeaVees. (\$178)

2. SADDLE UP

► Sinatra saddle shoes in burnt-sugar suede, by Walk-Over. (\$275)

3. HIT THE DECK

► Suede boat shoes, available at mrporter.com, by Quoddy. (\$275)

4. DRIVE, SHE SAID

► Driving moccasins in dark brown, by Atelier. (\$289)

5. CAMO CAMEO

► LunarGrand long wingtips in camouflage, by Cole Haan. (\$248)



MADE IN THE SUEDE

In a casual office, wear shoes that express your style with color and pattern. They can do double duty on the weekend.



Sheer Delight

**TWO SPECTACULAR
BEAUTIES PROVE THAT
WEARING LESS IS MORE IN
THIS YEAR'S REVEALING
LINGERIE SPECIAL**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
MICHAEL BERNARD



Elia underbust
bodysuit by
Cadolle Paris.



This page: Whip
Me stockings and
garter belt by
Agent Provocateur,
panties by **Calvin
Klein**, shoes by
Brian Atwood.
Opposite: skirt by
Cadolle Paris.





This page:
panties by **Agent
Provocateur**,
vintage skirt,
shoes by **Jimmy
Choo**. Opposite:
stockings by
Cecilia de Rafael,
panties by
Victoria's Secret,
shoes by **Yves
Saint Laurent**.







Opposite: stockings
by **Cecilia de
Rafael**, corset by
Cadolle Paris.

SNAPCHAT

(continued from page 74)

Although tech writers initially dismissed Snapchat as a “sexting app,” it is actually the first application to exploit what Spiegel calls the “value of the ephemeral.” Why, Spiegel has asked, should everything on the internet be around forever? “Data permanence is a big issue,” he says. “We were the first to understand that.” Teens and 20-somethings have embraced that ethos, making the app among the fastest-growing in history. According to the company, 400 million photos are sent daily; Facebook, by comparison, claims 350 million photos posted daily. The company became so successful so quickly that Spiegel turned down a \$3 billion offer from Mark Zuckerberg and Facebook, calculating that Snapchat would eventually be worth even more.

The lawsuit in which Frank Reginald Brown claims, as originator of the idea and one of the founders of Snapchat, to be entitled to 33.3 percent of the company, proves that every tech company has not only its visionary founders, inspiring genesis story and long nights of programming but also its personality feuds and bitter battles that inevitably, it seems, end up in depositions and courtrooms. It happened at Facebook; it happened at Twitter, where co-founder Noah Glass was forced out of the company with virtually nothing to show for his contribution; and it is happening at Snapchat, where Spiegel has proved as ruthless and cunning as any of his tech forebears. The Snapchat story, as laid out in court filings, affidavits, depositions, recollections from college classmates and interviews with Spiegel before Brown’s lawsuit was filed, is the latest saga of just how fast and furious the journey can be from dorm-room dream to next big thing in today’s Silicon Valley.

“At Stanford and in Silicon Valley, we perpetuate the myth of meritocracy,” Spiegel said last April in a speech to the Stanford Women in Business organization. “We believe that the harder we work, the more we will achieve.... This is not true. I am a young, white, educated male. I got really, really lucky. And life isn’t fair. So if life isn’t fair, it’s not about working harder; it’s about working the system.”

•

Incoming Stanford freshmen go through a weeklong orientation during which they meet classmates at barbecues and are told what will be expected of them academically by their assigned freshman advisors. Freshmen wear their names on lanyards, and for most of them this week is when they begin to understand the unique hierarchy they have joined. Although 70 percent of Stanford students receive financial aid—and those whose parents earn less than \$100,000 pay no tuition at all—there are still plenty of

scions of wealth and privilege to remind those less fortunate exactly what is to be gained from a good showing here. Spiegel, who grew up in a \$4 million home in Pacific Palisades and whose father, Stanford alumnus and significant donor John Spiegel, earned \$3 million a year as an attorney at the firm of Munger, Tolles & Olson, was among the latter. Six feet tall and lanky, with a rectangular head, fine, sharp features and a hank of brown hair parted down and to the left across his narrow forehead, Evan Spiegel had driven to college in his BMW 550i and stood out even among this spectacular cohort for his focus and ambition. “Evan was always hustling,” says one former classmate, “always looking to throw his energy into the next thing.”

Among his hall mates that freshman year was a stocky blond from Columbia, South Carolina named Frank Reginald Brown, whom everyone called Reggie. He and Spiegel quickly became friends. While Spiegel took a calculated approach to most aspects of college life—by the time he was a sophomore he already had the contacts to organize some of the best parties on campus and had been voted social chair of his fraternity—Brown was more laid-back, whiling away hours playing computer games and watching TV in his Donner Hall dorm room down the white-walled, gray-carpeted corridor from Spiegel’s. Spiegel was prone to wearing skinny jeans and a V-neck, while Brown tended to wear brightly colored khakis and backward baseball caps. Stanford prides itself on bringing together diverse elements of American society, and though both these boys were white and from privileged backgrounds, it was this meeting of two very different individuals that would catalyze the launch of Snapchat. Spiegel was a product-design major, which requires students to learn to conceive entire businesses, everything from the look and feel to the financing of a new product. The Institute of Design at Stanford, or “d.school” as it is known on campus, is a hothouse for future entrepreneurs and their start-ups. Brown, on the other hand, was an English major, which at Stanford is a far less gilded journey. In the new hierarchy at elite universities, it is the business, engineering and computer science geeks who are the cool kids potentially on the fast track to launching the next Google or Facebook, while English majors like Brown are on far more prosaic career paths and could even struggle for employment when they graduate. Despite their different paths, or perhaps because of them, the two became good friends, spending late nights in Spiegel’s one-room double, drinking vodka and Red Bull. Brown regaled Spiegel with tales of growing up in South Carolina, his whimsical ideas for potential new products for Spiegel to develop and his opinion of the many attractive coeds who caught his eye. The unlikely pair had a tenuous friendship from the

start. “They fought and bickered like an old married couple, even during freshman year,” says a mutual friend.

In the spring of their freshman year the two pledged the Kappa Sigma fraternity, one of seven fraternities on campus and perhaps the hardest partying and among the most selective, accepting only about 10 percent of those who rush. That Spiegel and Brown rushed together is a testimony to the bond they had formed, for Kappa Sig tends to either take or reject incoming rushes as a group. Both were tapped, Brown making enough of an impression on his older fraternity brothers that he was awarded the blue suit traditionally given to the pledge expected to party the hardest. The suit, which has never been washed, has been passed down for longer than any brother can remember. Brown, as “Blue Suit,” was expected to wear the outfit to most frat parties.

Sophomore year, they lived together in the two-story columned Santa Fe-style Kappa Sig house on Campus Drive. Among their roommates was senior Bobby Murphy, a mathematical and computational science major from nearby El Cerrito. Murphy, like Spiegel, was well aware of the possibilities Stanford offered, and he was waiting for the right tech start-up to come along. In the meantime he was ready to offer his computer skills to brothers in need. “He was down the hall, and whenever I needed computer science help I’d go wake him up at, like, four in the morning,” Spiegel says.

•

The culture of the start-up, of dreaming up the next big thing and then cashing in on your invention, was already part of the curriculum at Stanford’s business school, where Spiegel audited classes his freshman and sophomore years. Stanford Research Park, founded as Stanford Industrial Park in 1951, on Page Mill Road just off campus, is the crib of Silicon Valley. It is where William Hewlett and David Packard developed the audio oscillator that became the first product of Hewlett-Packard. Among the tech firms that have been started at Stanford or launched by Stanford alumni in the years since are Google, Sun Microsystems, Yahoo, LinkedIn and Cisco. While Spiegel was a junior, two Stanford grads launched Instagram, which Facebook acquired in 2012 for \$1 billion. Under Stanford president John L. Hennessy, an electrical engineer and tech entrepreneur who sits on the boards of Google and Cisco, the college has become so intertwined with tech culture that Hennessy has been called the “godfather of Silicon Valley.”

For bright students like Spiegel, Hennessy had practically built a start-up assembly line. All Spiegel had to do was come up with an idea, find programmers to build it and then use his Stanford professors to introduce him to investors and venture capitalists. He was sitting in



"Ms. Lake, your habit of getting to the office half dressed and half an hour late must continue indefinitely."

classes next to visiting tech moguls such as Eric Schmidt from Google and Chad Hurley from YouTube, was given a part-time job by Scott Cook, founder of Intuit, and was introduced to potential investors by professor Peter C. Wendell, founder of Sierra Ventures. It was inevitable Spiegel would launch his own business, and by the end of sophomore year he believed he had found the next big thing, starting FutureFreshman.com, a college guidance and application website, along with math wiz Murphy.

"We had identified the problem that kids and parents didn't know what to do in applying for college. We had this thing where you could click on which schools you wanted to apply to, and it made you a massive to-do list," Spiegel says. "But nobody used it. Still,

we learned a lot about what not to do." Spiegel designed the website and Murphy built it. Working on the project over a summer, both realized two important truths about start-ups: Don't get into a space where well-funded competitors (in this case a website called Naviance.com) could outspend you into oblivion, and make sure your idea is truly disruptive—a *new* idea, not just another *good* idea. The idea has to be killer, or no matter how well designed the product (and Spiegel still believes FutureFreshman.com was an impeccably designed website), the business will die.

Brown spent the fall of 2010 in Oxford, U.K., while Spiegel went to Cape Town, South Africa—typical of Stanford juniors,

who often spend at least one quarter abroad. Spiegel had visited Cape Town before, helping locals get jobs by teaching them how to dress and how to conduct themselves during interviews. When he returned during his junior year at Stanford, he realized that the jobs he had helped the young men from one township secure had come at the expense of young men from another township. "I hadn't created jobs; I simply took jobs from students in other townships and gave them to mine. I was devastated." Life, Spiegel realized, wasn't fair.

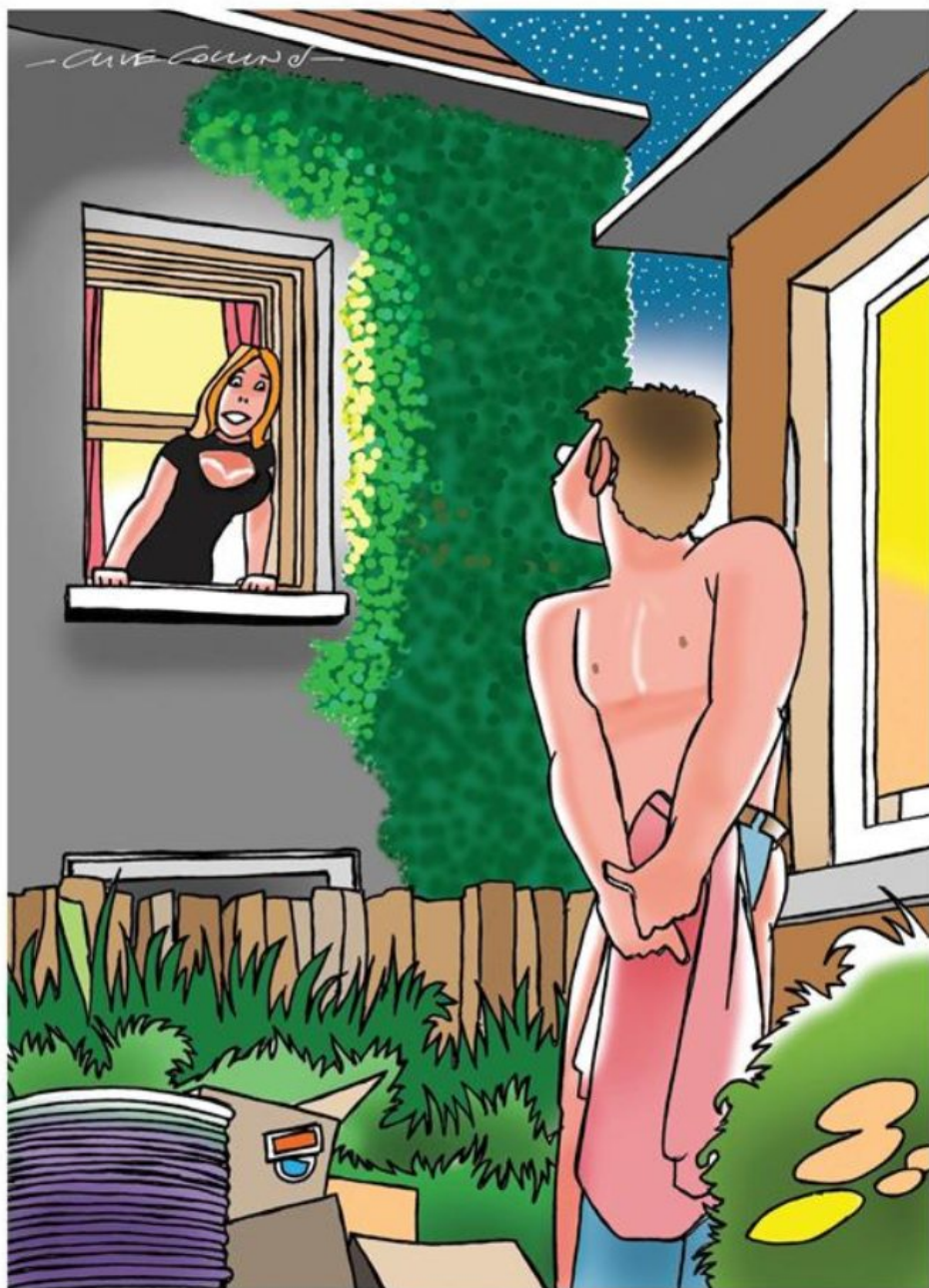
While Brown and Spiegel were abroad, their fraternity had been kicked off campus for one year for serving alcohol during a dry week. Brown and Spiegel returned to the dorms, this time on the same floor of Kimball Hall, and the two took up their friendship where they had left off, frequently dropping by each other's rooms or hanging out with fraternity brothers. Spiegel was increasingly frustrated, worried that his time at Stanford was coming to a close and he had yet to come up with a killer idea. Meanwhile, the tech world had changed, and many promising new start-ups were now built around mobile applications instead of websites—Instagram being a prime example. Apple's iPhone 4 had further changed the tech industry, putting phones with front-facing cameras in everyone's pocket and demanding more user time than computers. Spiegel knew from his d.school classes that venture capitalists were looking for mobile apps that capitalized on this new technology, but he had yet to come up with a product he felt passionate enough about to develop.

One afternoon in April 2011, Brown was hanging out in a Kimball dorm room with two frat brothers. The three were watching television when Brown began to lament that he had sent a provocative photo of himself to a female acquaintance and now wished he could somehow unsend it. In fact, he observed, it would be awesome if you could do that with photos and sexy text messages. Or how about making any message or photo disappear?

"That could be a cool app," Brown said.

He paused, waiting to see how the idea played in the room. The other brothers, not seeing the potential, dismissed it as a sexting app. "Brown ran out of my room after he thought he had struck gold and went to Spiegel," says a fellow member of Kappa Sigma. "He just knew Spiegel would take him seriously and move forward."

Brown found Spiegel in his room and told him the idea, which Spiegel, according to Brown, exclaimed was a "million-dollar idea." Spiegel excitedly asked Brown if they could work on the project together, and Brown agreed. The two set off to seek a fraternity brother who could program the app. They recruited Spiegel's former partner Murphy to join them and, in an "explicit oral agreement," divided the venture into thirds, according to the complaint Brown filed in February 2013. Brown was to be chief marketing officer, Murphy chief technology officer and Spiegel chief executive officer. Why did Spiegel automatically take the preeminent



"You poor dear! Has that husband of hers come home early? Why don't you pop up here to get out of the cold?"

role even though, as he acknowledges, the idea wasn't his? Because Brown was an English major and therefore didn't add as much value as a product-design major like Spiegel, who had already started and failed at one business. Spiegel has said in his own depositions that Brown was eager to participate so he could learn from Spiegel. In Stanford's culture, the humanities have been undervalued in the face of supposedly more practical majors such as computer science and engineering, something even university president Hennessy has lamented. This may be the ultimate expression of the new hierarchy: An English major, it goes without saying, is not qualified to be CEO, even if the whole damn thing was his idea.

Brown's idea was the seed for one of the fastest-growing companies in tech history. The app's usage expanded from a small group of high schoolers in Orange County, California—the school Spiegel's cousin attended turned out to be a key catalyst—to virtually every teen in America. While Instagram and Facebook tap people's vanity by offering them "likes" and "hearts" on their best photos, Snapchat taps their insecurity by offering them the freedom to send a picture they know will self-erase in a few seconds. And while Facebook and Instagram allow for the passive posting of photos, Snapchat allows users to push photos to whomever they like. "Our application makes communication a lot more human and natural," says Spiegel. "Our goal is to make communication fun again." That mantra seems to be working, as the company has gone from 40,000 users in February 2012 to more than 26 million U.S. users today, according to a Pew Research Center study. "Snapchat stopped being just an app and turned into a culture, a phenomenon," writes Chloe Drimal, a Yale senior, in a *Yale Daily News* op-ed. "It's basically Twitter combined with texting combined with crack. Twitter gives you 140 characters to say your thought or what you are currently doing; Snapchat gives you 31. A text is permanent; a Snapchat is gone within 10 seconds." In many ways Facebook has become too grown-up, too neat and tidy; Snapchat is where kids can go to goof off.

By the time Snapchat added video capabilities in December 2012, the rest of the tech industry was playing catch-up. Facebook scrambled to launch its version of Snapchat, called Poke. The project was built by Facebook engineers in just 12 days, with no less than CEO Mark Zuckerberg writing code and serving as the voice for the "Poke" notification. Spiegel retorted to Zuckerberg's panicked response with "Welcome, Facebook. Seriously," an homage to a 1981 Apple ad challenging IBM. "The idea of sharing your life in snippets of video has been transformative," says Yosef Solomon, a digital-marketing strategist. "The growth potential is based on Snapchat going from a mobile chat platform to a mobile social platform."

The great remaining question is just

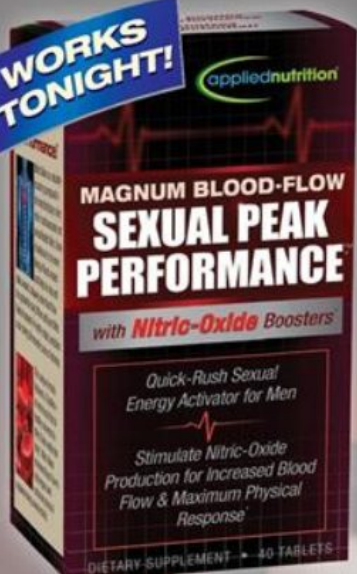
how much Snapchat is worth. Despite its remarkable growth, the company has no proven business plan to rake in revenue. Twitter went public in November with an \$18 billion valuation, but financial analysts have since downgraded its stock, even with a market cap of about \$30 billion. Snapchat's last round of investment, in June 2013, from several venture capital firms, valued the company at \$800 million. (Spiegel personally extracted \$10 million.) Zuckerberg's \$3 billion offer in November established the current baseline valuation. Not bad for a company with 30-some employees.

