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**PLAYMATE**  
**REVIEW**  
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**VOLLMANN**  
**THE YEAR**  
**IN SEX**  
**20Q**  
**JAMES**  
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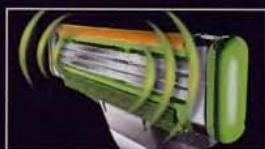
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In *Imperial America*, his new compilation of essays and articles (one of which first appeared in *PLAYBOY*), **Gore Vidal** proceeds from the premise that the America Thomas Jefferson envisioned has faded. In this month's *Jefferson vs. Hamilton*, Vidal examines the Manichean battle for the American soul, which finds its basis in the diametrically opposed philosophies of Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton. "We're caught between Hamilton and Jefferson," Vidal says. "That is the fault line, and they are the two tectonic plates in American history: Jefferson, representing individual freedom and a minimal state, and Hamilton, representing international banking and a state with great controls and rights. And the battle goes on and on."



Writer and director **Neil LaBute** returns to *PLAYBOY* with *Mom Descending a Staircase*, which combines his photography with a fine piece of original fiction. The story is set in motion by some long-forgotten Polaroids and the revelations they provide. "There is no shoebox full of photos of my mom," he says. "The idea is that people can think they know one another and then discover something that breaks them apart."



**William T. Vollmann** exposes the underbelly of North American free trade in *Blood, Sweat and Trade Secrets*, his account of conditions in Mexico's maquiladoras, the job-poaching factories mushrooming along the U.S. border. "They provide jobs for people who otherwise wouldn't have them," he reports. "But they don't pay much, and the companies trifle with people's health, which I think is inexcusable."



Author **Neal Gabler** is both a historian and a movie critic. No wonder we tapped him to reassess the twisted, mythic life of the original rebel billionaire, Howard Hughes, in *The Sucker With the Money*. "He was certainly successful in making himself an icon," Gabler says. "He managed to present his life like a movie. Some people do that inadvertently, but he was deliberate in making his life into a soap opera."



Playmate of the Year, TV and movie star, best-selling author, babe: We love **Jenny McCarthy**. Senior Contributing Photographer **Stephen Wayda** captured the queen of our hearts in the King's castle. "We did the shoot at Elvis and Priscilla's honeymoon house in Palm Springs," Wayda says. "Jenny wanted to do something different, with a 1950s feel to it. We wanted something wild enough to fit her outrageous personality, so everything was done to the extreme. Elvis's old house just seemed to be the perfect location. They haven't changed the place since he was there, so it was kind of powerful. When we went into the bedroom we had an awkward silence. It felt as though we were somewhere we shouldn't be—but it was cool to stage a threesome in Elvis's actual honeymoon bed."



"Rock singers don't meet with their fan clubs every night before a show and sign 50 autographs," says **Steve Pond**, who rode across four states on the tour bus of the proudly un-rock **Toby Keith** for the *Playboy Interview*. "But country singers—no matter how big they get—go through a ritual every night. There's a meet and greet with fans. They sign a bunch of autographs. There's 50 photographs with contest winners. Because Keith sells so many records and is such a big star, I wasn't expecting him to do all these things, but he still does, to stay close to his fans. Another refreshing thing about Keith is he knows that to be out there trying for crossover success would be to betray who he is. Of course, he also knows that he makes enough money and sells enough records without crossing over."



London-based illustrator **David Hughes** created the art that accompanies **Christopher Buckley's** *Digging Up Private Ryan*. "I was looking for a metaphor for the French, and it came down to my using any excuse to draw a poodle," Hughes admits. "I thought, Dare I stick an American flag in its ass? Then I said, Why not? It's *PLAYBOY*. I put the flag in the dog's ass because I liked it—and because that's what the French think of Americans and what the rest of the world thinks of America at the moment."



**Timothy White** recently brought home the award for International Photographer of the Year at the 2004 Lucie Awards. For more than 20 years White has been lauded for his portraits of celebrities. So he understands the red-carpet aesthetic behind *The High Life*, this month's fashion feature. What most intrigued him during the shoot was the way formalwear has been reimagined for a more relaxed, comfort-oriented era. "For me, the big surprise, frankly, was the fashion—how loose a lot of it is," he reports. "These aren't your typical tuxedos." White captures the bold personal style the new tuxes allow to show through. "Our subject was tuxedos, but I like to focus on individuals."

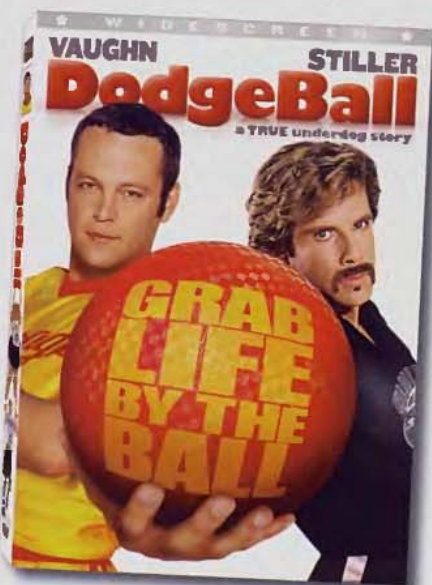


In *Is This Man the Future of Poker?* **Pat Jordan** profiles 24-year-old David Williams, the runner-up at the most recent World Series of Poker. In his first WSOP Williams won \$3.5 million and became both the youngest player and the first African American to make the final table. "David is a brilliant kid who is very disciplined and pathologically organized," Jordan explains. "He writes down every candy bar he eats and how much he pays for it. But he also takes an athlete's approach to poker. He wants to win. He is not thinking about the money. He wants to be the best. He wants to pitch a no-hitter."



*PLAYBOY's* Editorial Director Emeritus, **Arthur Kretchmer**, teamed with David Stevens and Ken Gross to revisit one of his favorite beats in *Cars of the Year*. Though Kretchmer is a legend in our office, the yellow 2005 Vette he's been testing may have something to do with the reverent reactions he's been getting on the street lately. "You need to feel a tactile sense of being in the right place when you drive a car," he says. "In many ways a car is a chair—a chair, an engine and a stereo. And those things need to work together first."

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## COVER STORY

Jenny McCarthy first appeared in PLAYBOY in 1993. Our readers spotted something special and elected her Playmate of the Year. From there, her popularity took off. She berated bachelors on *Singled Out* and starred in an MTV comedy. You can see her again on this season's *Bad Girl's Guide* on UPN. And she was a very bad girl for Senior Contributing Photographer Stephen Wayda. Jenny gives our Rabbit cardiac awrist.



# PLAYBOY

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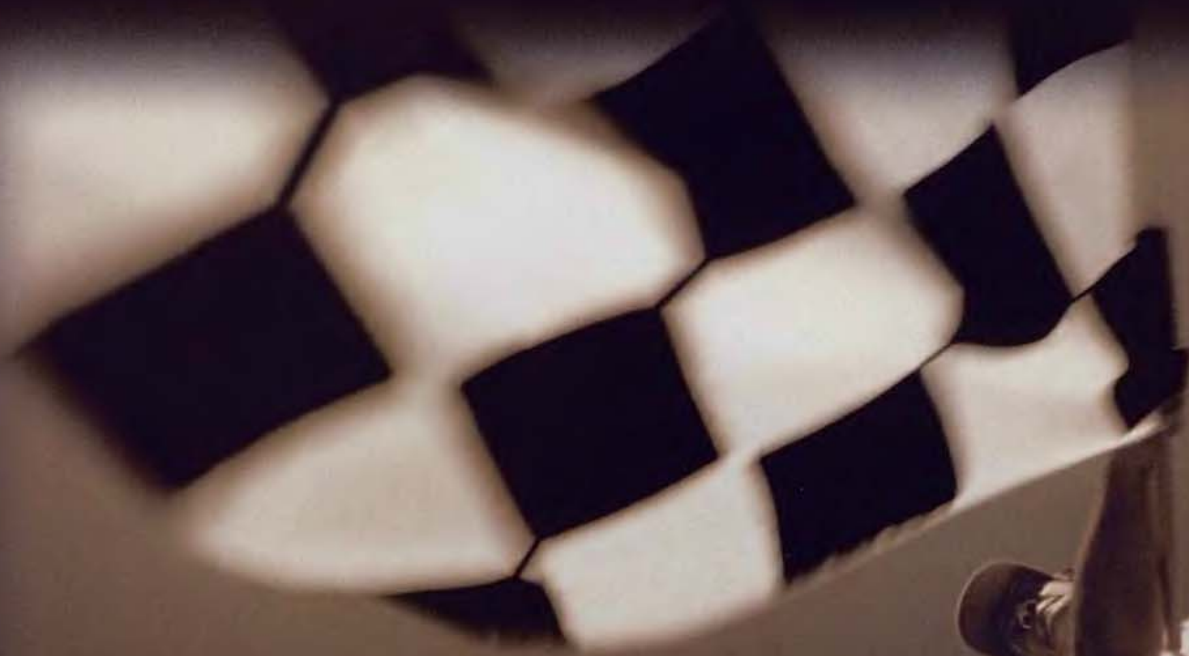
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


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HEF SIGHTINGS, MANSION FROLICS AND NIGHTLIFE NOTES



## VEGAS, BUNNY, VEGAS!

What's Sin City without a place to Bunny hop? Palms Hotel & Casino owner George Maloof and Hef plan to open a Playboy boutique casino, club and more in Vegas in early 2006.