For Stanford students Brown, Spiegel and Murphy, launching a multibillion-dollar tech firm should have been the modern equivalent of now-obsolete collegiate dreams: Write a novel before you graduate, get your band signed to a record deal or—who knows?—win a Heisman trophy. Snapchat is the latest proof that, if you are at the right school at the right time, you can indeed form a company and get no-worries wealthy before you can legally drink. That's why it is so tragic that Brown and Spiegel would never share in their success.

Pacific Palisades in summer has a surprisingly conducive climate for getting work done. The beachfront community of multimillion-dollar homes goes through an extended stretch of what locals call "June gloom," during which the days can remain overcast until midafternoon. For the three would-be tech moguls, who were staying at Spiegel's father's Toyopa Drive mansion (which Spiegel nicknamed "startuphaus"), the climate was perfect for long days spent programming their app, building the design and figuring out how to launch what they were then calling Picaboo. At this stage, before they had a product to sell, Spiegel and Murphy made tangible contributions—they were, after all, writing the code that would become the application—while Brown availed himself of the free food and beer provided by Spiegel. However, Brown made undeniable contributions even during this period, including coming up with the "Ghostface Chillah" logo. Brown directed Spiegel as he used Adobe InDesign to draw the logo. (Snapchat still uses a version of that logo.) Brown also began to draw up the terms of service, privacy policy, frequently asked questions and the potential offering language for the application in the iTunes store. According to court documents, Brown also came up with the name of the limited-liability corporation that became Snapchat's parent company, and in conversation all three agreed they would be equal partners in the venture. For now, however, the application was being developed under the aegis of Spiegel and Murphy's Future Freshman LLC, their old, failed start-up. This was, Brown believed, a technicality, and the fact that he had zero percent equity in his frat brothers' old business was irrelevant. At this point Murphy, in his communications with frat brothers

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about the new application, described it as the product of "Bobby, Evan, Reggie."

That would be the summer of Snapchat, what should have been remembered by all three men in their golden years as a magical season when they created an application that would literally change the world and that, for those few weeks, was known only to the three of them. To be young and so promising, and to sense and believe you are on the cusp of a transformative invention, to be working 15-hour days in harness to this dream and to actually be on the verge of realizing it—the application went live on iTunes on July 8, 2011—should have engendered generosity and fraternal love instead of what apparently came to pass: a betrayal, according to Brown, and disappointment in a friend, according to Spiegel.

By August, Brown had returned to Columbia, South Carolina, believing he was equal partner in the app, which he had, after all, conceived. While there, he began to write the patent application for Picaboo, because Spiegel was increasingly worried that another tech company could steal the idea. Brown put Murphy's name first in the patent application, followed by his own and then Spiegel's, an order that offended Spiegel. (The order of names on a patent application does not denote relative credit for the invention.) Spiegel expressed his anger by insisting that Brown speed up the patent process, an impossible task. Brown, sensing that Spiegel was becoming more distant, felt he needed to confirm the equity arrangement in their new business. He asked Spiegel if they could have a three-way call on August 16, 2011. Spiegel alerted Murphy, telling him, "Reggie wants to discuss equity."

Spiegel took the call from his bedroom, which his father had allowed him to renovate to his specifications with a white-leather king-size bed. Murphy was by the pool. Brown reiterated his understanding that he was an equal equity partner in the business, and he listed his many contributions. "He claimed that he had created the original idea," Murphy said in a legal deposition. "He had designed the ghost. And there were some disagreements about what that meant."

At one point in the conversation Brown said to Spiegel, "I directed your talents."

Spiegel hung up.

Murphy asked Brown what he wanted. "Thirty-three percent," Brown said.

"That's not gonna happen," Murphy said.

Spiegel and Murphy then changed the passwords on Snapchat's computer servers and accounts. They never spoke with Brown again.

Spiegel has by now written Brown out of the Snapchat genesis story, describing his first phone call with Murphy as the moment of inception, the moment he wanted to transform Future Freshman into "an app that would let people send photos that would disappear... We had no idea that what we now know as ephemeral media would change the communication land-

scape. We just thought it might be cool to make photos disappear." In this alternative history, Snapchat is presented as the next in line of Future Freshman's products. In interviews, when pressed, Spiegel has gone so far as to say that a "friend" came to him with an idea, yet he refuses to acknowledge that as the foundational moment. It was his and Murphy's work writing the code and designing the product that was the true inspiration. In depositions Spiegel says Brown was working at Spiegel's father's house that summer in exchange for room and board and the valuable business experience gained at Spiegel's knee. Brown, after all, couldn't read computer code, so what value could he possibly have added?

Yet Brown's attorneys, in questioning Spiegel, have asked him, "Did you come up with the idea for deleting picture messages?"

"Uh, no."

"Did Bobby come up with the idea?"

"No, he did not."

"Who came up with the idea?"

Spiegel answered, "Reggie did."

Spiegel never graduated, but Brown did and has started business school at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business—never again will he be a mere English major. Spiegel has proven to be, in accordance with his worldview, very adept at "working the system" and now presides over the company viewed as the gravest threat to Facebook and Twitter and the best bet to be the next great social-networking empire. But amid recent criticism that he too cavalierly responded to a security breach in which more than 4 million user names and phone numbers were publicly posted, some question how skillfully he can play the CEO game if and when Snapchat goes public. He seems to have calculated every angle, including this one: Even a large settlement or adverse ruling that awards Brown hundreds of millions of dollars—perhaps the worst-case scenario in the event Spiegel loses in court—is still far less valuable than 33 percent of Snapchat.

Stanford University has become, if possible, even more start-up obsessed since Snapchat began its meteoric rise. Computer science became the school's most popular major during Spiegel and Brown's final year, and the number of computer science majors and students enrolled in introductory computer science classes has risen since then. In the summer of 2013, to better harness the value of its own offspring, the university announced it would invest in students' start-ups like a venture capital firm, through its incubator StartX.

If three frat brothers could work the system and create a business worth billions in a matter of months, then there must be more billion-dollar apples to be plucked on Stanford's verdant campus. If only, incoming freshmen think as they drive up Palm Drive, they can find the right idea.



TY BURRELL

(continued from page 112)

Q8

PLAYBOY: What was your usual role in your family?

BURRELL: I think I may have been the entertainment for the evening, the clown of our house. My role was mainly to crack everybody up. I have an older brother and sister and a younger brother. My dad and his brother were funny guys, and they would do jokes. At family parties my younger brother and I began doing our own routines and became a very unaccomplished, undisciplined, rambling comedy team with maybe 10 percent decent material. I was the big dumb guy and my brother was the small boss.

Q9

PLAYBOY: When did you most test your mother's patience and your father's therapeutic skills?

BURRELL: I was a terrible student but a very big, very accomplished daydreamer. In junior high in Oregon I was a delinquent for a stretch. I was a bit lost during that period. I got into vandalism, stealing. I was running with the wrong crowd. These guys had taken me in, and I was pretty excited about that. I didn't know how to think for myself, and my self-esteem wasn't particularly high. We were out of control to the point that the sheriff came to our front door like it was old-timey Mayberry and told my father, "Ty may have destroyed some property." My parents were confused and didn't know what to do because they'd never been in that boat before. But by the time I got to high school I was playing football, basketball and baseball. Sports saved me.

Q10

PLAYBOY: Did being the son of a therapist in a rural town of 200 put extra pressure on you when it came to dating, let alone losing your virginity?

BURRELL: I was 15 when I lost my virginity. It was terrible. She was a really nice person, but I was so clumsy, really ineffectual. Luckily or unluckily, I don't have a ton of exes. Before my wife I was in only two relationships, one for five years and another for three and a half years. I'm a serial monogamist.

Q11

PLAYBOY: What were your jobs before acting came into the picture?

BURRELL: I was pretty directionless in high school and my 20s. I did telemarketing. I was a tour guide, and I was terrible at it. I worked for the state of Oregon fighting forest fires—I was terrible at that too. I worked for my uncle on construction, and I was so terrible they'd just have me sweep up and take stuff to the dump, while my younger cousin was already framing houses. I literally couldn't swing a hammer.

Q12

PLAYBOY: How did you get into acting?

BURRELL: At the University of Oregon I was allowed into a graduate-level Shakespeare

class a day after arriving back on campus after I'd dropped out of school for a few years. I was completely out of my depth, but we were all asked to improvise a Shakespearean character. After I did mine and got laughs, I was hooked. The laughs were always what I was after, but I was too scared to pursue comedy full-on. I continued to take whatever work I could get until I fell into the laps of [*Modern Family* creators] Chris Lloyd and Steve Levitan. That sounds wrong.

Q13

PLAYBOY: When you were in grad school you apparently saved money by living out of your van. That couldn't have been good for your social life.

BURRELL: Basically, when I was 28 to 29 or so I would stay with my mentors, husband-and-wife professors, and then sleep on their porch for a while, and then I'd live in the van. I may have had one date during that whole period, which was about a year on and off. Basically, when my date figured out I was living in my van, I didn't hear from her again. The funniest thing was I was confused about why. I was like, "What's the problem?" I didn't realize I was the creepy guy in a van. What could possibly be holding up this relationship? The van pretty much eliminated my dating life completely.

Q14

PLAYBOY: In retrospect, maybe you'd have been better off living someplace indoors, even if you had to split the rent.

BURRELL: But honestly, some of my best memories are of that period. It was so uncomplicated. I was busy with grad school, so I had real purpose. If you have that, there isn't much need for anything else. I had focus and a routine. I would get up, go shower in the gym, read scripts and memorize them in the van. You know the way people talk about prison as a meditative, transforming place? The van was like a little prison cell—only without all the other terrible prison stuff going on.

Q15

PLAYBOY: You know that old song lyric "Nobody walks in L.A."? So many people have seen you walking to the studio where you film *Modern Family* that maybe the song lyric should be amended to "Nobody walks in L.A.—except Ty Burrell." Have you stopped driving?

BURRELL: You walk much more in New York, and I got used to that. Now I don't drive on weekends unless we're going somewhere. I just kind of shut it down on Friday night. We lived closer to the studio before we moved, but even now, on Monday morning all I have to do is get in my really old Volkswagen Beetle and have my super-easy three-mile commute.

Q16

PLAYBOY: You've scored biggest in comedy, but after moving to New York you made your Broadway debut with Kelsey Grammer in *Macbeth*, and in succeeding years you co-starred in New York theater productions of *Burn This* with Edward Norton and Catherine Keener, and in

Richard III. You also got movie roles, often playing dweebs and unsympathetic, obnoxious guys in movies such as *National Treasure: Book of Secrets*, *The Incredible Hulk*, *Fur: An Imaginary Portrait of Diane Arbus* and *Dawn of the Dead*. Why so serious?

BURRELL: Because I look like Eddie Munster or a vampire, I think people tended to think of me as the bad guy. For a long time I played a lot of assholes. At first I had a hard time getting into the comedy stuff, but in the back of my mind that was what I really wanted to do. There are some really great asshole parts, and I've been offered a few, but I did that for so long that it's fun now to play closer to myself—a well-intentioned idiot.

Q17

PLAYBOY: You're staying comedic and family-friendly in your new movies, including *Muppets Most Wanted* and two animated films for which you provide vocal talent, the *Finding Nemo* sequel *Finding Dory* and *Mr. Peabody & Sherman*.

BURRELL: I also filmed *The Skeleton Twins*, which definitely isn't family-friendly. It's very dark and has great writing. Bill Hader and Kristen Wiig play fraternal twins who try to commit suicide on the same day. I play a young teacher at Bill's high school who had a relationship with Bill that caused a big scandal. It's complicated because my character has been in love with him the whole time since. I have a lot of hope for that film.

Q18

PLAYBOY: Since the makers of the Pixar films tend to have an uncanny knack for matching an actor's essence with his animated avatar,

what traits do you share with the beluga whale you play in *Finding Dory*?

BURRELL: A beluga is super social. I am super social. They have oversize, flabby heads. So do I. If you catch me in the middle of winter when there is a lack of sun, I, like the beluga, take on a sort of translucence. Other than that, *Muppets Most Wanted* is as funny as the last Muppet movie, and it was so much fun to play a character that broad—a French Interpol inspector who is like Inspector Clouseau overlaid with Hercule Poirot overlaid with Monsieur Hulot. If you remember Mr. Peabody and Sherman from the classic TV cartoons on *Rocky and His Friends*, the movie is really stylish, smart, witty and silly.

Q19

PLAYBOY: How do you feel about this season's story line on *Modern Family*, ramping up to the wedding of the gay characters played by Eric Stonestreet and Jesse Tyler Ferguson?

BURRELL: I honestly think we've done some of our best episodes because of the wedding. All of us got fired up and felt a sense of purpose and excitement. I hear stories about people who are conservative coming up to the guys and saying, "I think differently now because of you." And it's so cool that it's done without waving a huge banner or planting a flag at the top of a hill.

Q20

PLAYBOY: If life were like a high school yearbook, with mottoes under our portraits, how would yours read?

BURRELL: "Most likely to stumble into great situations."



"The children are at that age when they're beginning to wonder where you hid all the money you stole."

PLEASURE SEEKERS

(continued from page 108)

"I'm like a Jewish mother," she says by way of explanation.

Onstage, Blackman announces, "We've closed the doors. This group is going to be the first to have an OM at the OMX." The crowd claps and cheers.

Some of the men have already begun kneading the fleshy part of their partner's thigh; this is called the "initial grounding."

"This is the largest OM group yet," says Yia Vang, another orgasmic-meditation teacher here to facilitate the weekend and this, the world's largest finger bang. "You are history in the making."

They cheer once more, then the talking stops. A staff member starts a 15-minute timer on her iPhone, and the largest-ever group orgasm begins.

OneTaste Inc. was founded by Nicole Daedone in 2004. She is part CEO, part guru. Tall, blonde and lean, Daedone, a vital and vibrant 46-year-old, is a former Buddhist nun-in-training and the author of *Slow Sex: The Art and Craft of the Female Orgasm*. She was raised in tony Los Gatos, California, an affluent town in Silicon Valley and home to Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak and Pet Rock inventor Gary Dahl. Prior to OneTaste, Daedone taught gender communications at San Francisco State University, specializing in semantics, and owned an art gallery called 111 Minna Gallery in San Francisco's SoMa district.

Daedone experienced her first OM at a party. "I was showing off all my Buddhist intelligence, and a guy said, 'Oh really? I want to show you this Buddhist practice.'" That technique, she explains, involved taking off her pants and letting him stroke her pussy for 15 minutes. "I can't believe I said yes. Something deeper, I think, pulled me," she says. "The practice was so mind-altering, it shifted me."

A month later the man called Daedone and asked whether she was interested in watching an OM demonstration with a woman deeply experienced in the art. She hesitated, unsure about watching another woman orgasm, but went. The demonstration further changed Daedone. "I got switched on. It was like a light went on inside me. And then everything I had wanted from Buddhism, which was this notion of all of us being connected, looked possible after having that experience."

Daedone was getting a lavender facial when she decided to open the first orgasmic-meditation center. She named the company OneTaste after a Buddhist expression: Just as the great oceans have but one taste, the taste of salt, so do all the teachings of the Buddha have but one taste, the taste of liberation.

By necessity, orgasmic meditation follows a strict format. There is always the nest itself and the nesting position. Then there is grounding pressure—firm yet pleasurable touching—such as kneading the woman's

thigh, which is an opportunity for the pair to get into harmony. OneTaste advisors are quick to point out that OM is not foreplay, nor is it meant to be romantic. OM is a meditative partner practice that just happens to involve female-genital stimulation. As the literature explains, "OMing gives partners a stronger, more nuanced experience of orgasmic sensation."

Blackman, the lead orgasmic-meditation instructor, is a former software engineer, a short man, maybe five-foot-one. He speaks confidently into a microphone that coils around his ear. "Look at your partner's pussy and describe it," he says. "The color, texture, sheen."

This is called "noticing," another standard OM component. Afterward, the men ask their female partners for permission to place their fingers on the woman's vagina (in OM parlance this is known as "safeporting"). Then, for the next 14 minutes, the men use a bent left index finger to stroke the upper-left-hand quadrant of their partner's clit, with very light, fluttering movements, the way you might gently itch a mosquito-bitten eyelid.

Moons of pleasure start slowly and then build inside the Regency Center. One woman whinnies like a horse. Others giggle, hysterical. Some make deep, guttural grunts. There are *ooohs* and *aahhhhs* and *OoOooOHHHs*. Women shriek, and some buck in fits of ecstasy. Someone shouts, "Oh God!"

As per custom, a two-minute warning is issued at minute 13, and the men administer slightly firmer, "meatier" strokes to bring their partner down. Then they cup the palm of their hand against their partner's mons, applying pressure to ground her once more, and finish by pressing a terry cloth towel to wipe up any fluid and lubricant.

It is standard practice, and a key part of the OM routine, for the man and woman to each share a "frame," a snapshot of a feeling that stood out for them from any part of the 15-minute OM. A microphone is passed around so that participants can share their frames with the entire conference.

"I felt the energy of the entire room in my finger and cheeks," says one man. "It's still there. I can feel everyone."

"There was a moment when my pussy felt like warm, buttery, liquid caramel," shares a woman with a woozy voice.

"I felt waves of energy from my pussy up to my heart chakra and spreading around us like a lotus flower," says another. Then it's time for lunch.

Two food trucks parked outside the Regency Center will accept vouchers that are for sale on the main level, Blackman explains. The staff will clean up the nests. The \$12 food-truck vouchers are good for one meal each. For today's lunch the options are sushi or sausage. Yes, really.

While I wait for my Provençale duck sausage and hand-cut fries, I chat with a shy, curly-haired man named Brendan whom I recognized as a conference attendee by his OneTaste T-shirt, the word *PENETRATE* printed across it.

Later I find Brendan upstairs, sitting with his wife, Dawn, in a third-floor hang-out room that has been filled with sturdy black-and-white blow-up love seats and oversized armchairs. He ordered sausage, while she opted for sushi. (I know, I know.) The room smells of rubber and meat. A large coffee urn and assorted creamers and sweeteners are arranged on a folding table against the back wall, like at an AA meeting.

Brendan and Dawn have been married for 27 years, and their marriage, like many others, has had its share of problems. Two years ago, Dawn, who has worked as a school nurse in Delaware and has a tattoo of a dragon covering her back, left the country to embark on an *Eat, Pray, Love*-style journey through Thailand, Bali and India. She heard about orgasmic meditation—she'd been involved in other self-improvement communities before—and when she returned to the States, she encouraged Brendan to try it.

Before OMing, Brendan says, he was very closed off, disconnected, not particularly mindful. OMing, they agree, has done wonderful things for their marriage. Brendan says he's even thinking about moving out of Delaware, where they raised their three (now adult) children, and joining Dawn in New York, where she lives alone.

Brendan and Dawn feel so strongly about the positive effects of orgasmic meditation that they've persuaded their 24-year-old daughter, Sadye, who works in New York as a nanny, to get involved. Their 20-year-old son, however, is "weirded out" by the practice.

Dawn remains dedicated. "I've done many modalities of meditation, and it's just that. My mind wanders and I have to come back to the finger on the clit."

At the end of the first day a kick-off event is held in the Regency ballroom, a beaux arts grand hall with 35-foot ceilings, 22 turn-of-the-century teardrop chandeliers, a horseshoe balcony and a stage. Bryn Freedman, producer of the hit A&E addiction series *Intervention*, introduces Daedone, calling her "the Jimi Hendrix of stroking." Not an unfit nickname.

Daedone takes the stage wearing a tight black minidress and black high-heel ankle booties as the Black Eyed Peas' "I Gotta Feeling" booms from the speakers. She and a few of her staffers dance onstage, and soon the entire audience is out of their seats, shimmying, shaking and jumping.

"I am the nun that gets some," Daedone says, settling into a tall chair front and center on the stage. She talks about OneTaste—it started in her art gallery, which had room enough for 40 people to OM—and how she is "no longer settling for security but living to build the turn-on." Daedone envisions a world in which oxytocin (the so-called love hormone) "flows like the land of milk and honey." Orgasmic meditation is about building and fostering myriad relationships, not just conventional partners, she says. "Connection is the new religion.... Tonight is the beginning of lighting up the power grid." From time to time

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as she speaks, she spreads her legs, revealing a flash of fuchsia satin panties.

Daedone leaves the stage briefly and assistants bring out a massage table along with a round, wooden side table, on which they place a pot of OneStroke lube, a terry cloth towel and a single lily in a glass vase. When Daedone returns she is wearing a white butcher's apron over her evening-wear and is joined by Justine, a blonde OneTaste employee who could pass for her sister. Justine removes her skirt and panties, climbs onto the massage table and assumes a prone position. Both she and Daedone are miked and spotlighted.

Justine is already breathing heavily when Daedone brings her gloveless, lubed fingers down between Justine's legs. Daedone explains that she will start the OM by giving Justine "bread-and-butter strokes," basic ease-you-into-the-moment strokes. We lean forward in our seats until Daedone says, "Everyone, exhale."

Daedone fingers Justine's clit, swaying and gyrating and contorting her body like an orchestral conductor with a hard-on, and Justine's 15-minute orgasm plays on surround sound, amplified by the enormous

floor-to-ceiling speakers on either end of the stage. Daedone's face contorts like a concert pianist's. At one point, she utters a very faint, raspy "*Fuuuck*." It's hard to tell who is enjoying herself more.

At the end of 15 minutes, Daedone wipes off her hands and blots Justine's crotch with a towel. Justine sits up, her face glowing, eyes dark and glassy. Then the audience lines up at a standing microphone in front of the stage; it is time again to share frames.

"My stomach burned, my palms burned, and I cried," says a middle-aged man.

One woman says her vision blurred and she felt heat on the bottom of her thighs.

"My favorite part," says Daedone, "is when I can feel the heartbeat in my thumb and the heartbeat in her pussy."

She calls Justine's postorgasmic afterglow the "honey blanket." A roomful of rapt faces agrees.

The industry of orgasm is an emerging one, and OneTaste is on a mission to both disrupt and civilize. Over the course of the weekend, people tell me orgasmic meditation has changed their life, saved their life, given

them life, but perhaps none more so than Joanna Van Vleck, president of OneTaste.

"I am the most unlikely person to find orgasm," says Van Vleck, who is bubbly and friendly and eager to open up. Three years ago she was living out the last week of her life, planning to kill herself on her 27th birthday, when a gift from the orgasm fairy showed up on her doorstep. Seriously. The tiny basket contained one sunflower, two brownies and a note that read, "Happy birthday, from the turn-on fairy." The gift was left by somebody from OneTaste, though she is not sure who.

Van Vleck had met a couple of OneTaste women a few weeks earlier, connected by a friend who knew Van Vleck was new to San Francisco and didn't have many friends there. But the lunch meeting hadn't resulted in an immediate connection, and Van Vleck believed that was the last she'd see of the women.

"I called my friend and was like, 'They were weird. They don't know a good place to get pedicures; they didn't like drinking wine. We're not going to be friends.'" She was planning to kill herself anyway. "I was driving in my Lexus, and I had this flash: Joanna, it's not worth it to live anymore." The plan gave her peace. "It was like every part of my feeling capacity had been turned off. This crazy voice inside me told me it was okay to end my life. So I decided I would live out the last seven days of my life."

The basket arrived on day five. On day six, the eve of her 27th birthday, something hit her. "I was like, Maybe there is something else for me to learn in this life, maybe there is something else to feel, maybe there is something else to connect to." She scrapped the suicide plan. She was going to keep going, at least for a while longer. Then the same friend who had introduced her to the two OneTaste women introduced her to Daedone. They had brunch. Van Vleck, whose passion and experience are in marketing, was filled with ideas and inspiration. "Orgasmic meditation—do you know what we can do on the internet with that?" she said. "We can really do something amazing with this." Daedone hired her on the spot.

To be clear: OneTaste is an incorporated business, and while its "product" is a meditative practice (or a richer orgasm, depending on how you look at it), when you put the nest away, the company is still a for-profit machine. Depending on whom I asked, between 1,000 and 1,300 people registered for the OMX conference in San Francisco. At \$395 a ticket, that's at least \$395,000 in the bank before venue costs and speaker fees, though all the speakers have OneTaste affiliations, including Dr. Pooja Lakshmin, who does orgasm research at Rutgers University, and Reese Jones, a venture capitalist on Harvard Medical School's Genetics Advisory Council and a trustee at Singularity University (who is also in a committed monogamous relationship with Daedone).

Then there are the classes. The one-day introductory class "How to OM," taught at OneTaste branches across the country, costs \$195 a person. OneTaste's six-month



"Well, like duhhh! Of course he's hung like a horse!"

mastery program (which includes classes such as "How to Fuck," "How to Suck Cock" and "How to Suck Pussy") costs \$7,500. There are also one-on-one coaching sessions that cost more per hour than many licensed psychiatrists charge, even in Manhattan, and a men-only class that's \$495 per guy.

Orgasm is a lucrative—and growing—business, so much so that OneTaste plans to launch an Orgasm Business Mastery Program, in which participants learn how to run their businesses based on the principles and connection of orgasmic meditation. The three-month program, held on weekends, will cost \$4,995. There will also be a community-building class, with turn-on training in London, Las Vegas, San Francisco and New York, costing \$2,750.

At the end of the weekend, Van Vleck announces onstage that the first seven people in the hall to physically reach her will receive free tuition to the OM-based business-mastery program. She counts down backward from five, four, three, two.... At one, men and women leap from their seats, sprinting. Women in short dresses clamber over the stage, and men, abandoning any pretense of composure, flail outstretched arms toward Van Vleck. Robin Thicke's "Blurred Lines" plays through the giant speakers, and those not running for a scholarship dance.

To bring the weekend to a close, Daedone passes a microphone around, giving the hundreds of men and women packed into the hall a chance to share a final thought on their experience. They address Daedone as though she were a shining celebrity, a guru, a goddess. They are all excited to speak directly to her, as if they are communing with God him—or her—self.

The prompt: Today, I am leaving here with...

- "One thousand questions."
- "A huge crush on you, Nicole."
- "Orgasmic determination."
- "More. Lovers."
- "Magic."

A few weeks later I meet Sadye, the 24-year-old daughter of Brendan and Dawn, the married couple from the conference. We meet at Anfora, a wine bar in

Manhattan's West Village. It is late summer, and Sadye wears a white sundress and sandals. She is the picture of purity, sweet with her blonde hair.

"My mom is always on some journey to find herself," she tells me. So is Sadye. The duo has even attended Tony Robbins conferences together. They share a very "dynamic," candid relationship. When Sadye moved to San Francisco last year to work as a nanny, her mom said, "There's this thing I've been doing; it's kind of weird, but you're right in the heart of it." Dawn was referring, of course, to OM. "You should check it out," Sadye remembers her mother saying.

Sadye's first OneTaste experience took place at a 15-person coaching session taught by none other than Daedone. "I just jump

in SoHo. When she arrives, Dawn is with her, and they've been shopping. We ride the elevator to the seventh floor, where the OM circle is being held in a space borrowed from an organization called Friends in Deed, a crisis center for people with life-threatening illnesses. The room is warm, with large windows, a communal table and couches clustered with large pillows.

The crowd is a smaller version of the conference: men and women, young and old, black and white, rich and poor, buttoned-down and hipster, pretty and plain. Tonight Sadye will be Oming with a man her mother has OMed with already. The impromptu mother-daughter partner switch happened by accident: Dawn had OMed with a man who suggested they OM again at the circle. Dawn, he said, could

be his number two; he was Oming first with a new girl named Sadye.

"I don't know if there's enough room in that circle for me and you," Dawn says.

"It's weird," Sadye tells me. "But then again, this whole thing is weird. And as long as it feels okay to me, I'm going to keep doing it."

Tonight's group contains about 40 people. They OM behind closed doors, take a break, recenter, OM a second time. When it's over, everyone is glassy-eyed and glowing. They beam. They quickly come up with plans to go out for a group pizza dinner. Sadye tells me it will definitely be a while before it doesn't feel weird to share an OM partner with her mother.

As I say good-bye to Sadye and Dawn, I consider that what OneTaste is selling—be it sex tips or

self-help—is essentially well-meaning. The intention is good: help people help themselves to a better quality of life through orgasm. Besides, it brings families together—at least tonight.

Out on the street I remember a conversation I had at the end of the OMX conference in San Francisco. I was outside the Regency Center when I recognized a security guard who had worked the conference all weekend.

"What did you think?" I asked him. "Learn anything?"

"Me?" he replied. "Nah, I'm already a professional."

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into things," she tells me. "And I'm a very sexual person anyway." She had been put off by the "very masculine energy" of Tony Robbins and his "get shit done" approach to self-improvement. OneTaste resonated with her on an intimate level, honoring the mixture of emotionality and sexual energy that someone like Daedone would refer to as "the feminine."

We talk about Oming, sexuality and self-help. About needing to "let her feminine out." About becoming more deeply integrated in the community and what it's like to have parents in that same community.

Sadye invites me to join her at an OM circle, so the next night I wait for her outside a building on a crowded stretch of Broadway



IRON SHEIK

(continued from page 87)

Charles knows me.' Does he not know Ray Charles is dead, or is he saying that because it's funny? After living his gimmick for so long, it's a little bit of the real-fake thing."

"Even so-called normal wrestlers get lost in their character," says Greg Oliver, author of *The Pro Wrestling Hall of Fame*. He mentions Dick "the Destroyer" Beyer, an international star from the 1960s, as an example. "The Destroyer is a well-spoken guy who has taught school and saved his money. Yet when he went to a large event, he still put on his mask, because that's who he is. There's a slippery slope to keeping your sanity when you've played a character for so long."

The man who would become the Iron Sheik was born Khosrow Vaziri in March, or maybe September. He isn't sure. He believes the year was 1942 but is uncertain of his birthday, since his family often confused the Western calendar and the one used in Iran. He knows he was born in the ancient city of Damghan and was so dedicated to amateur wrestling that as a teenager he had 90 tattooed on his right forearm, for the 90-kilogram weight class in which he aspired to compete. The tattoo was done in a brothel despite the fact that Vaziri took his training and his Shiite faith so seriously he didn't lose his virginity until he was nearly 29. By then he'd represented Iran at international tournaments.

Among the Sheik's heroes: Shaban Jafari, who performed feats of strength for foreign delegations, and Gholamreza Takhti, a gold medalist in wrestling at the 1956 Olympics. Jafari and Takhti could hardly have been more opposite. Jafari won the favor of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the shah of Iran, for organizing mobs to bust dissidents' heads, earning him the ire of the people, who called him Shaban *Beemokh*—Shaban the Brainless. Takhti became an activist, capitalizing on his fame to cross police lines and bring food to demonstrators, until, in 1968, the government announced Takhti had committed suicide in his room at Tehran's Atlantic Hotel.

Vaziri had a good thing going at the time. Because of his athletic achievements, he worked as an assistant cameraman for the national television network, reporting directly to the shah's cousin, and was assigned to guard the royal family during the 10-day festival at Persepolis, the ancient Persian capital. Convinced by Takhti's death that no one was safe in Iran, Vaziri fled, accepting a long-standing offer to join the Minnesota Amateur Wrestling Club, which has consistently fielded competitors on the U.S. Olympic squad for the past half century. Guided by coach Alan Rice, Vaziri won Amateur Athletic Union silver medals in 1969 and 1970, as well as the gold in 1971. The next year, he served as an assistant coach for the U.S. Olympic team.

He also began training for professional wrestling with Verne Gagne, promoter of the then potent American Wrestling

Association in Minneapolis. Gagne was particular about whom he admitted into the fraternity, and Vaziri's class included U.S. Olympic weight lifter Ken Patera, former Miami Dolphin and San Diego Charger Bob Bruggers and the man widely regarded as the greatest professional wrestler who ever lived, Ric "Nature Boy" Flair.

It was Verne Gagne's wife, Mary, who came up with the gimmick that transformed Khosrow Vaziri into the Iron Sheik. The promoter and his spouse were with the wrestler in a French restaurant in Montreal, where Vaziri was working as an assistant coach for the 1976 American Olympic team. Vaziri told Gagne he was unhappy. He was doing jobs—losing—to nearly everyone in the AWA, even manager Bobby "the Brain" Heenan. The problem, he said, was that because of his amateur background, the AWA was presenting him as a babyface, or fan favorite. The three bantered about possible heel personas, when Mary Gagne shouted out, "The Iron Sheik."

The wrestler was unimpressed. Sheiks are Arab, and he is Persian. And there was another problem.

"We already have a Sheik in Detroit."

Vaziri was referring to Ed "the Original Sheik" Farhat, the Lebanese American promoter who played a crazed Bedouin, shooting fireballs at his foes and carving them up with a pencil he stashed in his trunks. Farhat did not appreciate gimmick infringement. After Frankie Cain portrayed a similar character called the Great Mephisto, Farhat slapped the hell out of him on a Japanese tour.

"Don't worry about Farhat," Mary Gagne countered. "He doesn't pay your bills." Likewise, the American public was largely clueless to the fact that Persians and Arabs had different customs.

"She was a smart lady," the Sheik remembers of the woman who invented the character that would alter the rest of his life. "I love her forever."

To get to the Legends of the Ring fan festival, I take a bus from the Port Authority in Times Square down the New Jersey Turnpike, past billboards, power lines and swampland to Monroe Township, an hour away. The bus overshoots the hotel by about half a mile, so I walk with a group of wrestling fans down County Road 612 toward the Crowne Plaza. As we pass an assisted-living facility, Louis Curry, 42, a technician at St. Agnes Hospital in Baltimore, asks my birthday.

"May 5."

"May 5," he repeats, calculating something in his head. A light goes on, and he smiles widely. "Cowboy Bill Watts!"

At the convention there's no sign of Watts, whose birthday is also May 5 and who ran a pretty exciting promotion in Oklahoma as the WWF with Hulk Hogan at the helm, was putting other regional territories out of business. But the hotel's ballroom does have former WWF champion Kevin "Diesel" Nash, Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka and Marty Jannetty—Shawn Michaels's partner in the late 1980s in a popular tag team called the Rockers—signing autographs next to tables

covered with DVDs, WWE action figures and old wrestling magazines. Upstairs I sit down with Croatian-born Josip Peruzović, who, as Nikolai Volkoff, performed as a Soviet heel and a tag-team partner of the Iron Sheik. Volkoff, 66, is a far cry from his Commie persona: In 2006, he ran as a Republican for the Maryland House of Delegates, but when he's around wrestling fans he wears his gimmick, a fur hat with a Soviet army seal.

He probably knows the Iron Sheik better than anybody in the wrestling business. "I couldn't speak good English, and he was worse than me, so we traveled together and became good friends," Volkoff says.

Before early flights, the two saved money by sleeping in airport lots in a van Volkoff outfitted with a sofa bed. Sometimes they shared a hotel room. "We had different habits," Volkoff says. "He liked to party. I'm allergic to alcohol. I always wanted to save money. If I could take the shuttle from the airport to the hotel, I'd do it. The Sheik hated that. He'd say, 'Nikolai, you cheap bastard, I'll pay for the taxi.'"

Hotels presented their own problems. Once, before an important singles match with Hogan, Volkoff ordered the Sheik to keep quiet. When Volkoff woke up in the middle of the night to use the bathroom, he grew dizzy and stumbled. "I turn the lights on," Volkoff recalls, "and I see the whole room is full of smoke. I had a contact high. It wasn't just the Sheik in there. It was lots of wrestlers. Some have passed away—I don't want to say who, God bless their souls. I said, 'Fuck off. Party's over.' And I don't like to curse. The Sheik could have gone to their rooms. Why does he have to bring everybody to me, to whisper and smoke and sit on the floor in the dark?"

Even when the Sheik was partying, he conducted himself as if he were back at the *zurkhaneh*, the traditional "house of strength" where he first learned to wrestle and juggle 75-pound Iranian exercise clubs.

"We'd be sitting around smoking a joint, and he'd start doing squats," says King Kong Bundy, the 458-pound hairless behemoth announcer called the Walking Condominium. "And he'd do hundreds of squats. He'd be dripping with sweat. Just dripping. He was a beast, a real beast. He has the constitution of a rhino."