## SILVER SCREEN DREAMS

Every June for the past 17 years, the L.A. Conservancy has hosted Last Remaining Seats events at historic theaters, where classic films are shown on the big screen. Movie buff Hef (with Bridget, Holly and Kendra, below) sponsored 2004's cinematic fete at the Orpheum.



## IT PAYS TO SPEAK UP

The 25th anniversary of the HMM First Amendment Awards was a night spent toasting our favorite loudmouths. Above, Christie Hefner presents a \$5,000 check to Bill Maher, who was honored for his ardent support of the Bill of Rights.

## MUSEUM OF LOVE

Hef was inducted into the Erotic Museum's Hall of Fame, where the Playboy exhibit includes his portrait hanging among those of other pioneers of sexual freedom. After the ceremony, Hef took press questions and perused another important collection (bottom) with his girlfriends and presenter Bill Maher.



## THAT'S WHAT BUDDIES ARE FOR

Best Buddies' 12th Annual L.A. Gala (held at the Mansion) left everyone—especially the Bunnies—warm and fuzzy. Co-chaired by producer Brian Grazer and director Brett Ratner, the event attracted Olympic gold medalist Carl Lewis (above), among other icons.



# HANGIN' WITH H&F



The cool crowd has been rubbing elbows with Hef at his favorite Hollywood hot spots. Here-with, the monthly report on Mr. Playboy and his party posse. (1) Bottoms up! Hef's girlfriends Kendra and Bridget get frisky with Holly at the nightclub Prey. (2) *Ocean's Twelve* star Bernie Mac at Forbidden City. (3) Michael "Let's Get Ready to Rumble" Buffer and his girlfriend, Christine Prado, at Mansion Movie Night. (4) Hef with Cindy Margolis at Bliss. (5) Same club, different night, with rock royalty Sean Lennon. (6) Playmates galore at Party With a Purpose, a fund-raiser for underprivileged children, held at PMW. (7) Marlon Wayans with the Man. (8) Brooke Burke. (9) Playmate Carrie Stevens and Angelica Bridges. (10) Kendra with Janet Jackson at Bliss, where, unfortunately, there were no wardrobe malfunctions to report. (11) Having way too much fun in the sun with Bridget, Kendra and Holly. (12) Legendary basketball star Isiah Thomas. (13) Lorenzo Lamas and Barbara Moore. (14) Huddling with Holly and Jessica Alba. (15) Jack Black at Movie Night.





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Our Special Editions calendars decorate your walls with incredible sex appeal that absolutely drips from every page. Comely coeds, lingerie-clad hotties and gorgeous girls from the Great White North display their charms all year long. Nudity. Each wall calendar measures 12" x 12".

**VF9602** 2005 College Girls Calendar \$7.99

**VF9601** 2005 Girls of Canada Calendar \$7.99

**VF9600** Lingerie Wall Calendar \$14.99

**VF9600** Lingerie Box Calendar (not shown) \$12.99

## WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Colonel David Hackworth's article *Why the Military Never Learns* (October) hits the nail on the head. As a Vietnam and Desert Storm veteran, I have been saying the same things since the day the war in Iraq started. We should have taken care of Afghanistan and found Bin Laden first. Saddam Hus-



At war in the wrang place, with the wrang tools.

sein was not a threat to our security. We claim we went there to liberate the Iraqi people, but they don't see us that way. How would we feel if another country invaded the U.S. to "liberate" us from our president? We would take up arms against it.

Martin Mendoza  
Phoenix, Arizona

If this article doesn't convince someone that the war on terrorism is a complete failure, I don't know what will.

James DeVoy  
Evansville, Indiana

I admire Hackworth for his service to our country, but like John Kerry, he's playing Monday-morning quarterback. I had hoped he would provide insight into the military aspects of the war on terrorism. Like Kerry, he doesn't seem to have a plan for how to win. He knows only why we can't.

Michael Hall  
Antioch, California

I am currently serving in the Army in Iraq. It's great to hear someone talk about what is really going on over here. Keep up the good work.

Cody Mills  
Baghdad, Iraq

Hackworth is wrong to say that terrorists are trying "to impose a radical brand of Islam on the world and to de-

stroy our way of life." He's been watching too much Fox News. We've been meddling in the affairs of these countries since at least Eisenhower's time.

Arland Miller  
Lawrenceville, Georgia

Nothing starts a fight quicker than religion and politics. *PLAYBOY* would be wise to refrain from discussing either.

Don Miller  
Mulberry, Florida

## BEHIND THE BABE

Rachel Perry (*Babe of the Month*, October) is my favorite VH1 host. Can you persuade her to pose nude?

Jake Watters  
Warner Robins, Georgia  
*We're working on it, always.*

## BLACK GOLD

I am the co-founder of Caviar Emptor, a group that educates consumers about eco-friendly caviars. Contrary to your claims in *A Fatal Legacy* (October), American caviars, such as those taken from farmed California white sturgeon, North Carolina rainbow trout and Missouri paddlefish, are exceptionally popular. One producer sold six tons in 2003. Food critics from *The New York Times* to *Gourmet* have raved about these roes.

Vikki Spruill  
Washington, D.C.

## LESS IS MORE

I've been begging the editors of your *Special Editions* for years to publish an issue devoted only to women wearing kneesocks, so you can imagine my delight at seeing Centerfold Kimberly Holland (October) posing in them. All I ask in return for my fabulous idea is one percent of the gross.

Michael Bruno  
Akron, Ohio

*Would you settle for a pair of kneesocks?*

My only complaint about the pictorial is those red cowboy boots. I prefer to see Kimberly completely in the buff.

Tony Garry  
Columbus, Ohio

Finally, a Centerfold whose pubic area is completely shaved. A bare pussy is wondrously beautiful, a holy thing fully offered, more generous, more intimate, more inviting.

David Griesemer  
Tallahassee, Florida

## PLAYBOY, YOU'RE FIRED!

Egocentric tyrant Donald Trump (*Playboy Interview*, October) is the business equivalent of Mussolini—he appears on the screen of history but is ultimately insignificant.

David Kaye  
Seattle, Washington

Every once in a while it's nice to skip an article in *PLAYBOY* without fear of missing anything important.

Sam Douglas  
Columbia, South Carolina

Had my father been a real estate developer instead of a railroad machinist, I'm sure the name Bell would be on buildings too.

Ron Bell  
Newport News, Virginia

## COLLEGE GIRLS

Your college-girls pictorials are my favorite feature, and *Girls of the ACC* (October) is no exception. Florida State's Lace Rose Allenius is amazing.

Jeremy Taylor  
Sunrise, Florida

If you don't invite cover girl Evelyn Gery back for her own pictorial, I may have to cancel my subscription.

R.W. Rose  
Big Bear Lake, California  
*Which is why we keep you guessing.*



Evelyn Gery and her powerful panties.

I own the same panties as Evelyn Gery. I put them on to show my hubby, and we had a great afternoon.

V. Zirzow  
Silver Lake, Wisconsin



**OUR VICTORY  
IS IMMINENT**



## THE RAEIAN ZONE

We have received overwhelming words of praise and support because of *The Rael World* (October), in which myself and the Raelian women are beautifully photographed. *PLAYBOY* is a great institution that has helped break sexual taboos that imprison humanity. It is important to embrace sexuality—be it hetero, homo, through masturbation or with one or many partners—because a lack of sexuality gives rise to violence. The response demonstrates that people are willing to contemplate the message I received from the Elohim, our true creators. Peace begins within ourselves.