Cowboy Bob Orton Jr.—father of current WWE headliner Randy Orton—met the Sheik when the future champ still wrestled under his birth name, Khosrow Vaziri, with a full head of black hair. Orton remembers sharing a room with the Sheik in either Cleveland or Detroit and hearing an unusual quiver in the middle of the night: "I'm thinking, What's this guy doing? I look over and he's got this cooler of beer sitting there, and he's drinking beer with his feet up against the wall, doing handstand push-ups. I say, 'It's four o'clock in the morning.' And he goes, 'The Sheik has to stay in shape.'"

It took a while for the Sheik gimmick to ignite. He tried a number of variations, sometimes billing himself as Lebanese, since at the time the shah of Iran was a U.S. ally. Then

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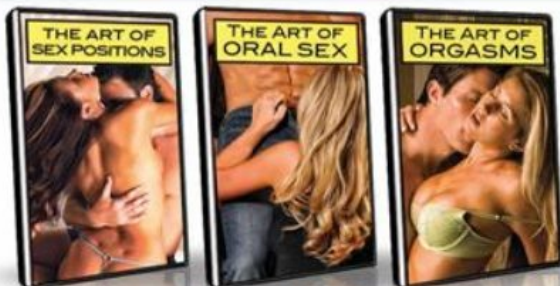
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came the 1979 Iranian Revolution, which saw the shah replaced by Ayatollah Khomeini and a hostage crisis that involved 52 Americans held captive in Tehran for 444 days. Although the Sheik had served as a bodyguard for the shah's family, he went on television and claimed to act on orders from the ayatollah, mentioning specific mullahs he regarded as mentors. Instantly he became the most despised man in the squared circle.

It was good for business.

"Everyone hated him because of what was going on overseas," says Orton. "The arena would go quiet sometimes because the people were so mad they couldn't get the words out. They'd have to put his match on in the middle of the card so he wouldn't have to fight his way out of the building. But he relished the heat that he had."

These were the innocent days of wrestling, when fans were not wise to the fact that winners were predetermined. A substantial number of audience members truly believed in—and hated—the man who came to the ring with a flag bearing the likeness of Ayatollah Khomeini.

At the Mid-Hudson Civic Center in Poughkeepsie, New York, a fan dove into the ring, knocking the Sheik to the ground. "I go to hit the guy, and I see the Sheik get up," Volkoff recounts. "The Sheik was ready to kill. So I grab the guy to save him. Man, the Sheik kicked him in the jaw harder than anything I've ever seen."

Without breaking character, the Sheik looked at security and demanded, "Now, take this American piece of garbage and throw him out in the street where he belong."

"Sheikie became Sheikie at some stage," says Bruce Prichard, an industry lifer best remembered for his televangelist gimmick, Brother Love. "He stopped being Khos.

The character became him. In fact, the Iron Sheik became a caricature of the Iron Sheik. I remember him watching the Saturday morning cartoon show [*Hulk Hogan's Rock 'n' Wrestling* started running on CBS in 1985], seeing the cartoon of himself on TV and saying, 'Yesss, look at Sheikie.'"

Shortly after the Sheik locked Bob Backlund in the camel clutch and won the WWF championship, he received a phone call from his old friend and AWA promoter Verne Gagne. An athlete of the Sheik's caliber did not deserve to lose his title to a showman like Hulk Hogan, Gagne allegedly said. Instead, Gagne purportedly offered the Sheik \$100,000 to break the Hulkster's leg and bring the belt to the AWA.

The Sheik respected his old trainer. After all, it was Mary Gagne who'd created the Iron Sheik gimmick. But he felt a greater affinity to WWF boss Vince McMahon. At his 2005 WWE Hall of Fame induction, the Sheik remembered his response like this: "Maybe you think Hulk Hogan is a jabroni Hollywood blond. But my boss, Mr. McMahon, is not jabroni. He is the real number one promoter in the world. God bless his soul. I love him forever."

On January 23, 1984, the Sheik defended his title against Hogan in front of a ravenous crowd at Madison Square Garden. "The Sheik went out and put over Hogan like a million bucks," Prichard says. "Not a lot of guys would have done that. Sheik could have tied Hogan up in a knot, but he didn't. He did business. He did the right thing."

History supports his decision. In 1991, the AWA declared bankruptcy. The association's video archives are now owned by the WWE.

Wrestlers still tell the story about Gagne's attempt to derail Hulkamania. "I think the

Sheik believes it happened, and it probably did," Orton says. "But who knows?"

In the backroom at the Warehouse, an event venue in Toronto's Downsview Park, Phife Dawg, a member of the pioneering hip-hop group A Tribe Called Quest, is reclining on a couch when the door bursts open and the Sheik rolls in in a wheelchair. Phife looks up as a friend of the Magens sweeps in behind the ex-wrestler and locates a tote bag containing the Sheik's AAU medals.

"Okay," the Sheik says, tapping his cane as the medals are placed on his lap. "Let's go." And he's gone as quickly as he arrived.

The medals are among the Sheik's most valued possessions. He wore them while cutting promos in the WWF and worries about them obsessively. He blames this on Volkoff, who once blurted out their room number in a Newark hotel lobby.

"What you think happened?" the Sheik asks disdainfully. "Some motherfucker broke in and took everything."

Volkoff wasn't happy his hot plate was missing—he hates spending money in restaurants and would cook in the room—but the Sheik was inconsolable.

"Sheik was *maaaaaaad*," Volkoff says. "He was mad. Oh my God, he was so mad, he was crying, 'Oh, Nikolai, they stole my medals.' I said, 'What you worry about your medals? They took my hot plate. You can go to any 10-cent store and buy another medal.'"

That's when Volkoff realized the Sheik traveled with his genuine medals—the AAU later replaced them—rather than the facsimiles a wrestler was expected to use.

Phife Dawg wasn't allowed to watch wrestling back then—his grandmother was a strict Seventh-day Adventist who disapproved of such frivolousness—so he had to sneak over to his friends' homes if he wanted to see the Iron Sheik on TV. All these years later, he finds it difficult to grasp that he's at the same event as the Sheik. But it is Jian Magen's bachelor party, and the Sheik's co-manager has invited his favorite celebrities. As a DJ transitions from Justin Timberlake's "Suit & Tie" to 2Pac and Dr. Dre's "California Love," former major league outfielder Jose Canseco—remembered as much for winning the American League's most valuable player award as for chronicling his steroid abuse in a 2005 tell-all book—plays cards at a red-velvet poker table.

The Magens' friends monitor him closely. "He's big," says one.

"He's got a great tan."

For most of the night, the Sheik is subdued, his replica gold belt draped over his shoulder as he sits with the Magens' father, Bijan, and speaks Farsi with white-haired men. When one of the 250 guests approaches and mentions that he's Israeli, the Sheik, known for his diatribes against "cheap Jews" on *The Howard Stern Show*, smiles politely.

Yet even when he does nothing, the Sheik captivates. Dave Keystone, a veteran of Canadian reality show *The Lofters*, holds a drink while watching the Twitter sensation. "Most of his fans today probably don't give



"Do you believe in horny at first sight?"

a shit about wrestling,” Keystone says. “It’s his diction, the delivery, an old man ranting in choppy English.”

In fact, even the two strippers hired to lap dance in an adjoining room stick their heads past the curtain to look at the Sheik as he poses for a photo with an invitee who lingers too long. Page hustles the man along. “What, are we here to make friends?”

The Magens have yet to run out of uses for the Sheik. For the past seven years, they’ve been making a documentary about their idol, subsidized in part by an Indiegogo campaign. Some have accused the pair of pimping the legend, but Jian insists, “This is a passion for us. We love him, and he loves us.”

The bachelor party culminates with Jian stepping into the ring for a series of comedy matches against local wrestlers. His mother interferes at one point—before Jian is thrown ringside and the Sheik places his nephew in the camel clutch.

The morning after the bachelor party, the Sheik shambles toward the kitchen in Jian’s home, clad in a red button-down shirt and blue cap. Gripping his cane with one hand, he reaches forward to be helped down a set of steps. As Bijan pours his friend orange juice and spreads cream cheese across a bagel, the Sheik pulls a medal—this one from the WWE Hall of Fame—from his pocket and asks me to place it around his neck.

He spots the replica championship belt on the table. “You find the belt?”

“It was never missing,” Jian answers, explaining that, the night before, a friend hid it as a gag. The Sheik appears relieved.

The Sheik takes a call from his daughter Tanya. “When you know the guy, you realize he’s a loving father, grandfather, a loyal friend, a smart, caring guy who watches CNN and talks about the world in a serious way,” Jian says. “But you don’t see that because his verbal presence will move you out of a room.”

The twins remember when they first became aware of the Sheik: Jian was watching wrestling, and his mother rushed into the room, asking why the man on TV was cursing in Farsi. When the family discovered it was Khosrow Vaziri, arrangements were made to meet him the next time he visited Toronto.

“My mother cooked for 10 days,” Page says. “We picked him up from the airport. We had a big party on the block, and the Sheik and Nikolai came.”

Although the Sheik and his Minnesota-bred wife, Caryl, had three daughters in the Atlanta suburbs, he rarely brought his family to the arena, fearing the reactions of wrestling’s true believers. In Toronto, though, he walked the Magen boys into Maple Leaf Gardens, holding their hands and threatening not to wrestle if security failed to grant them access.

“Page’s real name is Pejman,” Jian says. “And Pejman and Jian were not Ryan and Matthew. We didn’t go to school with PBJ and a juice box. We’d open our lunch box and rice would go flying all over. But we had the Iron Sheik, someone to relate to, someone who got us not only acceptance but status.”

At one event, the Sheik sang the Iranian

national anthem—the version praising the shah’s dynasty rather than the ayatollah.

“My dad looked over at us and said, ‘Stand,’” Page says. “I was so sick of being called a terrorist all the time that I put my hand on my heart and sang along. Everybody was booing the Sheik and booing my family. But he represented us.”

In 1987, however, the twins were shocked when the Sheik and his in-ring enemy, flag-waving Hacksaw Jim Duggan, were busted while riding together on the Garden State Parkway. Duggan was carrying less than an ounce of marijuana, the Sheik an eight-ball of cocaine. Even worse to those within the wrestling industry, the arrest highlighted the fact that babyfaces and heels—even those with violently divergent political perspectives—didn’t mind sharing a joint once in a while.

The arrest occurred as the WWF was experiencing unprecedented visibility, less than two months after Hogan faced Andre the Giant at WrestleMania III in front of a reported 93,173 spectators at the Pontiac Silverdome. Vince McMahon vowed that neither Hacksaw nor Sheik would ever work for the company again.

“It was bad for me that day I travel with Hacksaw,” the Sheik reminisces.

“I go to hit the guy, and I see the Sheik get up. The Sheik was ready to kill. Man, the Sheik kicked him in the jaw harder than anything I’ve ever seen.”

McMahon eventually rescinded his pledge, likely due to a combination of the Sheik’s loyalty to the company and McMahon’s affection for the former champion. But within a few months the Sheik’s career with the WWF was over. He bounced around smaller organizations in Houston and Dallas until, in 1996, the WWF brought in the retired ex-champion and a now-evil Bob Backlund as co-managers of a masked character called the Sultan. When the Sheik failed a drug test, he was released. Fans at small indie wrestling shows, where his name was generally at the top of the poster, frequently gave him drugs. The Sheik’s not sure of the exact day, but he remembers the feeling of gloom in the room when an enthusiast first offered him crack.

“I liked it,” he remembers.

Then, in 2003, his 27-year-old daughter Marissa, a stunning amateur weight lifter who contemplated following her father into the wrestling business, was partying with her boyfriend, Charles Reynolds, and a group of friends in her apartment. An undercurrent of tension plagued the gathering. Reynolds could be controlling, the Sheik’s family says, and Marissa was thinking of leaving him. But when the guests went home, no one was particularly worried.

The next morning, Reynolds, 38, called his minister. After the cleric arrived at the couple’s apartment with two other church members, Reynolds led them to the bedroom, where Marissa lay in the bed, strangled to death.

“It’s my fault,” Reynolds told police. “Take me. I’ve done wrong. You hear me?”

The tragedy intensified the Sheik’s drug and alcohol use. He smuggled a razor into the courtroom during Reynolds’s trial, determined to kill the man who’d murdered his daughter. In 2005 the Sheik’s family signed papers committing him to rehab, an attempt sabotaged by a fan who worked at the facility and smuggled in an eight-ball of cocaine. Depressed and bitter, the Sheik erupted from time to time; videos from this period are still viewed with regularity on YouTube.

Much of his fury was directed at Eric Simms, the bald, bespectacled onetime truck driver who arranges autograph signings for wrestling veterans. Simms has a Borat ringtone on his phone, squawks out unsolicited opinions and tells jokes too schmaltzy for the borscht belt. (“I’m bisexual,” he says at the beginning of our interview. “I buy sex.”) But he cared about the Sheik and would wait at parties for hours to ensure his often belligerent charge arrived safely at the hotel.

“I felt like leaving, but I never did,” Simms says. “I’m a glutton for punishment.”

In 2007 Simms brought the Sheik to an event also attended by the Ultimate Warrior. “Evidently Warrior had put out an edict that he didn’t want to interact with any of the boys,” Simms says. “I didn’t know, so I brought the Sheik over to take a picture with him. Warrior says, ‘Sheik, go away. You’ve been bad-mouthing me.’ The Sheik says he’s sorry, and the Warrior says, ‘I don’t accept your apology.’ You tell the Sheik to fuck off, is he going to go away? No. He’s the Iron Sheik. He starts to fire up on the Warrior, and I see it’s a bad situation. So I apologize to the Warrior’s people, and the next thing I know—*boom!*—I get a slap in the face.”

“You’re a fuckin’ asshole!” the Sheik yelled. “You bring me here, he treats me like that! That was your fuckin’ fault!”

The video of the altercation received nearly a million hits. Howard Stern brought the Sheik on his program to relive the episode and chronicle his animosity toward other former colleagues.

Hulk Hogan earned the Sheik’s ire, he said, by refusing to assist the wrestler who so selflessly dropped the title for him. “I’m going to fuck him up,” the Sheik announced to Stern during one interview, “beat the fuck out of him and suplex him, put him in the camel clutch, break his back and fuck his ass and make him humble.”

According to Stern, that would qualify the Sheik as gay.

“Instead I fuck his ass with my dick, I’m gonna fuck his ass with a beer bottle,” the Sheik clarified. “Yes, sir.”

“Oh, that’s not gay?” co-host Robin Quivers questioned.

“Exactly. Thank you, Robin.”

Today, the Sheik is not beyond making similar remarks. But it took his wife moving out and his family banning him from fraternizing

with certain associates for the Sheik to abandon his most destructive vices. He still likes his cold beer—and tweets about it often—but claims he has resisted cocaine for more than five years. He's now back with his wife and adored by his grandchildren, who call him Papa Sheik.

Despite his experiences, he appears strangely unsympathetic to public figures in similar situations. When Toronto mayor Rob Ford admitted sampling crack in November, the Magens rushed their uncle to City Hall.

"What kind of role model is for Toronto city?" the Sheik shouted to the press horde covering the scandal. "I just want to know, is he a real man or no?"

The next day, the *Toronto Sun* splashed a picture of the former wrestler on its front page, and the Sheik issued the following tweet: "Saddam Hussein dead better mayor than Rob Ford."

At Jian's, the Magens are helping the Sheik compose his tweets, watching the news on a big-screen TV and gauging his response.

"Mick Jagger is 70 today," Jian mentions. The Sheik considers the information. "Mick Jagger. He's singer. He's dancer. For his job, he's in Iron Sheik's class. And he's very popular."

Page remembers another exchange at the beginning of the Sheik's Twitter run. "I called him up and he said, 'Leave me alone. I'm watching Oprah. Fuck you. Fuck Oprah.' Well, Twitter's about what people are doing, so that's what I put up."

For a while, the Sheik watches television by himself, then drifts off to sleep on the couch, waking up after a few minutes to check his medals, adjust his kaffiyeh and twirl his mustache. When he closes his eyes again, Jian hurls a fluffy Ultimate Warrior toy at him. The Sheik ponders it a moment, then responds with mild annoyance. "I don't care about that jabroni."

"You can use it for a pillow."
"I have a good pillow. Get out of here."
Jian grins and throws a Hulk Hogan toy. The Sheik glances at it and shrugs.
"He's okay now."

The two reconciled last spring, after Hogan apparently admitted that, by laying down for him in the Garden, the Sheik helped launch Hulkmania. "I kiss him," the Sheik remembers. "I hug him. We have a friendship now."

The memory seems to infuse him with an enthusiasm that carries over when the twins put him on Skype to thank fans who contributed to the Indiegogo fund for the documentary. Proud and buoyant, the Sheik holds up his belt and points at his medals, reminding a donor in southern California to say hello to everyone in "Tehran-geles."

The admirer tells the Sheik that he hopes to speak with him soon on Twitter.

"*Inshallah*," the Sheik replies. God willing. He raises a finger and repeats a phrase he'd use to rile up crowds. "Iran! Number one!" Then he improvises. "*Ya Allah!*" (Dear God!) "I love you guys! Shalom!"

He gazes over at the Magens, beaming. "You like?"

NICK DENTON

(continued from page 60)

quiet for two years, and I barely had a friend by about year three.

PLAYBOY: You have one sibling?

DENTON: I have a younger sister.

PLAYBOY: What were you like as a kid?

DENTON: Smart, bratty, arrogant. Compensating arrogance, compensating for a bit of insecurity. I liked hanging out with adults.

PLAYBOY: Are you more like one of your parents than the other?

DENTON: I was closer to my mom. She was social and very determined. She was a refugee from Hungary, both she and her mother, who'd been brought up in Vienna in a Jewish orphanage. Both of them were tough characters. My mom was in the Budapest ghetto during the war, and I think she was one of those kids who had to be stronger than the adults. The adults were falling apart, and she basically couldn't afford to be a kid, you know? My grandmother's husband died in a labor camp, and she survived by having lovers. I was always more drawn to that side of the family. I had mixed feelings about my dad. My mother was a social organizer; I definitely got that from her. She was always fixing things, like arranging for people to go and interview for jobs. She was a matchmaker.

PLAYBOY: When did you decide that London didn't fit your plans?

DENTON: I've been away from the U.K., away from London, since I was 18. I went to Eastern Europe when I was 23. Since then I've lived in the U.K. for maybe two years.

PLAYBOY: And you came out when you were in college?

DENTON: After college. I mean, I wasn't fully out until I was out to my parents. If you're not out to your parents, then you have to maintain this protective zone around them. Gay guys spend a lot of time and effort coming out. There's a lot of calculation. You have to be aware about social networks and who's how many degrees away from somebody else, and you have to be aware of the speed with which gossip will be transmitted. You have to maintain a proper buffer around the people you're trying to protect.

PLAYBOY: Is that what got you interested in the mechanics of gossip?

DENTON: It's possible. It's a hypothesis.

PLAYBOY: So when were you fully out?

DENTON: With friends, probably in my late 20s. In Budapest I wasn't out. I was in Budapest from 23 to 28, and it's a pretty homophobic place.

PLAYBOY: When you eventually came out to your parents, was there any family strife?

DENTON: There was a lot of family drama. The thing that was sad was my mom became sick with cancer very soon after, so everything stopped. Everything was frozen, unresolved. No one wanted to upset her. That was a miserable period. I was on the West Coast. I'm kind of amazed I actually managed to come through that. My mom was sick, and we knew she was dying. She had two years from diagnosis to death, and I was in San Francisco. I flew back once a month. It was tough on my mom

because my sister and my dad both shut down. That's what they did. My mom was super strong. I never saw her cry. I saw her cry at other times, but not through that. She would say, "I'm not afraid."

PLAYBOY: Is it safe to assume that was the worst period of your life?

DENTON: Yeah, and I was out of my depth doing two start-ups, First Tuesday and Moreover.

PLAYBOY: You did those at the same time?

DENTON: Yeah. I started First Tuesday while we were working on Moreover because the coding was going on and I didn't really have enough to do during that. It was wildly overhyped. At one point they thought it was going to be a billion-dollar company. This was even after the Nasdaq had crashed.

PLAYBOY: How much did you sell it for?

DENTON: The nominal price was \$60 million, I think. The cash component was less. The stock turned out to be worthless.

PLAYBOY: For something that was basically—

DENTON: A party. But cool people went to the parties. If you were in the venture market at the time, if you had a cool start-up or were a cool venture capitalist, you had to be there. At some point it got so big there would be 2,000 people and four or five TV cameras at the events. It was crazy. And I saw what happened. You get what you deserve, you know? In press coverage and attention, whatever you get undeservedly on the way up, you will pay a price for. If they put you on the front cover before you've actually done anything, they will pull you down as brutally as they were enthusiastic in pushing you up. There's a kind of karma that obtains in media coverage.

PLAYBOY: What's your relationship to money? What does it mean to you?

DENTON: Mainly it gives me the joy of being free. It gives me the freedom I always wanted. Everything I am is a result of not caring about social convention and not having to worry about money. I can say whatever I want. The times I'm holding back in this conversation are only to protect other people's feelings. And not even that much. But you only have that kind of freedom, and our writers only really have that freedom—in theory—if they actually have the economic circumstances to allow that.

PLAYBOY: People have crazy ideas about what enough money is, though.

DENTON: Well, we have to be profitable, and I get paid a decent salary now. It's very recent. For a long time I was taking \$60,000 a year.

PLAYBOY: Until how recently?

DENTON: Until two years ago.

PLAYBOY: Gawker is famous for popularizing the ultra-low-wage model for journalism, paying writers as little as \$12 per article for the first couple of years.

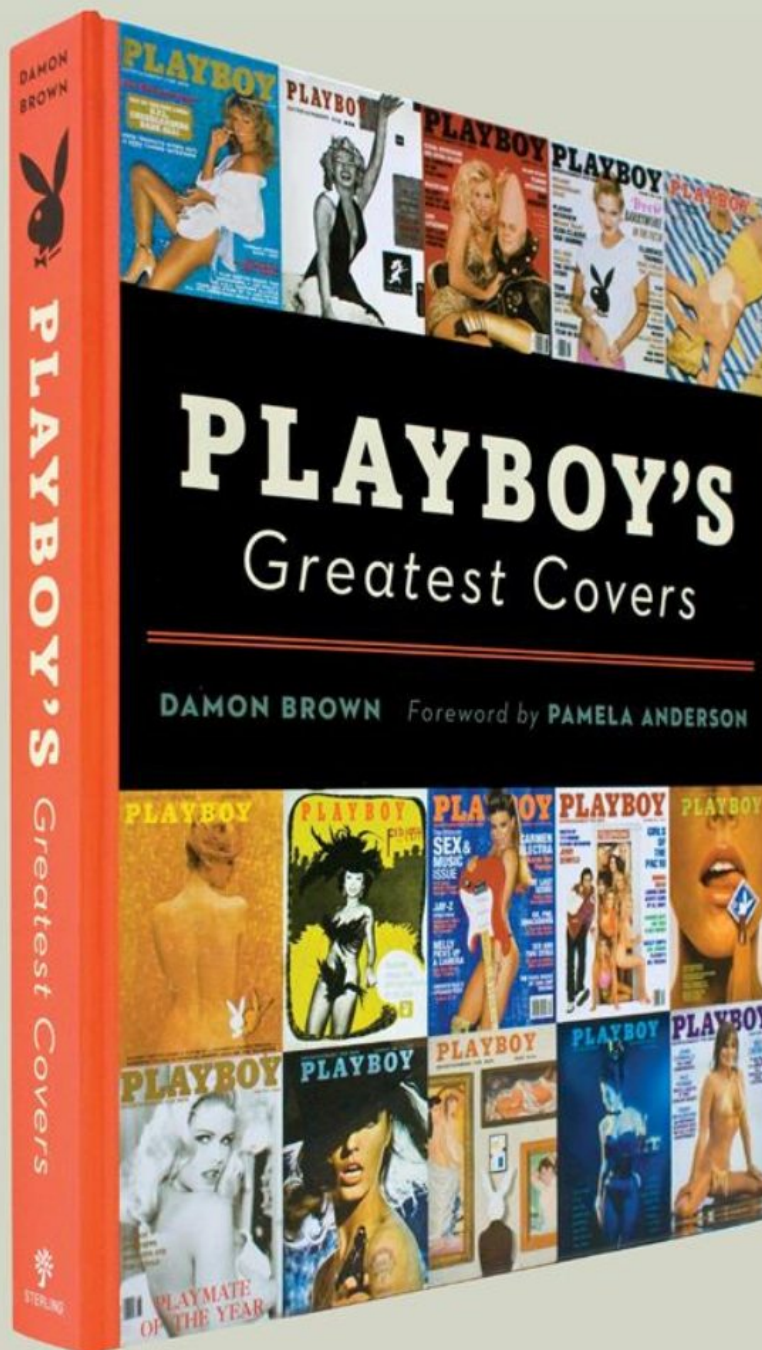
DENTON: That reputation has haunted me. At the very beginning there was no revenue, no advertising. This was basically money out of my pocket. So I would do a simple calculation. I would take the amount of money I had and divide it by costs, and I could keep going for 10 years. I didn't need to make any money for 10





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years. Remember, when we started in 2002 there was nothing going on. People had written off the internet at that point. It was such a cataclysmic collapse.

PLAYBOY: At what point did you become confident Gawker was a real company, a real business that was going to make you a fair amount of money?

DENTON: I resisted that. I never thought, This is going to make me a fair amount of money. I think at some point I realized, Oh, this can pay for itself.

PLAYBOY: How long will you keep running your current company before seeking what venture capitalists call a "liquidity event"?

DENTON: Oh, this one's long. How long was Steve Jobs thinking about smartphones before he actually launched one? Twenty years? Twenty years waiting and waiting and waiting. It's like the enemy is advancing, the guns are loaded, but the time's not right yet. I think that's what truly great leaders do. They marshal their resources, they train their troops and make sure they're well supplied, and then they wait for the right moment.

PLAYBOY: Who are the great leaders in technology now that Jobs is gone?

DENTON: There are some exceptional people. Evan Williams is an exceptional person. He doesn't present well, but he has an idea that is pretty much the same idea he's repeated again and again with Blogger, Twitter and Medium, only with different wrinkles. He's been the most influential person in web publishing, but I don't think he's ever done anything cheaply or cynically. He deserves the success. There's nothing more

to him. He's just a believer in simple, awesome tools that help people communicate.

PLAYBOY: Who else?

DENTON: Marc Andreessen is obviously extremely smart and bold. I admire the fact that he's all-in on this bet that the internet is changing everything, every industry. He's an absolute extremist, but actually that's a rational position to take. [Venture capitalist] Fred Wilson is smart and nice and probably in a position to be more truthful than any of the others. And Mark Zuckerberg, obviously: canny, determined, has retained enough power at Facebook. He's going to have another 20, 30, 40 years of being productive, being in charge of the company and being able to do things.

PLAYBOY: Now that you've become part of the establishment, do you feel more sympathy for Gawker's targets?

DENTON: I don't feel like part of the establishment. I don't even know whether there is an establishment. From up close, the establishment isn't up to much. Celebrity was a better deal 50 years ago. There was a time, as long as you weren't having orgies—or as long as you were discreet about your orgies—and as long as you weren't a Communist, you were probably fine. You'd be lionized and could get all the pussy you wanted.

PLAYBOY: Speaking of the establishment, what will *The New York Times* look like in 10 years? Will it exist? Will the Sulzberger family still own it, or will they have sold it, perhaps to Michael Bloomberg?

DENTON: *The New York Times* will exist.

Someone else will own it. Most families, the more generations they are from the original founder, the more fragmented the ownership, and eventually the nephews, grandnieces and great-great-grandchildren want their money now. They'd rather take the purchase price than zero dividends. I think the *Times* has bottomed out, and now, even though the signs are mixed, it will be able to put on more in digital revenue than it loses in print. Or I hope so, because I like the *Times*. There should be at least one or two survivors. Even when a major disaster kills most life on earth, usually a few species survive. Dinosaurs survived and became birds. Maybe that's the future of *The New York Times*: It will be the survivor of the dinosaurs, the little tweeting thing you see flying around.

PLAYBOY: If you're Jeff Bezos, what do you do with *The Washington Post*?

DENTON: Obviously you apply the Amazon recommendation engine. The interesting move would be to see whether you could take an entire newspaper-reading population and wean them off print. The price of Kindles is coming down. How much would it cost to bundle a Kindle with your subscription to *The Washington Post*? Discontinue the print and, as a gift, give everybody a *Washington Post* reader that can also buy books for them. That's what I'd do. That's what Bezos would do if he were ballsy.

PLAYBOY: Do you know him at all?

DENTON: No, though I had a dream that he had acquired us.

PLAYBOY: What would you do if you picked up the phone and he was on the other end, saying he wanted to buy Gawker Media?

DENTON: Amazon's the only company.... Well, I also like the idea of News Corp. *Buccaneering* was a word I always liked to describe Gawker Media.

PLAYBOY: Rupert Murdoch had the same notions about News Corp, to the point that he reportedly considered adopting a pirate ship as the company's logo. Do you feel a kinship with Murdoch?

DENTON: That sounds arrogant. I think he's done four amazing things, and most people get only one: Fox Network, Fox News, satellite TV in the U.K. and breaking the print unions. He saved Fleet Street. He saved London's newspaper industry.

PLAYBOY: What about Tina Brown? Is she done? Have we seen the last of her?

DENTON: I don't know about that. She has a tough rap. Was her *Newsweek* really that bad? Her biggest problem has been that she was dependent on the goodwill of media proprietors—Si Newhouse, Harvey Weinstein and then Barry Diller. And a media proprietor, particularly a late-era media proprietor, is a fundamentally dysfunctional businessman. There was a time when media made money and rational businesspeople would go into it. In an era when media basically doesn't make money, the only businessman who would go into it would be some kind of egomaniac, like me. [laughs] If I were truly into the money, I'd be in waste disposal or something like that. I'd be in some unglamorous profession. Media is way overpopulated. So she's dependent on the goodwill and



"You knew I was a people person when you married me."

the external financial resources of these erratic, aging proprietors.

PLAYBOY: You didn't always plan to be a media proprietor. You had notions of entering politics at one point.

DENTON: As a 16-year-old political nerd I wrangled myself a research position for the Social Democratic Party, which was a Labour splinter party. I quickly recognized that I wouldn't be electable. After that I wanted to be one of those shadowy, behind-the-scenes operatives, like a Lee Atwater or a Karl Rove.

PLAYBOY: It's easy to picture you as a pretty good Karl Rove.

DENTON: Oh, I'd be very good. I'd be so good! [laughs] I'd fight dirty in the interest of good causes. I almost had a whole campaign for a gas tax. Syphilitic Saudi sheiks, American women despoiled—basically taking our money from the gas station to fund their debauched sex lives, their despoiling of our women and terrorist attacks against our country. I don't frame it as an environmental cause. You've won the environmentalists already. You're trying to win the swing voters, the kind of people who don't like our money going to our enemies. So you make the campaign about that. No environmentalists—they're way too prissy to want to win. That's what I hate about liberals in this country. I hate them so much.

PLAYBOY: You do? You hate them?

DENTON: I hate liberals in this country so much because they're so fucking prissy. Did you ever see that documentary about Lee Atwater, *Boogie Man*? Lee Atwater was a terrible man. The Willie Horton campaign is a stain on the Republican Party, on the Bush family—let that all be stipulated. But you see in this movie that he has such joy in the battle, in the struggle, in the game, you know? He loves it. There are interviews with Michael Dukakis 20 years later, and Dukakis still cannot understand what happened. He still doesn't know how he got beat. This whiny, prissy—who would you want to work with? Who would you want to have beside you in the foxhole? Atwater is way more fun, probably a way better colleague, with way more appetite to win.

PLAYBOY: Isn't that a stereotype, the wimpy liberal? What about Barack Obama and his gang of tough Chicago politicians?

DENTON: In his own slightly bloodless way, he has competitive people. Obama himself is pretty competitive, and there are different ways of playing the game, right? It doesn't all need to be dirty South Carolina politics. That said, my political hero is Lyndon Johnson. I love people who are prepared to do what it takes, who aren't squeamish. If you want to stay pure, never break a story and never fuck anyone.

PLAYBOY: You got engaged recently. Have you always wanted to get married?

DENTON: No. My personal narrative was that I didn't want to get married in general; I just wanted to get married to Derrence. I'm marrying an individual. I'm not endorsing an institution. But two years ago, we had a party to benefit gay marriage—I think it was right around the date when it passed in New York—and apparently I said there that I wanted to get married because gay relation-

ships ended too easily. I hadn't remembered saying that; someone reminded me recently. [laughs] I was just coming off a breakup that had taken all of three days to implement—no kids, no jobs, no pets, no nothing. Relationships are hard enough and likely enough to fray, so one needs some kind of glue, some ritual in front of friends and family and the state to ensure that at least there's a cooling-off period before you actually break up.

PLAYBOY: Is that part of why you want to get married now?

DENTON: No. It's that this is as good as it's going to get. Isn't that the key? It doesn't sound very romantic, but when I saw my apartment, I knew it was much better than anything else. It was maybe 30 percent more than I wanted to pay, but it was 200 percent better than anything else I'd seen. I had to contain the expression on my face, because what I was thinking was, Yes, this is the one. That's how I felt with Derrence.

PLAYBOY: That's not a very romantic metaphor.

DENTON: I think it's actually a very real metaphor when you're with somebody in a better relationship than you ever expected or hoped for in your life and by far better than anything you could ever imagine with anybody else. Yeah, hypothetically, theoretically, there might be somebody else out there for me, but I don't have 100 lifetimes to go find him. So this is the best person I could be with in this lifetime.

PLAYBOY: How did you meet?

DENTON: How did we meet? [laughs]

PLAYBOY: Yes.

DENTON: [Laughs] I think you can say on the record that I knew his boyfriend.

PLAYBOY: The *New York Post*'s gossip column reported at the time that the boyfriend you're referring to threw a brick through your window.

DENTON: It was a stone, not a brick. I actually gave them the whole backstory. I knew they couldn't do anything with it.

PLAYBOY: Why couldn't they?

DENTON: Too complicated. The mainstream press doesn't really want gay gossip. They can't even deal with closet cases. It's a mixture of lingering distaste for the homosexual act and a modern version of correctness. They don't even know whether outings are politically correct or not. So they're completely paralyzed. They do not know how to deal with gay guys. They're just about getting to be able to deal with, say, a gay engagement being news. But the true pansexual messiness of most gay sexual histories is not something they or their readers are ready for.

PLAYBOY: Which is funny, because "pansexual messiness" sounds more interesting than most of what you read in the gossip pages.

DENTON: Well, I think everybody is more interested than how they're portrayed.

PLAYBOY: Do you ever have misgivings about exposing people's private lives, their sex lives?

DENTON: If there's a gap between your private behavior and your public status, that's what makes the story for us. To my mind, the only real modern sin is hypocrisy.



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TEA CEREMONY

(continued from page 83)

I have never been in this place before," Jack says. "Nor will I ever be in this place again with anyone but you."

"You say that now."

"I'd never be able to find this place again if I wanted to."

"How about by smell?"

They sit at the table farthest from the counter and wedge their chairs together to study the plastic menu. Gwen opens her Goodwill fur coat and Jack unbuttons his Levi's jacket, but like the people at the counter, they keep their coats on. An overweight waitress in a food-stained white uniform, her face ruddy with the broken capillaries of a drinker, shuffles over on swollen legs to take their order. The waitress waits, regarding them through eyes outlined in tarry mascara. Sandra is stitched in red on her uniform above the droop of her considerable bosom.

"You kids need more time?"

"I think I'll have hot tea instead of coffee,"

Gwen tells Jack. "Can I just get a tea?" she asks the waitress.

"Sure can, hon," Sandra says.

"Tea sounds right for the weather," Jack says. "This may be another first. I don't think I ever ordered tea in a restaurant."

"What about a Chinese restaurant?" Gwen asks.

"That doesn't count," Jack says. "You don't order. It just comes."

"So, two teas?" the waitress asks.

"Two hot teas."

"That it? Nothing to eat?"

"Crumpets, maybe," Jack says. "Do you have crumpets?"

The waitress isn't amused.

"Just the tea, please," Gwen tells her.

"You got it, hon," the waitress says and writes the order down on her pad. "You want cream or lemon?"

"Lemon," Gwen says. "I'd love some lemon."

"Lemon for me too," Jack says.

The waitress writes it down.

"How about some honey?" the waitress asks her. "We got these little breakfast

honeys for toast I could bring you."

"Thank you so much," Gwen says, smiling at Sandra, "just lemon's fine."

"She an old friend of yours, hon, a long-lost aunt or maybe fairy godmother?" Jack asks after the waitress shuffles off.

"She's just being nice. She seems lonely. She's probably the only woman in here most of the time. Maybe I remind her of someone."

"Remind her of who?"

"How should I know? A daughter she never had. Or one she did, a love child who ran away from home and every time the door here opens Sandra thinks it might be her prodigal finally coming back."