Rael  
Valcourt, Quebec

## MUSIC ROUNDTABLE

AS *PLAYBOY* has always taken music seriously, I'm not surprised by the candid tone of your roundtable, *Rip. Burn. Die.* (October). But the panel should have included someone from an independent label or a record store and, more important, a few consumers. I can't understand why you included so many executives and rock stars when you usually review indie-label CDs. The most exciting things in music are happening on the margins.

Mike Nutt  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

The artists interviewed fail to recognize that they alienate fans by blathering about politics from the stage. As a conservative who appreciates the arts, I am offended by their hostility.

Lisa Springsteel  
Bordentown, New Jersey

Jason Flom seems so out of touch with the music industry that I can't believe he's the CEO of a major label. He misses the point of Napster and Kazaa. I have purchased more than 2,000 CDs, and nothing is more frustrating than spending \$15 to hear one good song out of 12. Market researcher Joe Fleischer claims that radio stations play what people want to hear. But how can people know if they want something else when they hear only the same 25 songs? The future of radio is satellite. Marc Geiger of the William Morris Agency says some people blame the lack of concertgoers on indie rock. The real causes of lackluster sales are high ticket prices and service fees.

## THE STATE OF THE AFFAIR: HELP WANTED

*PLAYBOY* is conducting a study. Last fall we hired a research group to survey Americans on fidelity and infidelity, lust and liaisons, truth and consequences. The results have been surprising. Now we want to get specific information. If you're willing to participate in a survey on the state of fidelity in America, please point your browser to [playboy.com/fidelitysurvey](http://playboy.com/fidelitysurvey). It's anonymous.

There's no way for kids to save enough money to go to a lot of concerts. That's why Ozzfest and the Warped Tour are popular: lots of bands, one ticket. The music industry has to change the way it does business. Open the vaults, throw it all on the Internet, and charge a reasonable price for downloading.

Andrew Mitchell  
Montgomery, Illinois

This reminds me of what happened in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when the recording industry complained because people were taping songs from the radio. Once again the technology has gotten ahead of it.

Mike Moss  
Orlando, Florida

Give me a way to pay the artists without paying the ridiculous salaries of record executives and I might stop downloading.

Alix Miles  
Kansas City, Missouri



Can music execs play a different tune?

Following the trail blazed by the Grateful Dead, many "taper-friendly" bands allow fans to share live recordings. Many are posted at [archive.org](http://archive.org), and the quality is impressive. It's given me so much new music that I haven't bought a CD in the past year. Instead I spend my money on shows, which more directly benefit the bands.

Paul Knapp  
Arlington, Virginia



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**SKECHERS**

# PLAYBOY

## after hours



babe of the month

## Chanel Ryan

**F**or Chanel Ryan, the slow transition from model to actress has at least been colorful. "I've done fun independent films that haven't necessarily gone anywhere," she says. "I played a schizophrenic, a crazy pregnant alcoholic teenager, a nerd and an obsessed fanatic who drools over Gary Sinise in TNT's *George Wallace*. In *Beach Balls* I play a waitress in a rubber-ducky inner tube and full snorkel gear. It's a Roger Corman film, so it's all about hot chicks skimpily clad." Sounds terrific—and appropriate for a seaside stunner who designs swimwear and shot her 2005 calendar in Puerto Vallarta. Her company,

This calendar girl is no stuffed bikini

Babes With Brains, publishes all her calendars, books and Benchwarmer trading cards, available at [chanelryan.com](http://chanelryan.com). Life seems like an endless summer for Chanel, but she wouldn't mind a partner for beach blanket bingo. "There's this vicious rumor that girls don't like sweetness and that nice guys finish last, but not with me," she says. "A lot of L.A. guys cop an attitude and won't call back, but I don't play that. When I start to think I'm too cool for school, I go home to Pennsylvania, where people put you right in your place. I'd like to settle down in the country in a few years. I love that way of life."

"There's this vicious rumor that nice guys finish last, but not with me."



See Miss July 2004 Stephanie Glasson  
and Cyber Girl Rochelle Loewen without  
their tracksuits on in the Cyber Club.  
<http://cyber.playboy.com>



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## guest spot

## LAST LAUGHS

## PARTING SHOTS FROM A KING OF COMEDY

In October Rodney Dangerfield died of complications following open-heart surgery. The day before he went into the hospital, he offered us his New Year's wisdom. When the clock strikes midnight this year, join us in raising a glass to the one, the only—Al Czervik.



## RESOLUTIONS

This year I'm going to try to stay away from hookers. I tell ya, a hooker—that's the best business there is. I mean, you got it, you sell it, and you still got it.

Every New Year's I make a resolution to get healthy. I visit my doctor. Last time, my doctor told me I pulled a muscle. I told him, "I've been doing that for years."

One time I told my doctor I wanted to get a vasectomy. He said with a face like mine I don't need one.

I'm always resolving to lose weight, but that's a tough one. Everything is fattening. I'm glad jerking off isn't fattening. I'd weigh a fucking ton.

I tell ya, it's tough to lose weight. I tried jogging. I kept running into restaurants.

## MEMORABLE MOMENTS

There's one New Year's Eve I'll never forget: At the stroke of midnight I actually had a stroke. It was memorable all right—it was a nightmare.

## THE KISS

Last New Year's Eve my wife told me I could kiss her on the cheek...and then she bent over.

## PARTY FAVORS

The best party favor is if some girl lets me take her home.

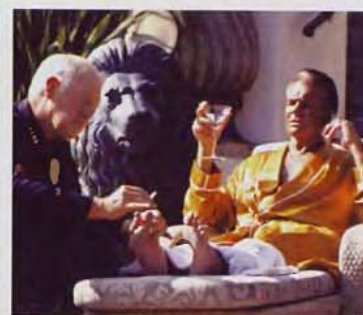
The funny hats are nice, but I tell ya, I don't like the noisemakers. This one girl I left the party with—I found out she was a noisemaker, and I got rid of her real fast.

## A TOAST

Here's my New Year's toast: "A mother may love her child, and a child may love its mother, but no love is greater than one drunk's love for another."

Amen.

## song 'n' dance macabre



## THERE'S A RIOT GOIN' ON-SCREEN

## A NATIONAL NIGHTMARE SEEN AS COMEDY OF TERROR

On April 29, 1992, after four LAPD officers were acquitted of beating Rodney King, rioters took to the Los Angeles streets in a racially charged display of song, dance and comedy. At least, that's what happens in *The L.A. Riots Spectacular*, a bizarre movie about the chaos that captivated a concerned nation. "Maybe I'm handling it irresponsibly," admits first-time director Marc Klasfeld. "But to me this isn't a joke. I'm examining how something horrible was treated as entertainment. You couldn't turn on your TV without seeing violence—it was just another media distraction." Like "Springtime for Hitler" in Mel Brooks's *The Producers*, *Spectacular* seems designed to offend: In one scene, narrator Snoop Dogg serenades a courtroom full of cops with the gangsta-rap anthem "Fuck tha Police." Other notable stars include Emilio Estevez (Officer Powell), Charles Dutton (the Mayor) and George Hamilton (the King of Beverly Hills). The movie has scored at film festivals, so check local art house listings—but don't look for it at the multiplex. "It's gonna piss off a lot of people," says Klasfeld. Given that it's a musical, perhaps they should ask themselves, "Why can't we all just sing along?"

## cool inventions

## CHILL 'ER UP

## INGENIOUS JIGGERS KEEP THE HARD STUFF COLD

What's worse than a room-temperature shot of vodka? Aside from disease and a Sting concert, not much. To keep your Russian firewater frosty, Stolichnaya is packaging its 750-milliliter bottles with shot-glass-shaped ice molds. Make your cool cups with juice to add a touch of flavor; for the ultimate turn-on, freeze the original aphrodisiac—chocolate—and fill with Kahlúa or Bailey's.



premature extrapolation



## 2005: A LOOK BACK

**FASTEN YOUR SEAT BELTS—IT'S GOING TO BE A BUMPY RIDE. THESE ARE THE STORIES, IMPORTANT OR OTHERWISE, THAT WILL CAPTIVATE US IN 2005**



Pentagon clarifies: Mission in Iraq was accomplished, but "missionettes" continue.