"That would explain why she doesn't consider me a worthy escort. You notice the evil eye I was getting."

"Maybe she could see I'd been crying. Can you tell?"

"You look like you just came in from the cold."

Gwen polishes a teaspoon with a paper napkin and examines her reflection in the concave finish. "My eyes are puffy," she says.

Jack takes the spoon from her, brings it to his lips as if it's brimming with steaming soup and sips. "I even love the taste of your reflection," he says, dropping his voice. "I could lick it off mirrors."

"A little over-the-top but better. You're making a comeback," Gwen says and takes his hand and slides it into the pocket of her fur coat. The pocket has a hole in it and Jack can reach through the pocket and then through the torn lining of the coat to brush his fingers along Gwen's right breast.

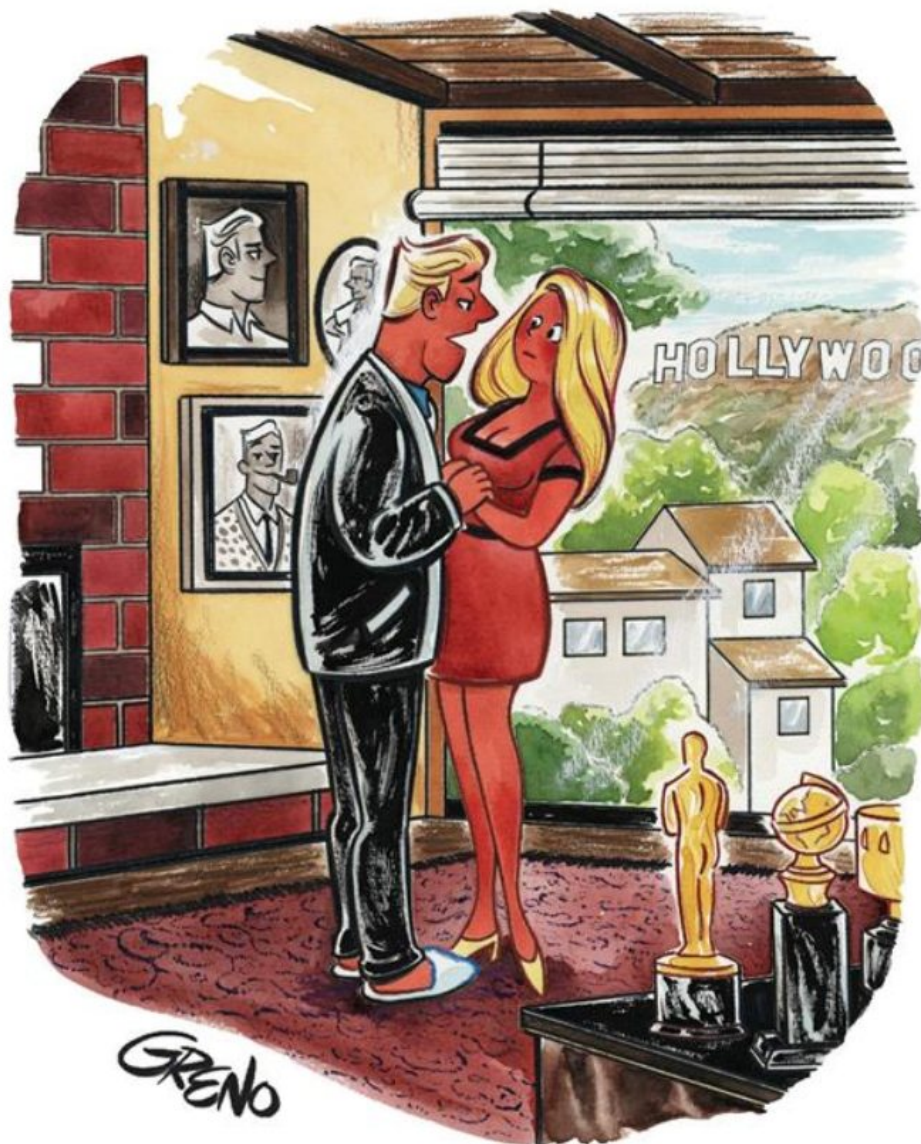
"Oh-oh," Jack says, "this is how it started at the movie."

"God, I was so close too," she says. "I blame it on that old, atmospheric theater and its velvet seats and winking starry sky. Like we'd entered a time machine to get there, the way the movies used to be. I always envied those generations that grew up making out at drive-ins instead of ordering Netflix. I wanted us to come together while Fred and Ginger were dancing."

"Foreplay interruptus," Jack says. "We're both probably suffering from post-traumatic sex disruption. No wonder you got upset about a heart on a car window."

"It wasn't just a car. It was a vintage Jaguar. That was the point—a beautiful, sleek green Jag inscribed with a heart. Tomorrow morning some lonely venture capitalist is going to come out and find that heart on his car and see only my initials in it 'cause you were freezing and couldn't wait around. He'll think it was a message for him and inscribe his initials where yours were supposed to be, and then he'll slowly cruise through the city, hoping for GL, whoever she is, to wave as he goes by."

Sandra brings a plastic tray to their table. Arranged on the tray are two small metal pots filled with steaming water and two thick, white, chipped cups on matching chipped saucers. There are two Salada tea packets on a separate plate, two spoons and a little white bowl of lemon wedges. She carefully transfers each item to their table, setting a cup, pot and spoon before each of them, and the bowl of lemon wedges in



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the middle. She opens each tea packet and places a tea bag in each cup and then from her apron pocket produces two small containers of honey.

"Anything more I can get you?" Sandra asks.

"This is wonderful," Gwen says. "I wasn't expecting a tea ceremony when I ordered."

Sandra smiles, pleased. "It's just tea bags," she says. "My mother really knew how to brew tea—real loose tea from India in a little silver ball with a chain. She'd read the leaves."

"Really!" Gwen says. "I always wanted to see someone do that. My mother told me my *nonna* Marie used to read the cards. Not tarot, just regular playing cards. The family story is that it was the cards that told my grandmother her future was in America."

"I read the cards," Sandra says. "It's in my family. All the women can do it. My sister Irene can read eggs. Don't laugh," she says to Jack. "It's true. I read palms."

"Who taught you," Gwen asks, "or did you just, like, know how?"

"My mother taught me. She taught me what I already knew but didn't have the confidence yet to do. I can show you," Sandra says and sits down at their table. She extends her hand toward Gwen, and Gwen releases Jack's hand in the pocket of her fur coat and gives her hand to Sandra.

"It's amazing what we're born knowing if someone just shows us," Gwen says.

"Yeah, and amazing what we think we know when what we know is nothing," Sandra says. "You have a warm, lovely hand, hon." She turns Gwen's hand palm up and lightly traces the lines with her crooked forefinger, studying them and then looking up at Gwen, who meets Sandra's eyes and smiles.

But Sandra doesn't smile back.

"You're laughing on the outside, but your heart is crying," Sandra says.

Jack feels caught off guard. He notices Gwen flinch and instinctively draw back, but Sandra grips her wrist. Gwen closes her hand and Sandra gently pries it back open and studies it again. "You two, you're the wrong chemicals to mix," she says and shakes her head disapprovingly.

"Pardon?" Gwen says.

"Not a good fit, no balance. Don't go near the ledge together," Sandra says and pushes herself up as if she's suddenly weary, then shuffles away.

"Mondo weirdo," Jack says. "There goes her tip. I think we just experienced the Gypsy tea ceremony. That line about crying in your heart sounds like it comes out of *Fortune-Telling for Dummies*."

He pours hot water over his tea bag; the water in the cup turns tannic.

"My great-aunt Lucile used to look like she was reading tea bags," he tells Gwen. "She'd put hot tea bags on her eyes when she had a migraine. She could tell the future from the spatters of bacon fat too, and forecast winners at the track from feeling the fuzz on a raspberry."

He sips his tea. The water that appeared to be hot is tepid.

Gwen reaches for the glass shaker of sugar that's beside the napkin dispenser along with a squeeze bottle of mustard and a bottle of ketchup missing its cap.

"Did you and your friends ever fill the sugar container with salt when you were in high school?" Jack asks.

"What a callow, guy thing to do," Gwen says. She stops before pouring sugar in her cup and instead touches the tip of her index finger to the sugar spout and then extends the sugary finger toward Jack.

"Taste. Some gang of knuckleheads like your high school homeys might have been messing around here."

"It's sweet," Jack says. He licks the grains from her fingertips, then spreads her middle and forefinger as if spreading her legs and runs his tongue down the side of her forefinger to the webbing and laps her there. She takes his hand, sprinkles sugar on his forefinger, guides it to her lips and sucks it. He closes his eyes.

"Did you like it in the movie theater?" Gwen asks.

"Loved it. I'm sorry we got kicked out into the cold before we ever saw if while I was getting a blow job Fred at least gets to kiss Ginger."

"What if entering that old theater was going back in the past, and because we got kicked out instead of staying until it was over and returning to the present, we got kicked out into the past? I mean, look at this place." Gwen releases his hand and bobs her tea bag in the cup. The string slips from the staple that attaches the bag to the Salada label, and she spoons the tea bag out and presses it to her eye. "Oooh, that feels good. Great-aunt Lucy was onto something." Gwen places the tea bag on her saucer and then sprinkles sugar on the lemon wedges in the bowl. "I like sour tastes. I used to suck lemons even when I was a little kid. My friends all thought I was crazy. I like how clean they make my mouth feel." She sucks at a lemon wedge and then inserts the wedge into her mouth and retracts her lips, giving Jack a lemon-peel smile.

He peels open a honey, dabs out a fingertip of honey, outlines her lips and kisses her. She still has the lemon wedge in her mouth and it blocks the probing of his tongue. Her kiss tastes of lemon oil. He dabs his forefinger in the honey again and then slips his hand beneath the table and carefully slides it between the folds of her fur coat and up under her heathery woolen skirt. When he reaches her thighs, her legs part. She looks at him and narrows her eyes. There's the tink of her spoon as her right hand absently stirs her tea. The lemon peel smiles at him from between her lips. The radiant warmth of her body defies the grains of ice slashing through the dark trees that line the curb, the sleet ticking against the pinkish plate-glass window and pocking the film of snow on the windshields of parked cars. No way would that heart on the Jag survive until morning. She slouches down in her chair, pressing his sticky fingertip against her panties and then past the elastic so that the honey mixes with her slickness. They may have entered the past, but for this moment there's only the present between them.

From behind the counter, Sandra locks them in a nonstop stare.

With his free hand, Jack raises his teacup to his lips. Gwen's eyes are closed, she's breathing heavier, her nostrils flared and her mouth parted, revealing lemon yellow. When she slides toward his finger so that it enters deeper, he whispers, "Sweetheart, you have to at least make like you're sipping your tea."



"Of course, these profit projections are based on the assumption that we're not found out."



PRESCRIPTION

(continued from page 64)

everyone in the county heard about it.

A few months later I received a slew of e-mails, Facebook messages and calls from strangers in McDowell County. All of them said basically the same thing: I read your article. You should know what really happened with Tom and John Hatcher.

Here's what happened: John didn't die; Mayor Tom Hatcher did. And two days later, his daughter-in-law, Becky, was charged with his murder.

War can be a pretty place. The mountains are thick with trees, and in the fall they erupt with splashes of yellow, red and orange. Most of the land is wild and barely populated. But you feel confined nonetheless, always hemmed in by mountains. It's a chore to get to McDowell County and no less of one to leave it.

The McDowell County that Tom Hatcher grew up in in the 1940s and 1950s was very different from today's. The coal industry was booming then. War had movie theaters, restaurants, stores and a sweet shop. "You couldn't drive into town when the Big Creek High football team was playing," recalls lifelong resident Patty Hawkins.

"Back then, War was a nice little town," said Tom's sister, Jerry Lynn Roncella, a no-nonsense high school teacher. She was wearing a lavender hoodie and purple glasses and chain-smoking as we talked at the kitchen table in Tom's house, just outside the center of town, shortly after his death. She was still clearing out the place; it was cluttered with cleaning supplies and Hefty bags half filled with Tom's possessions. "When we were growing up, anybody who drank was looked down on," said Roncella. "And there certainly were no drugs."

Tom went to West Virginia University to get bachelor's and master's degrees and later added a Ph.D. in education. Along the way he got married. The couple adopted three babies through the local Catholic diocese—two girls and John, the youngest. They soon divorced, though. The girls wound up with their mother, and John with Tom.

Tom took a job with a nonprofit organization that brings students and professionals from around the world to the U.S. for cultural exchanges. The job eventually landed Tom and John in Washington, D.C. As John moved into a troubled adolescence, Tom decided the big city wasn't the place for them. In 1991 he moved back to War with his 16-year-old son.

By then McDowell County was skidding downhill. The coal mines had either closed or been mechanized, and most of the miners and their families had moved on. In 1950, when Tom was a boy, nearly 100,000 people lived in the county. He came back to find two thirds of them gone.

Things have gotten worse. War has shrunk to around 1,000 people, one quarter of its peak. The few blocks of low brick buildings that compose War's downtown are a glum procession of empty storefronts, broken windows and caved-in roofs,

interspersed with a handful of surviving businesses—including no fewer than three pharmacies. On a window of the War Hotel, the town flophouse, the owners have taped a handwritten sign: NO ALCOHOL OR DRUGS ALLOWED IN THE BUILDING OF ANY KIND. ALL WHO GET COUGHT [sic] WILL GO TO JAIL.

Today, McDowell County is at the bottom of the heap by just about every measure of misery and dysfunction. One third of its inhabitants live below the poverty line. Barely six percent have college degrees. Life expectancy is among the lowest in the nation. The county also has the state's highest rates of teen pregnancy and child abuse.

Tom did everything he could to bolster the place and its people. "When our dad was in the state senate, people would come to our house at all hours, asking for help," recalls Tom's brother, James Hatcher. "Tom had that same commitment. When he came back to War and saw how bad things were, he wanted to help." Tom was active with just about every civic organization within miles, from the Catholic church to the Kiwanis Club and the county historical society. He was elected mayor in 1997 and campaigned to get War a wastewater-treatment plant, a playground and a drug-treatment facility. He also taught at Big Creek High and gave extra tutoring to his students. "I was just a little holler girl everyone figured was going to be a housewife," says Tonya Hagerman, a sharp-faced, cheery young woman. "But Tom saw something else. I'd go to his house every evening and he'd teach me English." Thanks to him, she says, she went on to college and a lucrative career. It wasn't his fault she wound up back in War, where she slipped into a years-long addiction to pills.

Tom was candid about his town's troubles when we met, but he also wanted to make sure I heard about its charms. "I love it here. There's beautiful scenery and great people," he told me. "In spite of it all, I'm very optimistic about this community."

When John arrived at Big Creek High as a teenager, he quickly fell in with the stoners and troublemakers. "I never even knew what drugs was till I got here to War," John told me. "It didn't take but a week after I got here and it was pills and pot."

John was moving through high school just as the epidemic of painkiller abuse was spreading across the nation. Through the 1990s, regulations controlling such opiates were relaxed, making it much easier to get a prescription. OxyContin, a powerful narcotic later to become famous as "hillbilly heroin," hit the market in 1995. Meanwhile, the FDA cleared the way for pharmaceutical companies to advertise pills on TV and radio, something almost no other country allows. The industry now spends about \$3.5 billion every year on ads and promotes its products heavily to doctors. The results have been eye-popping: The number of prescriptions written for opioid painkillers shot from 76 million in 1991 to 219 million in 2011. Narcotic painkillers are now the most-prescribed drugs in the nation, with sales topping \$8 billion annually. Today, according to the Centers for Disease

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Control, 12 million Americans use prescription painkillers for nonmedical purposes.

Educational campaigns and legal crackdowns galore have been launched in response. The drug industry has been called to account. In 2007 a federal court ordered Purdue Pharma, which makes OxyContin, to pay \$600 million in fines for encouraging doctors to overprescribe the drug and for deceiving the public by downplaying the risks it poses. The following year Cephalon paid \$425 million to settle a federal investigation into its marketing of a fentanyl-based painkiller. West Virginia is currently suing 14 drug distributors that it alleges have fed illegal painkiller use. "The worst drug dealers are the pharmaceutical companies," says McDowell County district attorney Ed Kornish. "We basically deal with their victims."

Due in part to the high injury rate in coal mining, West Virginians are prescribed more drugs per capita than residents of any other state. Combine all those pills with joblessness and poverty, and you get carnage. Pills spread like a virus from one carrier to the next. Tom kept a list of all the residents of War and its environs killed by drug overdoses. He'd tallied dozens in just a few years.

"Just about everyone I used to party with is dead," says Hagerman. "We're talking about whole families disappearing."

The next time I saw John was through a thick glass partition inside a state prison. He was locked up in 2012 for forging checks on his father's account. His hair was shaved to stubble, his biceps defined from doing 400 push-ups a day; a fresh homemade tattoo of the word *WAR* was on his wrist. Despite the tough-guy trappings, he was a welter of misery and confusion, desperately struggling to figure out what

to believe about Becky and choking back tears every time his son's name came up.

"Dope has ruined my life. It put me in here, cost my dad his life, ruined my marriage of 14 years, and my son doesn't have a father or mother," he said. "I don't know how much worse it can get."

John was 23 when he started dating Becky Click, a sweet, studious 17-year-old. "Becky was head over heels in love with him," recalls Becky's sister Laura Click. "John had long curly hair then, and she thought he was Prince Charming." A prince with a well-known pill habit. In fact, John gave Laura the first of the painkillers she wound up becoming addicted to. But at the time, Becky wasn't interested. "I could barely get her to smoke a joint," John told me. They were married the next year in War's tiny Catholic church. For their honeymoon John took her to a Ramada Inn in a town an hour away. Jonathen was born a year later. Nothing too strange about that by local standards—Becky's mother had her at 15.

Things went all right for the first few years. The family moved into an apartment in town. Becky went to nursing school while John worked on and off and took care of Jonathen. They had another baby, Ethan, in 2004. John was spending a lot of time partying with friends or just lying around wasted, but it was all more or less manageable.

That changed one day in May 2005 when Becky was at her mother's place in Grundy, Virginia, about an hour from War. Becky lay down on the couch with baby Ethan for a nap. When she woke up, the infant wasn't breathing.

Some people suggest Becky was stoned on pills and accidentally smothered her baby. No way, says John. "Even if she did do this to Dad, she'd never do that to Ethan," he told me. "She was too good a mother. She wouldn't even let me smoke around him."

His son's death caved John's head in. "After we buried Ethan, I really didn't give a shit about life anymore," he said. "I got high as hell on Xanax for three days. I was zombied out right through the wake and the funeral."

Pills took over John's life after that. He'd show up staggering at Jonathen's ball games. Becky would come home to find he'd sold off the dishes, the couch, the rugs, anything he could get a few bucks for. Once, the local cops found him passed out on the street, naked. Becky even left him briefly after he sold a PlayStation she'd bought Jonathen for his birthday.

Becky, of course, was also shattered. "I was worried to death she'd kill herself," says Laura Click. "She didn't want Jonathen out of her sight after that."

Somewhere along the line Becky started taking pills too. She went through a string of jobs at a hospital, an old-age home and a pharmacy in nearby towns. Sometimes she and John would make runs to Florida, home to a thriving industry of "pain clinics" that hand out pills. They'd hit a bunch of different doctors and come home with enough OxyContin and Roxicet to party for weeks and sell the extras.

But most of the time they were broke. Tom tried to help. "He'd set them up with an apartment, but they'd get evicted every time," said Roncella. "Both of them are sorer than owl manure. They wouldn't work in a pie factory." Eventually Tom wound up taking in all three of them. Before long, his china, silverware and high school graduation ring had disappeared.

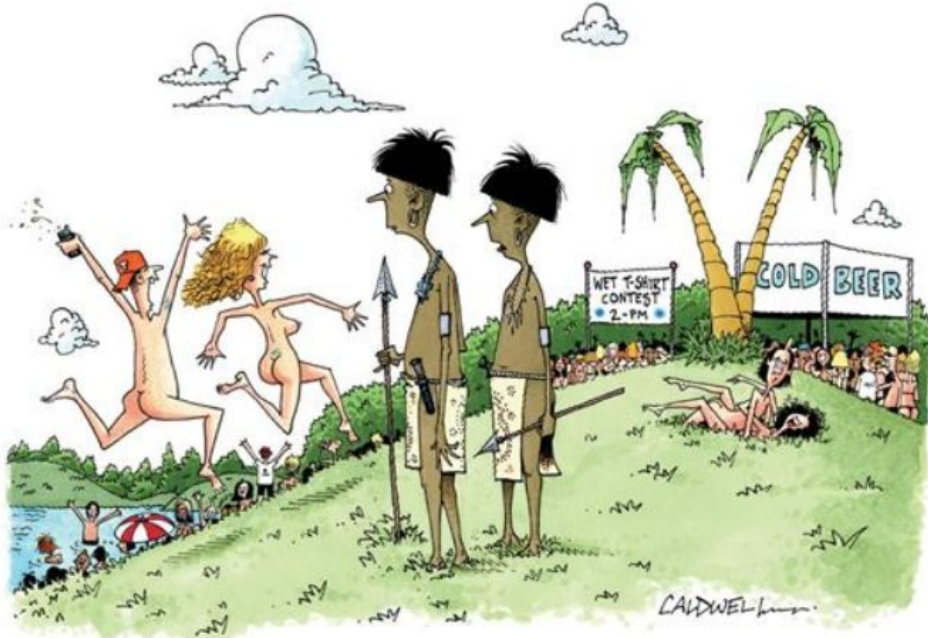
By 2011 John and Becky were dragging Tom down with them. In February, Becky was arrested for stealing \$125 of church money from Tom's car. She was fined and ordered into six months of drug and alcohol counseling, which she didn't complete. In April, John went crazy one day, throwing stuff around the house and threatening Tom, who was scared enough to call a cop to the house.

Tom paid for John to take one rehab treatment after another, including a stint in a residential program in Arizona. Tom wasn't a wealthy man, and supporting his son's family was slowly bankrupting him. He had to take a second job teaching in War's elementary school.

That's about when I showed up. The day after we'd met in his office, Tom took me out to breakfast at one of the few open businesses on Main Street, a tiny diner decorated with faded pictures of John F. Kennedy. Proprietress Orbie Campbell, still sparky at 77, shuffled out with two plates of eggs and bacon on biscuits without being asked; Tom had eaten there every day for years. "I've threatened many times to put John out," Tom told me, "but that would be punishing my grandson."

"If it all leads to John's death, I'll grieve," he said. "But I don't think I have any control."

John kept getting worse. A month after my visit, Tom again had to call the police to his house. This time John had a knife and was ranting about burning the place down. Then in December he was convicted of forging checks from Tom's account. Tom,



"Tell me, when exactly did we go from being a lost Amazon tribe to a spring break destination?"

at the end of his rope, had finally pressed charges. But later, ever hopeful, he sent the judge a letter asking him to consider probation. "John, I feel, has learned his lesson," Tom wrote. "Of course, I have said this before and was wrong."

Becky was out of work again by the time John was locked up. She started spending a lot of time in the "casino" that had opened on Main Street, a single crepuscular room curtained off from the street that houses a few video poker machines and a counter selling cigarettes and beer.

Roncella suggested Tom try to get custody of Jonathen. She had done that with her granddaughters after her son died of an overdose. "He said he wasn't sure he could take care of Jonathen by himself," Roncella told me. And there was another issue: "He told me Becky had told him she'd kill him if he took Jonathen away." Tom's longtime friend and co-worker Kitten Cempela says Tom also told her about these threats.

So by June 2012 things were tense between Tom and Becky. That's when Becky's brother Earl Click came home from prison.

Earl is only five-foot-three and 120 pounds but plenty of trouble. As a kid he was so hyperactive he was put on Adderall. By the age of 15 he had pretty much given up on school in favor of smoking weed and popping pills. Like his sister Laura, he was introduced to painkillers by John Hatcher.

How Earl got locked up in the first place is illuminating. On his 18th birthday he was partying on Xanax with a bunch of friends. Literally hours after he had become eligible to be tried as an adult, he and a buddy went into town, sneaked around the back of a pharmacy on Main Street and smashed a window. They climbed in and set about trying to get into the pill-storage area. By the time the cops arrived all the pair had managed to gather was a bunch of cigarettes.

The police took Earl to City Hall and called Tom, who had helped get Earl out of minor legal scrapes before. Earl was so wasted Tom had to slap him to keep him from nodding out. He was soon taken to the hospital to be treated for an overdose.

A few months later, while he was awaiting trial, Earl was at Becky's and got crazy on Xanax again. He took a swing at her, screaming that he was going to kill her and her unborn child. Becky ran out and came

back with a cop. Earl socked the cop in the chest, yelling, "I'll fucking kill you!" Becky declined to press charges, but it didn't much matter. Earl was convicted of the break-in and sent to a rehabilitative facility for young adults. He was soon kicked into the regular prison system, however, for fighting with other inmates, saying "Fuck you" to one guard and calling another a fat bastard. He eventually made parole and went home, but his parole was revoked after a few months when he hit his mother in the jaw.

Earl's sentence for the break-in ran out in June 2012. He headed to Grundy, where his mother lives, and moved into a room with his uncle Roy "Donny" Harding at the Appalachian Inn, a cheerless cluster of trailers squatting around an asphalt parking lot. Harding, who had recently been laid off from a coal mine, had spent 10 years in prison on a murder charge back in the 1980s, so he could relate to what Earl was going through.

At the time I'm writing this, Earl is back in jail, awaiting his own day in court for Tom's murder. I met him there in a small, spartan visiting room during a break in Becky's trial. He has sharp blue-gray eyes and is lavishly tattooed but comes across as affable, with a certain goofy charm, even in his orange jumpsuit. "I kind of secluded myself when I got out," he told me. "I was still adjusting from prison."

One thing had changed in a big way, Earl said. "It was like, What happened to Becky? She was the sweet and innocent one who never got in trouble. But when I got out, she was on dope, just chasing pills," he said. "I'd never seen that side of her before."

On the evening of July 16, 2012, Kitten Cempela got a distraught call from Tom. Someone had used his ATM card to drain his bank account, he said. He was sure it was Becky. "You've got to do something," Cempela told him. Tom said he'd had it and promised to confront her. That night Patty Hawkins, whose house is right behind Tom's, heard Tom and Becky screaming at each other. "He said, 'I prosecuted John and I'll prosecute you,'" Hawkins told me.

The next day, Tom didn't show up to work and didn't call. That was so unusual that Cempela gave her copy of Tom's house

key to a couple of city employees and told them to go check on him.

They found Tom in his bed. He was lying on his side, pale and cold, with a livid bruise on his cheek, clutching a long pillow tightly in his arm. A large plastic shopping bag lay behind his head. One of the workers checked for a pulse. There was none.

The workers called the police. Becky and Earl were soon arrested and charged with Tom's murder.

Here's what the police say happened: About one in the morning on July 17, Becky and Earl drove from Grundy to Tom's house in War. There, they suffocated Tom with the plastic bag. They also stole about \$1,100 in cash. Around four a.m. Becky dropped Earl back at the Appalachian Inn. Earl told his uncle Donny about the killing, and Donny soon told the police. At a press conference a few days after the arrests, Mark Shelton, then chief of police in War, opined that the money was "most likely" stolen to buy drugs. Tom, it seemed, had become the latest casualty on his own list.

One of the first things I did after learning about Tom's death was write to John in prison. He wrote back almost immediately. "I am absolutely devastated by my dad's murder," he wrote. "I never thought my soon-to-be-ex-wife had that kind of evil in her. This is all my fault. If I hadn't wrote Dad's checks...I would not be in here and would have been able to protect him." He went on: "My father was a great man. He should never have had to go down like this."

Later, when I met him in person, he wasn't so sure. "If Becky did this, I hope she sits in a cell and rots and dies," he said. But over the months, he and Becky had managed to exchange a few letters clandestinely. She said that she loved him and "that she loved Dad, and I'll see when the evidence comes out that she didn't have nothing to do with this," said John. "I don't know what to believe anymore. I really don't."

I met Becky last spring. The Southern Regional Jail in Beaver, West Virginia, where she was being held awaiting trial, is a low-key lockup. The warden cheerfully agreed to let me visit the same day I called to ask.

Becky was waiting for me in a visiting room furnished with a table and two plastic



chairs. In her mug shot she looked skinny and wild-eyed. She looked better now, even in her jailhouse outfit. She was sturdily built, with a personable smile, her honey-colored hair held back with a narrow headband.

"I'd never hurt Tom," she told me. "He was like my dad. I was closer to him than I was to my dad. If it weren't for Tom I don't know how my son would have turned out, without a male figure in his life." She missed Jonathon intensely. They talked by phone a few times a week, but she didn't like him visiting her. It was too hard watching him walk away. "Tom was grandpa and daddy all in one. I'd never take that from my son." Her voice broke, and she wiped an eye angrily with her finger.

What about her stealing from Tom? That didn't happen, she said. The missing-church-money episode was a mistake—the money was taken by a cousin of hers. And she didn't steal Tom's ATM card or have a fight with him about it.

Did she take pills to get high? "No," she said. "Never." She did take the pain pills she was prescribed when she hurt her knee a few years back. And she did lie about how many she needed so she could get extra for John. And yes, she went with him on runs to the Florida pill mills. But that was it, she insisted.

I'd expected Becky to tell me she hadn't killed Tom, but this denial was surprising.

After all, one of her friends, her stepsister, her grandmother, her brother, her sister and her husband had all told me she used pills. Why would John have said that if it weren't true? "I don't know, I really don't," she said. "He's upset with me right now. I think he wants me down at his level."

Becky's trial began on a chilly, overcast day late last October, in a tiny brick courthouse in Welch, the rundown, half-abandoned county seat a couple of valleys from War. Given McDowell County's size, it was inevitably a bit of a clubby affair; the prosecutor, the lead defense attorney and the judge had all been involved in one or another of John's, Earl's or Becky's previous cases.

District Attorney Ed Kornish, a powerfully built former marine with buzz-cut iron-gray hair, put on a case that relied heavily on circumstantial evidence—but lots of it. One of Becky's cousins and her uncle Donny testified that she had complained bitterly about Tom and had offered to pay them to help her kill him—perhaps jokingly, perhaps not. Other evidence proved that Becky had been stealing from Tom's bank account and using the money to gamble at the video poker parlor in the days just before his death. Patty Hawkins took the stand and recounted hearing Tom

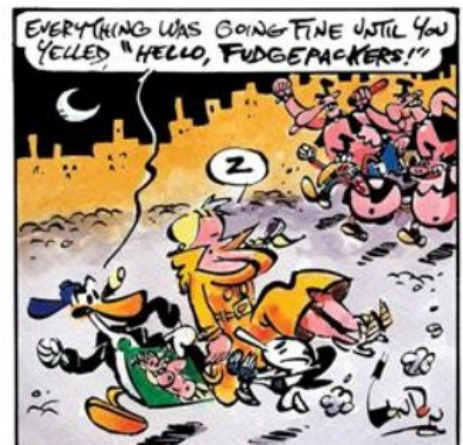
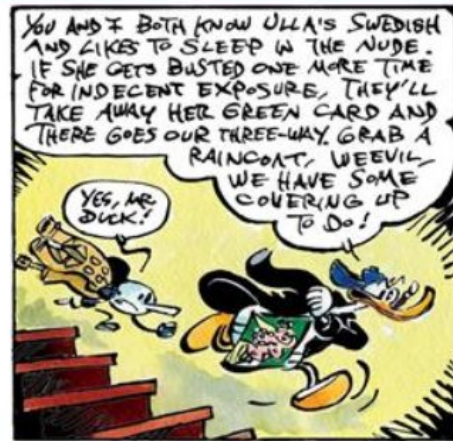
screaming at Becky on the night of July 16 that he aimed to prosecute her.

Donny told the court that shortly after midnight on July 17, Earl got a call in their shared room from Becky, telling him to come meet her. Another guy who lived at the Appalachian testified that at about one a.m. he gave Earl a ride to the road that leads to his mother's house, where Earl was picked up by someone driving his mother's car. Several hours later, according to Donny, Earl stumbled back into their room in tears and confessed he had killed Tom. "He said he had to protect his sister," Donny said. The next day, Donny testified, he'd told a tearful Becky what Earl had told him. "She said she couldn't handle it because Tom knew she was there when he died and that she regretted it, but at least she'd have a place to live," Donny told the court.

Several people who had seen Tom the day of the 16th said they hadn't seen a bruise on his face like the one found on his corpse the next morning. Forensics experts affirmed they'd found Becky's fingerprints and spots of Tom's blood on the plastic bag. "In short," Kornish asked the state medical examiner who'd autopsied Hatcher's corpse, "Thomas Hatcher was smothered to death?" "Yes," replied the examiner.

Lead defense lawyer Keith Flinchum's line was simpler: *(concluded on page 153)*

Dirty Duck by Bobby London



WATER GIRL

BRANDE RODERICK

Brande Roderick has no problem keeping herself busy. The 2001 Playmate of the Year is a mother and a wife, has appeared in numerous television and film projects, has run several businesses and is now on the advisory board of the Alkaline Water Company. "When I came off *Celebrity Apprentice* I wanted something to be passionate about," Brande says. She found it in the unique water brand. "It's the best water I've ever tried, and it's the only bulk alkaline water out there." The smallest packaging for Alkaline88 is a three-liter container—the equivalent of eight 12-ounce bottles—so with less waste, the company is environmentally conscious as well.



PLAYMATE NEWS

HELLO AMANDA

On an episode of HBO's *Hello Ladies*, hapless bachelor Stuart Pritchard (played by Stephen Merchant) finds himself in a gay bar where a woman named Melanie (played by Miss October 2011 Amanda Cerny) invites a male patron to feel her breasts. Pritchard is offered the next handful, but like Wile E. Coyote, he's prevented from touching the bird.



Social Shutterfly

Imagine having Miss May 2012 @MissNikkiLeigh as your road trip co-pilot. It would be awfully tough to keep your eyes on the road.

Girl Talk

■ Congratulations are in order for Miss November 2001 **Lindsey Vuolo**, who wed Jason Handrinos in Athens. Fellow Playmates Stephanie Glasson and Laurie Fetter served as bridesmaids.



■ A photographer caught Miss June 1985 **Devin DeVasquez** and her soap-star husband, Ronn Moss (*The Bold and the Beautiful*), acting lovey-dovey at Boston's Super Megafest.



■ We have some great girls. **Val Keil**, **Bryiana Noelle** and **Audrey Aleen Allen** spent the Tuesday before Thanksgiving serving turkey and fixings to the troops at the Bob Hope USO at LAX before they shipped out for service.



Don't Go in There, Jaclyn!

PMOY 2012 Jaclyn Swedberg harnesses her inner scream queen in the indie horror flick *Muck*. Jaclyn plays Terra, who entertains both danger and men's flirtatiousness. Either way, she undoubtedly finds herself in a compromising situation.



PLAYMATE FLASHBACK

Twenty years ago Miss March 1994 **NERIAH DAVIS**, the child of hippies, gave us good vibes. She has also brought smiles to *Meatballs 4*, *Suddenly Susan* and *Baywatch*.

PRESCRIPTION

(continued from page 150)

Tom wasn't murdered at all. He simply died in his sleep of a heart attack. After all, he was 72 years old and plagued with diabetes and badly clogged arteries. The autopsy, Flinchum pointed out, could definitively ascertain only that the immediate cause of his death was asphyxiation, or lack of oxygen. But that could have been caused by his heart giving out. Flinchum put his own forensics expert on the stand to say so. And Becky's mother and 13-year-old sister swore Becky had been in Grundy all that night.

Becky, dressed in a slightly ill-fitting taupe jacket-and-skirt set, took the stand, looking pale and intent. She choked up talking about how Tom was "like a dad" to her. She acknowledged that she'd been stealing money for video poker from him. Everything else, she denied: She insisted she had never asked anyone to help her kill him, had never told Donny she'd killed him herself and had been at her mother's house all through the night that Tom died.

There are several things the jury never heard about. They barely learned anything about Earl and nothing about his criminal history. They didn't hear about Becky's pill use. And thanks to complicated rules of evidence, they never saw, as I did, her videotaped statement to the police after she was first arrested. In that recording she says that at about four a.m. on July 17, she sneaked out of her mother's house to pick up Earl. Earl mysteriously had a lot of cash on him, Becky said, and told her, "All your problems are over now."

That's not an admission of guilt, but it does flatly contradict the alibi she swore to in court.

After the trial was over, while the jury was still out, I went to visit Earl. He surprised me with how tepidly he stood up for Becky. "I know I didn't do it," he said. "I can't vouch for her, because I was at my apartment."

Earl asked me if I thought Becky was guilty. "Honestly, it looks pretty bad," I said. "They have people saying she asked them to help her kill Tom. We know she was stealing from him. They've got a neighbor who said she heard Tom saying he'd put Becky in jail just like he put John in jail. And the very next day, Tom turns up dead."