CBS News scandal: Panties in question not actually worn by Britney.

Jews for Jacko.

The Oprah–Dr. Phil wedding.

The buffet table at the Oprah–Dr. Phil wedding.

Flannel and baggy pants hot sellers as "lesbosexual" look takes off.

Department of Homeland Security rechristened Department of Fatherland-sekuritie.

Filming begins on Mel Gibson's controversial *Shylock*.

CBS News scandal: "Easter Bunny" just an unemployed longshoreman in costume.

Dick Cheney explodes. Rumsfeld wounded by shards of sternum; says it doesn't hurt.

*Details* goes back into the closet.



Most bootlegged sex video: *1 Night in Regis*.

Rapture occurs.

Cubs win World Series.

CBS News scandal: "Unicorn" just a horse with a pointy stick glued on.

Ellen DeGeneres

kicks off season by giving each audience member a former child star.



Ali G's interview with Mike Tyson ends in tragedy.

Sales of WNBA jerseys take off after Nelly wears one in "Tall Drinka Watta" video.

Kim Jong Il annexes China but allows it autonomous rule.

"Who Wants to Be on Television?" reality series churns out 100 pseudo-celebs each week.

Tappahannock, Virginia, population 1,629: Hit, and hit hard.

junk on your trunk



## WHAT R U WEARING?

**SPAM: ANNOYING IN YOUR IN BOX, FUNNY AS A SHIRT**

Scams, homegrown porn, penis size, Viagra, privacy, paranoia.... Spam comes on paint a fairly damning portrait of contemporary hopes and insecurities. Fight the lamebrained social engineers with a tee from spamshirt.com—then escape your debt and be the nine-inch man your goddess craves.

popular photography



## GOTCHA!

**MOBILE SNAPPERS TAKE HOT SHOTS**

Beware—mobloggers walk among us. Moblogging, or mobile blogging, is the on-the-go posting of content to the Internet, and camera phones have taken the concept from egghead fantasy to virtual reality. It's no surprise, given humans' fascination with exhibitionism and voyeurism, that the uploaded photos tend toward the risqué. The thong peeking from a co-worker's jeans—snap it, post it. Your wife's new tattoo—snap it, post it. The fellatio you're receiving—snap it, post it. Visit [sexblo.gs/mob](http://sexblo.gs/mob) for a sampler of extremely candid camera work.

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## hangover hotel



## SUITE RELIEF

BIG EASY INN EMPLOYS BENDER MENDER

New Year's Eve? Please. In New Orleans excessive celebration is a year-round affair, and visitors on hurricane-fueled all-nighters of jambalaya and jazz wake up in uncharted hangover hell. At the Loews New Orleans Hotel, you'll find the nation's only Recovery Concierge. "It's not just the drinking that flattens you," says Sara Baker, the self-described "queen of excess" whose job it is to patch up damaged guests. "It's overindulging in everything—food, walking, humidity, cigarette smoke and booze." Baker offers pre- and postparty counseling; rooms are equipped with sleep-enabling white-noise machines and a Recovery Basket loaded with vitamin C eye cream, a cooling eye mask and bath salts containing aloe and juniper. Baker stops short of holding a guest's head over the porcelain god, so don't ask. Instead she advises a stop at Café Du Monde; the grease in the beignets coats your stomach, she says, "and the bread soaks up alcohol. It's a personal remedy I've tested once or twice."

## listings

## THE HOOK OF LOVE

ACTUAL FLIES TIED BY BAWDY ANGLERS

Merkin  
The Stimulator  
Wiggle Nymph  
Dirty Sanchez  
Booby  
Electric Smut

Pink Scud  
Sea-Ducer  
Squirrely Bugger  
Red Ass Willie  
Willie's Woody  
Joe's Green Weenie

Hairy Mary  
Montreal Whore  
Who's Your Daddy  
Wood Pussy  
Goldie Hawn  
Jungle Cock Silver

## employee of the month



## DESIGNING WOMAN

LET INTERIOR DESIGNER MANDY MONTALBANO CREATE YOUR LOVE LAIR

**PLAYBOY:** What does your job entail?

**MANDY:** I try to match clients' personalities to their spaces. I hire contractors to do construction, and then I go out to find the furnishings. Most of my clients are men, and I know what a woman wants, so whenever I walk into a room I am thinking how I can make it sexier.

**PLAYBOY:** Do you specialize in bachelor pads?

**MANDY:** I had an older, divorced client who was very into sports and rock-and-roll memorabilia—his place looked like a 13-year-old's bedroom. I thought to myself, This guy is never going to get laid. I heard that after I put his place through an overhaul he did one on himself and is now hanging with younger women.

**PLAYBOY:** That's a lovely head of red hair. Does the carpet match the drapes?

**MANDY:** A designer never gives away her secrets.



Employee of the Month candidates: Send pictures to PLAYBOY Photography Department, Attn: Employee of the Month, 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611. Must be at least 18 years old. Must send photocopies of a driver's license and another valid ID (not a credit card), one of which must include a current photo.

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ABOUT ME INVENTING THE  
STRING BIKINI: YOU'RE WELCOME."

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# THE MANSION



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# RAW DATA

SIGNIFICA, INSIGNIFICA, STATS AND FACTS



## Jesus Rents

Coincident with the DVD release of *The Passion of the Christ*, rentals of *Ben-Hur* jumped **160%**. The 1977 flick *Jesus of Nazareth* saw a **100%** uptick, and borrowings of 1965's *Greatest Story Ever Told* increased by **33%**.

## Thanks for Nothing

The price tag on each of the 276 Pontiac G6s Oprah Winfrey famously gave away to her audience members was **\$28,500**. The IRS classifies such a gift as income and as such expects to reap taxes on it—as much as **\$7,000** per car, depending on the audience member's tax bracket.

## Book of Pointless Records



## Most Time Spent in a Glass Case Full of 6,000 Scorpions

**36 days**, by "Scorpion Woman" Nur Malena Hassan of Malaysia. She was stung **17 times**.

## Value Ad

The first television commercial—bought by the Bulova Watch Co. and aired on July 1, 1941 before a Brooklyn Dodgers game—cost **\$9**.



## Gouge Away

Average price of a gallon of gas, adjusted for inflation:

1964: **\$1.83**  
1974: **\$1.99**  
1981: **\$2.83**  
1990: **\$1.61**  
2000: **\$1.61**  
2004: **\$2.04**

## Price Check



## \$128 million

Amount paid for a mansion in London's Kensington Palace Gardens by Indian steel magnate Lakshmi Mittal. It's believed to be the highest price ever paid for a house.



## Bird Feeders

The people of Hong Kong are expected to eat **800,000** pigeons this year.

## The Loneliest Number

According to a new study by sexuality expert Anthony Bogaert, **1%** of the population is classified as asexual, having responded in the affirmative to the survey statement "I have never felt sexually attracted to anyone at all."

## X-Hausted

There are currently **1,383** products whose names incorporate the word *extreme*.





GET YOURS

Thousands of Possibilities



# R E V I E W S

## m o v i e s



### movie of the month

## [ THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA ]

### Broadway's biggest musical goes Hollywood

When more than 100 million ticket buyers worldwide have shelled out over \$3.5 billion to see a visually striking stage musical in which a disfigured genius composer shows his passion for a young soprano by dropping a chandelier on a theater full of freaked-out patrons, you'd better believe somebody's going to fire up a movie version. Enter *The Phantom of the Opera*, the big-screen rendition of Andrew Lloyd Webber's spooky, sexy 1986 Gothic roof raiser. Director Joel Schumacher's film features young up-and-comers Gerard Butler as the Phantom and Emmy Rossum as his honey-throated protégée, along with the more familiar Minnie Driver as a bitchy opera diva. Says Emmy-nominated actor Patrick Wilson (*Angels in America*), who stars as the dashing nobleman, "Let's face it, this was the stage musical about which people kept telling each other, 'A chandelier falls right in the theater!' That made musicals as cinematic as can be. But when that chandelier fell while they filmed it from 8,000 different angles and everything started exploding, you could see how the movie gives the stage show a shot of aggression, passion and boom. I said to Andrew Lloyd Webber, 'I'll bet you've never seen the chandelier fall and explode for real.' And he had this big smile on his face."

**"The movie gives the stage show a shot of aggression."**

—Stephen Rebell

### now showing

### BUZZ

#### Elektra

(Jennifer Garner, Terence Stamp, Goran Visnjic) A superbuff Garner is back in this *Daredevil* spin-off playing the assassin who befriends Visnjic and his 13-year-old daughter, whom she has been assigned to kill. With her new pals, Garner takes on that vicious pack of killers the Order of the Hand.

**Our call:** The bad news? Garner's black leather outfit is ancient history. The good news? She now wields her superhero *sai* of vengeance while wearing a red corset.



#### In Good Company

(Dennis Quaid, Scarlett Johansson, Topher Grace, Selma Blair) *American Pie* co-director Paul Weitz flies solo, without brother Chris, in this comedy about a young hotshot (Grace) who demotes a middle-aged magazine ad ace (Quaid), then worsens things by sleeping with his teenage daughter (Johansson).

**Our call:** Expect a smart cast, an offbeat script and a fast-maturing director to deliver something closer to the Weitzes' *About a Boy* than just another stale slice of pie.



#### Coach Carter

(Samuel L. Jackson, Robert Ri'chard, Rob Brown, Ashanti) Jackson could turn in a slam dunk as the real-life inner-city high school basketball coach who benched his entire undefeated team in 1999 because of lousy grades, then mercilessly whipped them into shape as students and men.

**Our call:** Three of the more encouraging words we know—"starring Samuel L. Jackson"—help cancel out five of the least encouraging words we know: "inspired by a true story."



#### Spanglish

(Adam Sandler, Téa Leoni, Paz Vega, Cloris Leachman) James L. Brooks's first flick since *As Good as It Gets* tackles L.A.'s culture clash as a Mexican single mom (Vega) tries to learn English and deal with her daughter while tending to a house full of neurotic eccentrics, headed by Sandler and Leoni.

**Our call:** Oscar voters tend to pay attention to actors in Brooks's movies. Does that mean Sandler haters would view a best actor nod as a sign of the coming apocalypse?



## dvd of the month

# [ ANCHORMAN: THE LEGEND OF RON BURGUNDY ]

Will Ferrell gives TV news an *Old School* makeover

Ferrell goofs his way to the front of the post-*Saturday Night Live* class with this hilarious if uneven funfest, playing Ron Burgundy, the puffy-haired and cocksure star of a San Diego newscast in the double-knit 1970s. TV news was a man's game, we're told in a droll voice-over by *American Justice* host Bill Kurtis, and then Christina Applegate ruins it for Burgundy and his fellow boobs on the Channel 4 news team. The frontline battle of the sexes serves merely as a framework for connected skits, such as Ferrell wooing Applegate with a wild, wandering flute solo in a jazz club. Ferrell and director Adam McKay get laughs from Steve Carell, Paul Rudd and David Koechner as Burgundy's brain-dead posse. They're very *Old School*. **Extras:** Bloopers, outtakes, trimmed scenes and several Burgundy interviews serve as highlights. An unrated version adds eight minutes to the PG-13 cut. **YYY** —Greg Fagan



## OZ: THE COMPLETE FOURTH SEASON

(2000) Life goes on for the various psychopaths and miscreants of Oswald State Penitentiary in this fourth stretch of HBO's brutal prison drama, which runs 16 episodes instead of the usual eight. The extended season sizzles with soapy intrigue, and the backstabbing is literal, sometimes with a "Gillette bayonet" (learn how to make your own in episode 12, "Cuts Like a Knife"). **Extras:** Thirty minutes of deleted scenes, plus commentary on two episodes from writer and executive producer Tom Fontana. **YYY½** —G.F.



**TROY** (2004) There are moments in this overwrought saga when you are certain Brad Pitt's Achilles will start a line with "Dude!" Ignoring the playful gods of Homer's *Iliad*, director Wolfgang Petersen constructs a trite love triangle punctuated with CGI combat. Diane Kruger, as the face that launched a thousand ships, is sadly beautiful but boring. **Extras:** An interactive tour of Mount Olympus. **YY** —Buzz McClain



**OPEN WATER** (2004) It is astonishing what director Chris Kentis accomplishes with a \$130,000 budget, a digital video camera and two fearless actors willing to swim with real sharks. Based on a true story, the film stars Blanchard Ryan and Daniel Travis as a vacationing yuppie couple unintentionally abandoned by their diving boat and left to fend for themselves in the open ocean. The black-eyed man-eaters circling the scuba divers provide tension, but watching the two leads struggle to suppress

their frustration, anger and panic as the hours tick by is a psychological endurance exercise. **Extras:** A piece that separates shark fact and fiction, tips from dive professionals to help you survive being stranded at sea. **YYY**

—Robert B. DeSalvo



**PAPARAZZI** (2004) Director Paul Abascal has gone from hairstylist for action stars (Gibson, Willis, Stallone) to director of a movie about...an action star. Cole Hauser plays the actor who clashes with the paparazzi. Too bad he doesn't have the grittiness to pull off the role, but Daniel Baldwin and Tom Sizemore make up for him. **Extras:** Commentary, deleted scenes, a stunt featurette. **YYY½** —B.M.



**GARDEN STATE** (2004) First-time writer-director Zach Braff—star of TV's *Scrubs*—grounds this offbeat romantic dramedy in his native New Jersey, where L.A. actor Andrew Largeman (Braff) returns after a long absence to attend his mom's funeral. Untethered from his lithium, bland Andy loosens up, getting high with his oddball buddies and hooking up with wild child Natalie Portman. **Extras:** Deleted scenes, commentaries and a making-of featurette. **YYY** —G.F.



## h2&gt; tease frame

You knew it wasn't polite to cheer during *Jersey Girl* (2004) when **Jennifer Lopez** kicked the bucket. But after all the tabloid chatter perhaps J. Lo deserves a little razzing to motivate her to choose worthwhile material again. Her star rose with



*Selena* (1997), a biopic about a would-be crossover Latina pop star—a move Lopez actually accomplished, and then some, in real life. She also distinguished herself in *Blood and Wine* (1996), Oliver Stone's eccentric *U Turn* (1997, pictured) and *Out of Sight* (1998). But then she took wrong turns with *The Wedding Planner* (2001), *Maid in Manhattan* (2002) and, especially, *Gigli* (2003). We're hoping for better in her newest movie, *An Unfinished Life*.

## the critical collector

## [ DOCUMENTARIES TAKE FLIGHT ]

DVDs breathe new life into nonfiction movies

Not since Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* captivated 1922 movie audiences with walrus fights and Eskimo kisses has the film documentary been so popular. Suddenly, multiplexes are booking nonfiction, and DVD is helping drive the popularity. "A year ago retailers didn't want documentaries. Now *documentary* is the buzzword," says Steve Savage, president of Docurama, a DVD label whose catalog lists more than 100 docs—the top seller being *Don't Look Back*, D.A. Pennebaker's 1967 cinema verité profile of the emerging Bob Dylan. With DVD, producers can add content that builds on the theatrical release. *Winged Migration* (2002, pictured), a montage of birds-in-flight footage, boasts an equally fascinating behind-the-scenes featurette on how the images were captured. *Spellbound* (2002) depicts the plights of eight contestants in a 1999 spelling bee and includes a where-are-they-now update. *Fahrenheit 9/11* (2004), Michael Moore's \$119 million box office sensation, provides DVD extras such as an Abu Ghraib prison segment and a bit on Arab American comedians. *Outfoxed* (2004), which investigates Fox News's right-leaning exaggerations, shows how director Robert Greenwald clipped the feature from TV footage. *Born Rich* (2003) adds commentaries and outtakes that further embarrass famous heirs. The DVD of the grand prix motorcycle saga *Faster* (2003) includes an entire sequel, *Faster and Faster '03-'04*, that never made it to theaters. Bonus footage aside, the recent rise of DVD documentaries reflects a change in audiences' taste for the truth—or at least an attempt at it. And yes, *Nanook of the North* is on DVD, with bonus features. —B.M.