"Hell of a coincidence, huh?" said Earl.

A few days later, the jury came back with a strange pair of verdicts. On the charge of first-degree murder: not guilty. Apparently the evidence they'd seen wasn't enough to get them past reasonable doubt. There was a second charge as well, however: conspiracy to commit murder. On that one they deadlocked. Becky is slated to face another trial on that count in February.

Meanwhile she's been released on bond. Becky is back in War now, staying at her dad's and spending time with her son, who lives with a foster family. Her new Facebook page carries a message thanking her family and husband for standing by her.

John is up for parole in a few months. Soon, he'll probably be right back where I met him.

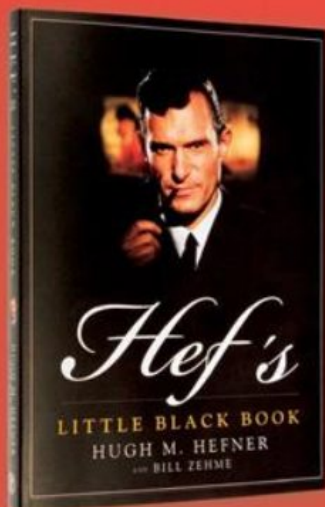


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My little girl yesterday,
my friend today,

My Daughter Forever

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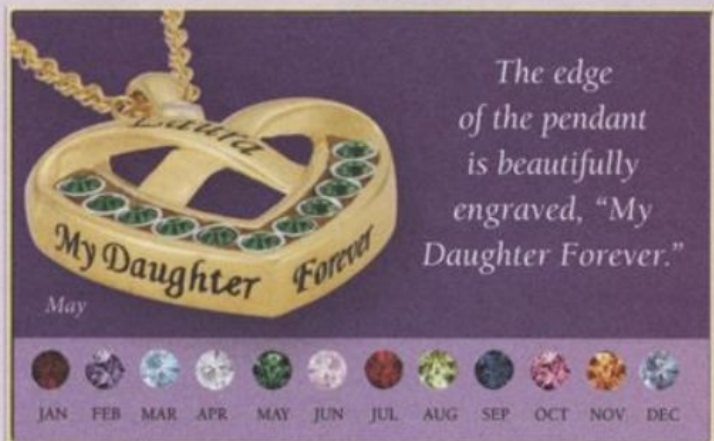
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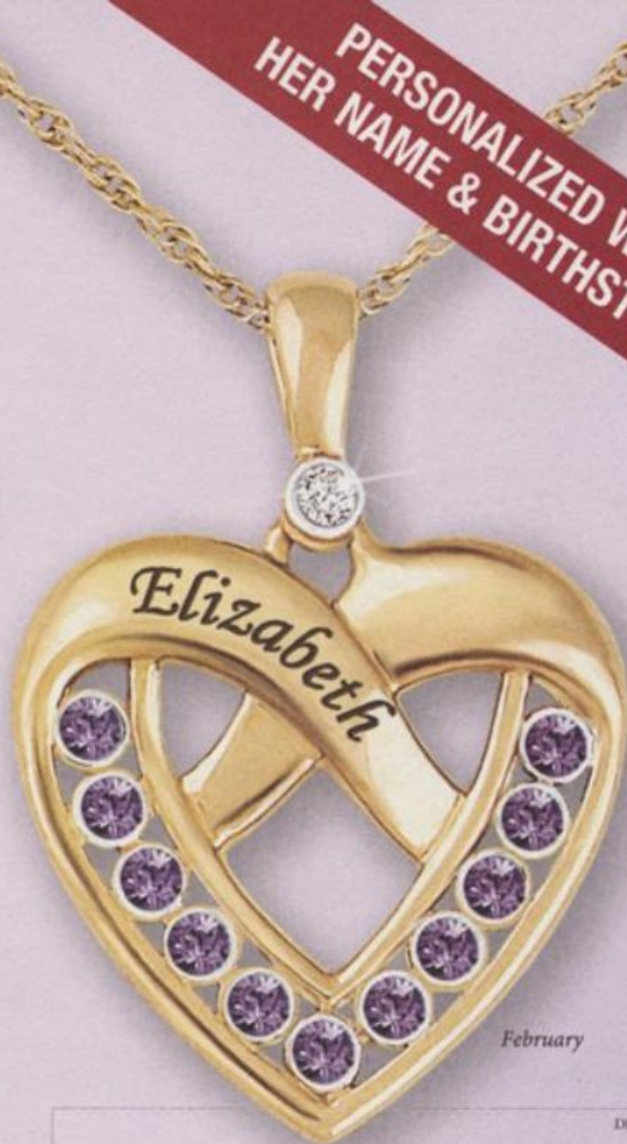
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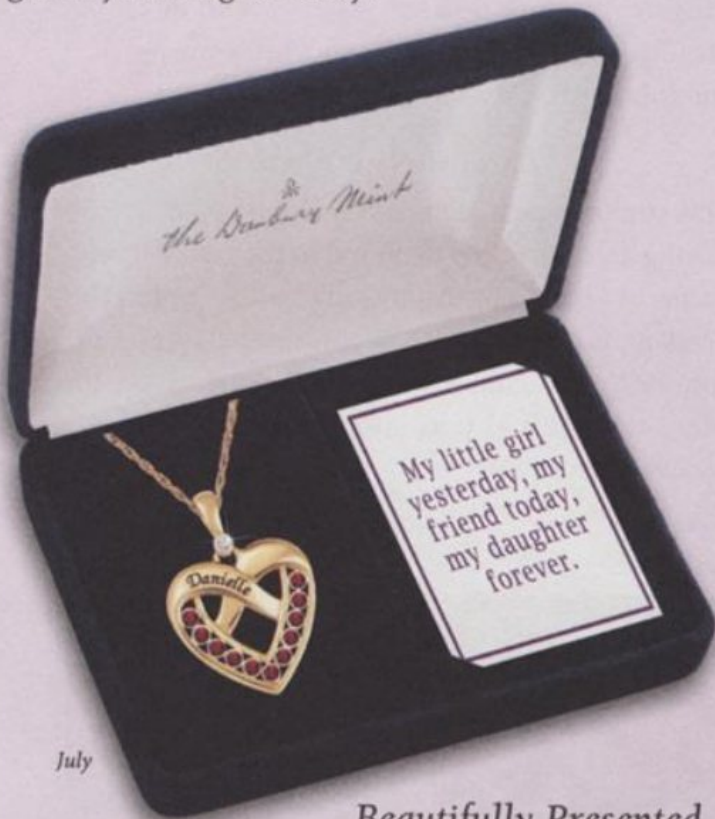
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<p>\$29⁹⁹ MO. FOR 12 MONTHS SELECT™ Package</p> <p>ACT NOW! \$24 MO.</p> <p>OUR BEST VALUE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OVER 130 Channels 1,500 Titles On Demand FREE FOR 3 MONTHS HBO + SHOWTIME <p>FREE GENIE UPGRADE One HD DVR powers your entire home! Add'l equipment required. Add'l & Advanced Receiver fees apply.</p> <p>FREE Playboy TV For 3 Months Ask how.</p>	<p>\$34⁹⁹ MO. FOR 12 MONTHS ENTERTAINMENT Package</p> <p>ACT NOW! \$29 MO.</p> <p>OUR BEST VALUE WITH SPORTS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OVER 140 Channels 2,000 Titles On Demand FREE FOR 3 MONTHS HBO + SHOWTIME <p>FREE GENIE UPGRADE One HD DVR powers your entire home! Add'l equipment required. Add'l & Advanced Receiver fees apply.</p> <p>FREE Playboy TV For 3 Months Ask how.</p>	<p>\$39⁹⁹ MO. FOR 12 MONTHS CHOICE™ Package</p> <p>ACT NOW! \$34 MO.</p> <p>TV THAT ALWAYS BEATS CABLE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OVER 150 Channels 3,500 Titles On Demand FREE FOR 3 MONTHS HBO + SHOWTIME + COMEDY CENTRAL <p>FREE GENIE UPGRADE One HD DVR powers your entire home! Add'l equipment required. Add'l & Advanced Receiver fees apply.</p> <p>INCLUDED Every Game, Every Sunday. ONLY ON DIRECTV! Out-of-market games only. 2014</p> <p>FREE Playboy TV For 3 Months Ask how.</p>
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ALL DIRECTV OFFERS REQUIRE 24-MONTH AGREEMENT. 2 years of Savings includes \$10/mo. for 24 months on Advanced Receiver Service (reg. \$25/mo.) with Auto Bill Pay, valid email address and Paperless Billing with selection of Genie HD DVR.

Regional Sports fee may apply.

DIRECTV offers you all this:

#1 in customer satisfaction over all cable & satellite TV providers
2013 American Customer Satisfaction Index.

99% Worry-Free Signal Reliability
Based on a Nationwide Study of representative cities.

Local channels* in over 99% of the U.S.

FREE Professional Installation
of a DIRECTV® System in up to 4 rooms

IT'S FAST!
IT'S EASY!

Custom installation extra. \$19.95 Handling & Delivery fee may apply. Applicable use tax adjustment may apply on the retail value of the installation.

FREE UPGRADE **genie** **\$299** value

The most advanced HD DVR ever!

Records 5 shows at once.
With activation of SELECT™ Package or above. Additional & Advanced Receiver fees apply. Additional equipment required.

Bundle with DIRECTV. Don't settle for cable!

DIRECTV **INTERNET** **PHONE**

Eligibility based on service address. DIRECTV television & qualifying Internet &/or telephone services required. Additional Telco Equipment & Service Fees Apply.*

ALL DIRECTV OFFERS REQUIRE 24-MONTH AGREEMENT. *Offers valid through 4/30/14. Credit card required (except in MA & PA). New approved customers only (lease required). Programming, pricing and offers are subject to change and may vary in certain markets. Some offers may not be available through all channels and in select areas.

Upgrade to DIRECTV!
Call **1-888-530-0667**

All programming and pricing subject to change at any time. **BILL CREDIT/PROGRAMMING OFFER:** IF BY THE END OF PROMOTIONAL PRICE PERIOD(S) CUSTOMER DOES NOT CONTACT DIRECTV TO CHANGE SERVICE THEN ALL SERVICES WILL AUTOMATICALLY CONTINUE AT THE THEN-PREVALING RATES. Three free months of HBO and SHOWTIME, a \$10 value. Three free months of 4 premium movie packages, a \$144 value. **LIMIT ONE PROGRAMMING OFFER PER ACCOUNT.** Featured package/service names and current prices: SELECT \$49.99/mo.; ENTERTAINMENT \$57.99/mo.; CHOICE \$66.99/mo.; and ULTIMATE \$77.99/mo. Advanced Receiver fee \$25/mo. In certain markets, a Regional Sports fee of up to \$3.63/mo. will be assessed with CHOICE Package or above and MAS ULTRA Package or above. **Prices include the following instant bill credits for 12 months: \$25 for SELECT Package, \$28 for ENTERTAINMENT Package and \$32 for CHOICE Package. *\$10 CREDIT OFFER:** To receive the \$10 bill credit for 24 months on your Advanced Receiver fee required for Genie HD DVR or HD DVR lease, customer must, at point of sale, provide a valid email address and activate and maintain the ENTERTAINMENT or OPTIMO MAS Package or above, Auto Bill Pay and Paperless Billing. ****2014 NFL SUNDAY TICKET OFFER:** Package consists of all out-of-market NFL games (based on customer's service address) broadcast on FOX and CBS. Games available via remote viewing based on device location. Local broadcasts are subject to blackout rules. Other conditions apply. 2014 NFL SUNDAY TICKET regular full-season retail price is \$299.94. 2014 NFL SUNDAY TICKET MAX regular full-season retail price is \$329.94. **Customers activating the CHOICE Package or above will be automatically enrolled in the 2014 season of NFL SUNDAY TICKET at no additional cost and will receive a free upgrade to NFL SUNDAY TICKET MAX for the 2014 season. NFL SUNDAY TICKET subscription will automatically continue each season at special renewal rate unless customer calls to cancel prior to start of season.** To renew NFL SUNDAY TICKET MAX, customer must call to upgrade after the 2014 season. Subscription cannot be cancelled (in part or in whole) after the start of the season and subscription fee cannot be refunded. Account must be in "good standing" as determined by DIRECTV in its sole discretion to remain eligible for all offers. Account must be in "good standing" as determined by DIRECTV in its sole discretion to remain eligible for all offers.

****24-MONTH AGREEMENT, EARLY CANCELLATION WILL RESULT IN A FEE OF \$20/MONTH FOR EACH REMAINING MONTH.** Must maintain 24 consecutive months of any DIRECTV base programming package (\$19.99/mo. or above) or any qualifying international service bundle. Advanced Receiver-DVR fee (\$10/mo.) required for DVR lease. Advanced Receiver-HD fee (\$10/mo.) required for HD Receiver lease. Advanced Receiver fee (\$25/mo.) required for Genie HD DVR, HD DVR and TiVo HD DVR from DIRECTV lease. TiVo service fee (\$5/mo.) required for TiVo HD DVR from DIRECTV lease. If you have 2 Receivers and/or one Receiver and a Genie Mini Client/Enabled TV/Device, the fee is \$6/mo. For the 3rd and each additional Receiver and/or Genie Mini Client/Enabled TV/Device on your account, you are charged an additional fee of \$6/mo. per Receiver, Genie Mini Client and/or Enabled TV/Device. **NON-ACTIVATION CHARGE OF \$150 PER RECEIVER MAY APPLY. ALL EQUIPMENT IS LEASED (EXCLUDING GENIE) AND MUST BE RETURNED TO DIRECTV UPON CANCELLATION, OR UNRETURNED EQUIPMENT FEES APPLY. VISIT directv.com/legal OR CALL 1-800-DIRECTV FOR DETAILS. ****GENIE HD DVR UPGRADE OFFER:** Includes instant rebates on one Genie HD DVR and up to 3 Genie Minis (excluding model C4TW) with activation of the SELECT Package or above, OPTIMO MAS Package or above, or any qualifying international service bundle, which shall include the PREFERRED CHOICE programming package. A \$99 fee applies for Wireless Genie Mini (model C4TW) upgrade. Whole-Home HD DVR functionality requires a Genie HD DVR connected to the primary television and a Genie Mini, HDS HD Receiver(s) or an RVU-capable TV/Device in each additional room. Limit of three remote viewings per Genie HD DVR at a time. Visit directv.com/genie for complete details.**

INSTALLATION: Standard professional installation in up to four rooms only. Custom installation extra.

DIRECTV On Demand: Access to available DIRECTV On Demand programming is based on package selection. Actual number of titles will vary. Additional fees apply for new releases. Some DIRECTV On Demand content requires an HD DVR (HR20 or later) or DVR (RZ2 or later), DIRECTV Cinema Connection Kit and broadband Internet service with speeds of 750 kbps or higher and a network router with an available Ethernet port are required. Visit directv.com/cinema for details.

PLAYBOY TV PROGRAMMING OFFER: Upon request customer will receive Free Playboy TV for three months. In the fourth month service continues automatically at \$15.99/month unless customer calls to cancel.

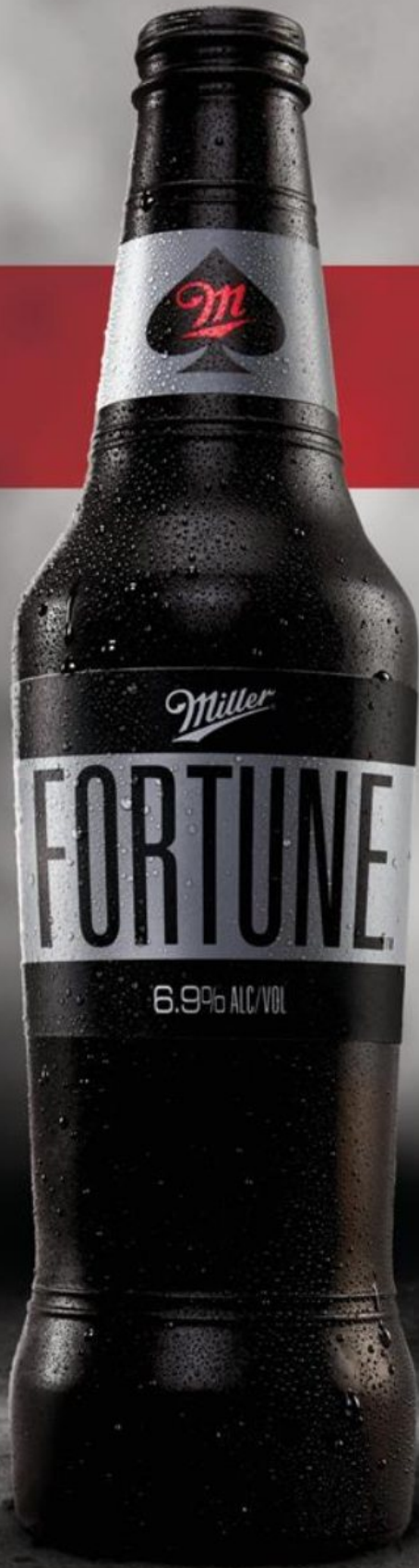
ADULT PROGRAMMING: Billing in discreet. Charges will not include channels or titles on your bill. Adult programming contains explicit sexual content, complete nudity and graphic adult situations. Viewer discretion is advised. Must be 18 years or older to purchase. DIRECTV System has a feature that restricts access to channels.

TV/DVR equipment required to view programming in HD. 1. Eligibility for local channels based on service address. Not all networks available in all markets. 2. Bundled services requires qualifying TV, Internet and/or telephone services. Internet service subject to availability. Service not available in all areas. Eligibility based on service address and phone line. Internet service provided by a preferred DIRECTV provider and billed separately. Programming, pricing, terms and conditions subject to change at any time. Pricing residential. Taxes not included. Receipt of DIRECTV programming subject to DIRECTV Customer Agreement, copy provided at directv.com/legal and in order confirmation. **PHOTO CREDIT: Playboy Images ©2012. PLAYBOY, Playboy TV, Rabbit Head Design, and PLAYMATE OF THE YEAR are trademarks of Playboy Enterprises International, Inc. NFL, the NFL Shield design and the NFL SUNDAY TICKET name and logo are registered trademarks of the NFL and its affiliates. ©2014 DIRECTV. DIRECTV and the Cyclone Design logo, SELECT, CHOICE and GENIE are trademarks of DIRECTV LLC. All other trademarks and service marks are the property of their respective owners.**

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