## special additions

Behind the scenes with Altman, 24 and two teen classics



The serialized TV techno-thriller *24* works brilliantly on DVD, so the new *24: Season Three* box screams for a marathon viewing. It arrives with a disc-only prequel that sets up the show's fourth year on Fox. This eventful, six-minute scene setter is a must if you're tuning in to the season premiere on January 3. But since the third season is the best so far—and the box supplies commentary tracks for six episodes, deleted scenes and making-of featurettes—the devoted will still dig in.... Take a deep breath and hold it till the room spins. Dude! It's *Ultimate Party Collection*, featuring Richard Linklater's toke-tastic 1993 hit *Dazed and Confused* and Amy Heckerling's 1982 teen classic *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*. *Dazed* has been dosed with a slew of institutional filmstrips decrying the dangers of marijuana, as well as PSAs from the movie's 1970s era. *Fast Times* has commentary from Heckerling and screenwriter Cameron Crowe, plus a production featurette.... Master filmmaker Robert Altman has an ear for music, so it's good that the DVD debut of 1993's *Short Cuts* offers an isolated music track bonus, which allows listeners to savor vocalist Annie Ross. Other highlights include a new interview with Altman and Tim Robbins and an audio interview with author Raymond Carver, whose stories Altman adapted for the film. —G.F.

## SCANNER

## THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE

(2004) Corporate kleptocracy replaces communism in Jonathan Demme's edgy remake of the 1962 classic. Denzel Washington struggles against a corrupt elite that wants to select the next president. Sound familiar? ★★★

## CODE 46

(2004) Director Michael Winterbottom's speculative sci-fi crime drama about globalization horrors is heavy on atmosphere, light on story. Don't let that deter you from following Tim Robbins on his mind-blowing futuristic journey. ★★★

## THE VILLAGE

(2004) Critics savaged writer-director M. Night Shyamalan's stylish flick about evil beasts lurking in the forest around a peaceful 19th century village. On the small screen in a dark room, the film fares much better. ★★

## THE NOTEBOOK

(2004) James Garner reads dotty nursing-home resident Gena Rowlands a three-hankie tale of two young lovers from opposite sides of the tracks. Your girlfriend will love it. ★★

## WITHOUT A PADDLE

(2004) Three buddies set out on a wilderness adventure and end up in "You got a purty mouth" country. Lower your expectations and enjoy the frequent—and frequently unexpected—laughs. ★★

## KING ARTHUR

(2004) Director Antoine Fuqua forgoes the sword-and-stone legend for a more intimate look at Arthur's honor-bound knights. Well-shot battles and a near-naked Keira Knightley provide eye candy. ★★½

## ANACONDAS: HUNT FOR THE BLOOD ORCHID

(2004) A J. Lo dopelgänger leads a cast of stereotypes through the jungle to uncover a new longevity drug. Unbeknownst to all, the Atari-style serpents have already filled that prescription. ★½

## SOUTH PARK: THE COMPLETE FIFTH SEASON

(2001) The boys return with Big Gay Al, Osama bin Laden and more. This season includes the Terrance and Phillip *Behind the Music* spoof, the rare "shit" episode and the killing of Kenny for good. ★★½

★★★★ Don't miss  
★★★ Good show

★★ Worth a look  
★ Forget it

## case study



### [ JACKO IN THE BOX ]

#### Where did he go wrong?

Michael Jackson once enjoyed a formidable reputation as a musician. Between 1979 and 1991 he fused R&B, dance and rock to create some of the most amazing pop music ever made. *The Ultimate Collection*—four CDs and a concert DVD—provides an opportunity to assess Jackson's career from the days of the Jackson 5 to the present. How did such a creative force become so meaningless? This anthology shows he consistently creates taut, up-tempo songs that push genres and challenge listeners. (The lugubrious ballads, from "Ben" to "You Are Not Alone," are another story.) Previously unreleased contemporary tracks show Michael can still do it. But his freakish behavior keeps people from listening. All told, this compilation is a chronicle of tremendous talent squandered. (Epic) ★★★ —Leopold Froehlich

#### RAMMSTEIN • Reise, Reise

The allure of this industrial metal group lies in its thoroughly uninviting sound. German lyrics are delivered over pounding music—there's even a song about German cannibal Armin Meiwes. But the most startling moment comes when English words rip through the hammering rhythms and singer Till Lindemann croons, "We're all living in America/Coca-Cola, sometimes war." It's a reminder that there is a view from outside the States worth noticing. (Universal) ★★★ —Jason Buhrmester



#### AND YOU WILL KNOW US BY THE TRAIL OF DEAD Worlds Apart

Here is a rare gem: an album you feel compelled to listen to, riveted, for its entirety. With its slow-building walls of noise, earnest lyrical themes and cinematic scope, it is the kind of album we all wish Radiohead were still making—one that really matters, one that swirls around your head and serves as a soundtrack to the anguished discussions you have with yourself. In short, a masterpiece. (Interscope) ★★★ —Tim Mohr



#### LUDACRIS • The Red Light District

On his first three albums, Ludacris proved he wasn't just another Atlanta MC—he was a wordsmith who played his mouth like an instrument and spit rhymes clever enough to make even record execs laugh. On his new one, Luda is still the rapper most likely to Xerox his ass at Kinko's, but he's also quite soulful and even attempts to sing. With a stable of producers including Timbaland and Lil Jon, Luda's joints range from crunk hits to harsh street anthems. (Def Jam) ★★★ —Alison Prato



#### DEATH FROM ABOVE 1979

##### You're a Woman, I'm a Machine

This album delivers an incredibly pure rock-and-roll rush. Like Minor Threat covering Black Sabbath, it's a blend of metal, hard-core, melody and intelligence. Fuzzed-out bass lines—agile and thick at the same time—carry the tunes, spitfire drumming propels it all along at a deliciously dangerous pace, and the vocals alternately lash out and soar. All this from a duo. An early contender for best debut of 2005. (Vice) ★★★ —T.M.



## state of the art

### [ HERBIE HANCOCK ]

Through a 40-year career, pianist Herbie Hancock has established himself as one of jazz's great unorthodox talents, stretching the boundaries of the genre with his use of everything from electrically charged funk in the 1970s to laptops in the 1990s. We caught up with him in Los Angeles between sessions for his new album.

**PLAYBOY:** What is wrong with music these days?

**HANCOCK:** It seems so money-driven and not creation-driven. It hasn't always been like that. When I first came on the scene, there were people in the industry who were passionate about the music. They wanted to sell records, of course, but it wasn't the be-all and end-all. Music is supposed to serve a function, and that function isn't to put money in somebody's pocket. That's what you get after you serve the function. The function is to serve humanity.



**PLAYBOY:** A lot of great music from past eras seemed commercial when it first came out. Wasn't Motown commercially driven, for instance?

**HANCOCK:** It was the first major black label. There was a passion about having ownership of what created the music. That's not just money. That's a social position they were trying to carve out for themselves, one that didn't exist before. When your only motivation is money, you give people what they've already shown they want to hear. That's tantamount to saying, "Give them what they already have." But the Motown groups didn't all sound the same.

**PLAYBOY:** Has jazz been marginalized?

**HANCOCK:** I would be in deep trouble if I were starting out today. Smooth jazz is the only form of jazz played on the radio. If you don't fit into that format, you won't get airplay. But there are still amazing musicians—like Danilo Pérez, who plays piano with Wayne Shorter's quartet. He's not afraid of anything.

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# game of the month

## [ HALO 2 ]

How do you improve on perfection? Like this

When the Xbox was just a newborn, a little game called *Halo* turned skeptical gamers into true believers. Even more impressive, *Halo* remains atop best-seller lists three full years after its explosive debut. Why? It's the best console game ever made. Rather, it was. Because even though there was nothing wrong with *Halo*, *Halo 2* (Microsoft, Xbox) somehow manages to kick its ass—with new weapons, new bad guys, more backstory, fire-fights through the ruined cities of Earth and intense head-to-head online play. But where *Halo 2* truly shines is in the subtlest of gaming's black arts: pacing. As in the original, the action is kept at the perfect pitch to maintain a constant level of adrenaline pump, but the game isn't so difficult as to become frustrating. Add the elimination of load times and it's nearly impossible to put down. If you were wondering why all your co-workers were calling in sick at the beginning of November, now you know. **★★★★** —Scott Alexander



**ALIEN HOMINID** (0~3 Entertainment, GameCube, PS2) No gorgeous 3-D renderings here. This is old-school 2-D side scrolling as it was always meant to be—hand-drawn and hilarious. Chew the heads off your bumbling FBI pursuers, toss them into wood chippers or hit them with an array of wild weapons while dodging collapsing scenery and build-size bosses. Want to try before you buy? Check out the original web game at newgrounds.com. **★★★★**

—Scott Steinberg



**GODZILLA: SAVE THE EARTH** (Atari, PS2, Xbox) Sometimes you have to destroy Tokyo in order to save it. And this latest addition to the radioactive-lizard canon more than encourages doing so. From Gigan to Jet Jaguar, all your favorite beasts are here and playable, each with its own set of signature moves and death rays. A melee mode lets up to four players duke it out at once. Plus, the original cheesy sound effects are sampled from the films for added "realism." **★★★★** —S.A.



**FIGHT CLUB** (Vivendi Universal Games, PS2, Xbox) Okay, yes, we're breaking the first and second rules of Fight Club by talking about this game, but we'll take our chances, as the virtual version isn't nearly as tough as it should be. Fans of the book and the movie (i.e., us) will have fun with the gratuitous brutality, the faithfully reproduced environments and the bounce in Big Bob's man-boobs, but serious fighting gamers will want to stick with their DOAs and Def Jams. **★★**

—John Gaudiosi



**METROID PRIME 2: ECHOES** (Nintendo, GameCube) The Cube's best shooter is back for seconds. Once again, gamers can slip into the space suit of sexy Samus Aran, a bounty hunter who's taking on an alien race single-handedly. Clichéd story line aside, players will have a ball running and gunning through vividly colorful environments, snagging weapons and power-ups. Though there's no online play, up to four Metroid-oids can duke it out in split screen on the same TV. **★★★★½** —Marc Saltzman



# wireless watch

## [ DIAL G FOR GAMING ]

Four more ways your cell phone can own your life

**NFL 2005:** Jamdat's pigskin sim has all 32 NFL teams, a deep play-book and easy controls, whether you're looking to juke, tackle, pass or run (\$3 to \$4 a month, jamdat.com).



**Texas Hold 'Em by Phil Hellmuth:** Hone your poker skills against AI, then play other wireless gamblers live. Now go own your Tuesday-night game (about \$3 a month, summus.com).



**Joust:** This classic looks, sounds and flaps just like the 1982 version, except now, for the price of a mere 20 arcade plays, you can slip it into your pocket (about \$5, thwireless.com).



**Might & Magic:** Battle foes, solve puzzles and unravel the arcane mysteries of Erathia in this magical single-player adventure spread over 15 huge 3-D levels (\$4, gameloft.com).



# wired

**Atari Flashback Console** (\$40) The box is sleeker and the controllers more ergonomic, but you're old pals with what's inside—20 of the original Atari games that made the company a household name in the 1980s. (Five of the games are from the Atari 7800, to give you a taste of what was blowing minds circa 1986.)



## book of the month

## [ SECRET AGENT MAN ]

A spy geek exhibits his gear

Americans have long been fascinated with spies, less so real-life ones such as the Rosenbergs and more so fictional ones such as James Bond and Jason Bourne. The reason is simple: Hollywood's secret agents get everything a man can dream of—the coolest gadgets, beautiful women and wild adventures. Perhaps that's why Danny Biederman, a consultant for MGM on its Bond film series, has spent his life amassing more than 4,000 pieces of spy props and gadgets from television and movie spy thrillers. With *The Incredible World of Spy-Fi*, the public has been granted security clearance to check out such artifacts from the past four decades as the tarantula from the Bond film *Dr. No*, the cigarette-pack transmitter from *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.*, the shoe phone from *Get Smart* and Austin Powers's glasses. In the early days of spy thrillers, such fictional gear was always a far cry from what existed in reality. But we wouldn't be surprised if the CIA gearheads in Langley now use these sorts of props as blueprints. (Chronicle) **YYY** —Patty Lamberti



## ACTION SPEAKS LOUDER

Eric Lichtenfeld

In *Dirty Harry* Clint Eastwood says, "You have to ask yourself, 'Do I feel lucky?'" You'll feel lucky reading this gem, which traces the history of action films. The movies, which bloomed from police procedurals, overlapped with other genres during the second half of the 20th century: Cowboy John Wayne played a policeman in *McQ*, and martial artist Chuck Norris shouldered guns in *Invasion USA*. Lichtenfeld excels at defining the connections between action films and our social constructs about masculinity. The public's fear of AIDS in the 1980s gave rise to musclemen such as Schwarzenegger and Stallone. Once you read this, action films will no longer be just for viewing; they'll make you scratch your head. (Praeger) **YYY** —Kate Rockland



## UGLESICH'S RESTAURANT COOKBOOK

John Uglesich

It's one of the stranger restaurants in America (no tablecloths, lunch only, typically closed on weekends), yet it's a destination spot for gourmands from around the world. Legend has it that Aaron Neville says Uglesich's serves the second-best gumbo in New Orleans (his mother's is number one). The recipes here are wonderful, but this book seems like a memento of a transcendent dining experience. The green tomatoes and shrimp rémoulade you make at home won't compare with the shrimp you'll eat in a ramshackle building at the corner of Barrone and Erato. (Pelican) **YYY** —L.F.



## AMERICA'S MAGIC MOUNTAIN

Curtis White

With his sixth book of fiction, White establishes himself as the most intrepid novelist in America. Who but a courageous writer (or a fool) would recast Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain* in an alcohol rehab center in downstate Illinois? The premise wouldn't appear to offer much, but White's brilliant novel no more resembles Mann's ponderous masterpiece than

the slag heaps of central Illinois resemble the Alps. White's clinic is an odd place, where drinking is encouraged and pathologies are embraced. Alternately hilarious and harrowing, this is a bizarre and powerful satire on our sick therapeutic culture. (Dalkey Archive) **YYY** —Leopold Froehlich



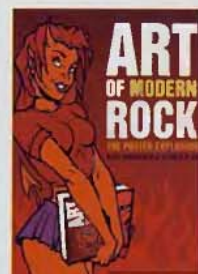
## art of the groove



## ART OF MODERN ROCK

Paul Grushkin and Dennis King

This 492-page sequel to *Art of Rock* includes more than 1,650 posters from the past 15 years, from legends such as the Rolling Stones to fringe acts such as Nashville Pussy. Now that most people no longer buy LPs, the music industry places little emphasis on covers. For that reason, the poster has become the medium to explain what a band sounds like. Music has taken a turn for the worse, but the visuals are only getting better. (Chronicle) **YYY** —P.L.



100

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# Las Vegas

Las Vegas is in the midst of a fundamental change. The faux excitement of themed resorts is out. Now Vegas is about elegance, luxury and hedonism. Sin is back. The new Vegas wants to fill you with fine food, loosen your inhibitions in a designer bar, take you dancing in a packed club and, as dawn rises, lay you down in a swell hotel room. All you have to do is bring money, stamina and your lawyer's phone number.



One of the fastest-growing cities in America, Las Vegas lights up the desert night.



The singing Sirens of Treasure Island lure visitors.



Gambling galore (above); swing through old Vegas on Fremont Street (below).



•**Best Upscale Restaurants:** Vegas is off the hook with high-end eateries—nearly every brand-name chef you can think of (Emeril Lagasse, Wolfgang Puck, Tom Colicchio) has opened an outpost here. Don't miss Michael Mina's Seablue (in the MGM Grand, 702-891-3486). It serves jet-fresh fish in a showy room; be sure to try the tuna kibbe. Another good bet is Bradley Ogden (in Caesars Palace, 702-713-7410). On many days, the steak is flown in directly from Iowa. You'll never forget about the Italian food at Zeffirino Ristorante (at the Venetian Resort, 702-414-3500). Ask the sommelier to pair one of its 300 wines with your dish. Carb lovers shouldn't miss the homemade pasta, and carnivores should dig into the vitello alla griglia. For another breathtaking glimpse of the Grand Canal without leaving the resort, stop in for sautéed foie gras at Lutèce (702-414-2220).

•**Best Quick Eats:** Quick doesn't mean cheap at the Burger Bar (in Mandalay Bay, 702-632-9364). The Kobe beef burger starts at \$16, and the price goes

up considerably if you top it with pâté or lobster. (To save a few bucks for gambling, order the Colorado lamb burger.) Elsewhere, Caesars Palace puts a nice spin on the food court with its new Cypress Street Marketplace (702-731-7686), where your food purchases—from nine worldwide cuisines—are logged onto a plastic card and totaled when you hurry on your way.

•**Best Ethnic Restaurants:** The national food press regularly includes the Thai cuisine at Lotus of Siam (953 East Sahara, 702-735-3033) on its must-eat lists. Dishes such as the ginger-steamed sea bass will demonstrate why. Locals have voted Ricardo's (4930 West Flamingo, 702-227-9100) the best Mexican restaurant 20 times since 1983. Its margaritas and grand burritos are exceptional. You'll find a local Chinese crowd—a good sign in a town full of tourists—at Chow Cuisine (5485 West Sahara, 702-257-8807), which serves delectable dumplings in lotus leaves.

•**Best Hotels:** Though the Strip is lined with fine hotels, the luxuriously understated THE Hotel (in Mandalay Bay, 877-632-7800) gets our nod for having the largest standard rooms on the Strip, amenities such as 42-inch plasma TVs and snap-to service. The Palms Casino Resort (4321 West Flamingo, 702-942-7777) offers the best views of the city. A portion of the floor at Ghostbar, a lounge on the 55th floor, is made of glass so you can look down into the pool below. Spend the next morning relaxing in the resort's 20,000-square-foot spa.

•**Best Dive Bars:** No question, the Double Down Saloon (4640 Paradise, 702-791-5775) tops the list. Why? The loony Day of the Dead murals. Enough grunge to restock Seattle. The free-spirited regulars. The killer jukebox. And a full chemistry set of drinks such as the house specialty, ass juice (don't ask). As for the bacon martini, you'd be a fool not to try it, and you'd be a fool to drink the whole thing. Although you have to ring a buzzer to get into Atomic Liquor Store (917 Fremont, 702-384-7371), the bar's charm rests on the fact that it will let in just about anybody, including many lovable oddballs.

•**Best Bar:** Teatro (at the MGM Grand, 702-891-7777) looks like a spaceship in the middle of a casino. Inside, the atmosphere is intimate, with sexy women stationed at drink carts. The back wall features a slide show of red rocks, with the occasional female body contoured in for good measure.

•**Best Wine Bar:** A truly top-notch wine bar is one amenity the recent boom hasn't brought to Vegas. But for a resuscitative side trip beyond the Strip, visit the wine shop and bistro Marche Bacchus (2620 Regatta, 702-804-8008). It has an outstanding grape selection, which you

# Las Vegas



Vegas has finally restored its reputation as an adult destination.



Vegas has no shortage of cocktails and cuties.



Vegas hotels such as the Luxor (below) are fit for kings and queens.



can sample on the cozy back porch overlooking a man-made lake.

•**Cooliest Nightclubs:** This is another category in which Vegas offers splendid excess. If you want to dance, head to Studio 54 (in the MGM Grand, 702-891-7254) or the new Body English (in the Hard Rock, 702-693-5000). For an elegant lounge experience, check out the amazingly designed Tabú (in the MGM Grand, 702-891-7777). And if you have Energizer bunny in your DNA, don't miss Tangerine (in the Treasure Island, 702-894-7111).

•**Funkiest Nightclub:** The women who frequent Bikinis Beach & Dance Club (in the Rio, 702-252-8429) are there to have fun without trying to guess the worth of your 401(k). It doesn't hurt that the waiters—shirtless beefcakes handing out free shots to the women—help put them in the mood to get hit on.

•**Best Music Spots:** Take your pick—the House of Blues (in Mandalay Bay, 702-632-7777, ext. 77600), the Joint (in the Hard Rock, 702-693-5066) or the Rain in the Desert nightclub (in the Palms, 702-

942-6832). Each venue is intimate and offers a busy schedule of acts, from the newest emo sensation to classic rockers. If you have a hankering to hear the blues, follow the motorcycles to the Sand Dollar Blues Lounge (3355 Spring Mountain, 702-871-6651). The area that surrounds it looks sterile, but inside you'll see that it's the real deal.

•**Best People Watching:** The Hard Rock Hotel (702-693-5000) draws a heady mix of visiting beautiful people, local scenesters and free-range celebrities. Gene Simmons and Tara Reid often just walk around. For an offbeat choice, park your keister at the Forum Shops at Caesars Palace and eyeball free spenders from every spot on the globe.

•**Best Florist:** No one in town can match the flower power, beauty or sculptural—yes, sculptural—sophistication of Jane Carroll Floral Artistry (in Caesars Palace, 702-866-1050).

•**Best Mode of Transportation:** For getting around the Strip, especially in traffic, take a spin on the new Las Vegas Monorail. The five stops between the MGM Grand and the Sahara put much of the resort corridor at your feet. And at \$3 for one trip, \$5 for two or \$10 for a day pass, it's cheaper than cabbage. (Tip: If it's warm out, get a margarita Popsicle at the stand outside the MGM terminal.)

•**Best Coffeehouse:** Never exactly a city of intellectuals, Vegas offers mostly franchise-outlet coffeehouses. To see the local boho crowd in repose, try the Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf (4550 South Maryland, 702-944-5029).

•**Best Drink:** Here's a hidden gem of a cocktail in a city full of trendy mojitos and martinis: the couchette, a mix of Hpnotiq and vodka. Sip one on the balcony of the Risqué de Paris (in the Paris Las Vegas, 702-946-4589), overlooking the resort's fountains and the Strip.

•**Best Shopping:** You can strain your credit all over the Strip, but the best place is the Forum Shops at Caesars (in Caesars Palace, 702-893-4800). It has excellent shopping for men (Valentino, Hugo Boss, John Varvatos) and women (DKNY, Gucci, Dior). A close runner-up is the Fashion Show Mall (3200 Las Vegas Boulevard South, 702-369-0704), home of Neiman Marcus and Nordstrom.

•**Best Sports Opportunity:** Until the city figures out a way that pro sports and gambling can coexist, Vegas will want for a home team. Don't worry—boxing promoters fill the void. Many of the sport's marquee matches happen here, usually at the MGM Grand. If it's a truly big fight, Hollywood tough guys and rap royalty will be out in body-guarded force.

•**Playboy Pick:** Trust us on this one: the Liberace Museum (1775 East Tropicana, 702-798-5595). No, really. Whether you dig it as kitsch or just marvel at one man's epic indulgence, this over-the-top collection of Liberace's cars, outfits and rhinestone oddities will absolutely win you over.

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Extreme skler Mike Douglas 40 feet above Whistler-Blackcomb.

## King of the Hills

The best North American skiing and the best XY-to-XX chromosome ratio—all on one mountain

IF YOU KNOW anything about skiing, you know Whistler-Blackcomb in British Columbia has been the hottest winter resort in North America for years. This season the party picks up more steam with 1,100 acres of virgin terrain and a new Four Seasons hotel that will knock your frozen socks off (book at [fourseasons.com/whistler](http://fourseasons.com/whistler)). We asked ski bum and local legend Johnny Thrash to plan your perfect day. "Start by skiing from the peak of Blackcomb right to Merlin's Bar & Grill for a pint of O'Keefe and a shot of Crown Royal," Thrash says. Then head to

Whistler for some cruise-and-schmooze skiing on the new Peak to Creek run, one of the longest trails on the continent, with a vertical drop of more than 5,000 feet. You'll end up at Dusty's Bar & BBQ for a Dusty burger and another pint. For après-ski, head to the Fairmont Chateau ("if you're on an expense account") or Garfinkel's ("for the drunk chicks"). Then it's dinner at Sushi Village and dancing at Tommy Africa's. "Years ago it was 15 guys swarming one barmaid," Thrash says. "Now it's five girls swarming every guy." Don't you want to be that guy?

### Ski Report

Where to go and why



**BIG SKY, MT:** The West's best off-the-beaten-path resort has two new lifts and some new tree-skiing runs. Stay at the Powder Ridge Cabins, a perfect romantic getaway.

**CRESTED BUTTE, CO:** It's snowing money! New owners are pumping millions into this winter paradise.

**WHITEFACE, NY:** The hill with the East Coast's biggest vertical drop is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the 1980 Olympics. Think booze, bobsleds, snow bunnies....

**HEAVENLY, CA:** This mountain is getting a multiyear \$30 million face-lift. Plus, you're in Lake Tahoe. You can practically take a gondola to a blackjack table.

### Swiss on White to Go

SWISS SKI MAKERS once owned the industry. Just one company remains, but it's a doozy. Stöckli's skis (\$800 to \$1,000, [stockli.com](http://stockli.com)) are high-tech yet handmade, with advanced laminates, special shaping and old-growth-wood cores. A big manufacturer might turn out a million pairs annually—Stöckli makes 39,000. Get a set. It's like strapping on a pair of Lamborghinis.





## Keynote Speakers

A marriage of technology and design starts with—what else?—diamonds

IN THE WORLD OF HIGH-END AUDIO, Bowers & Wilkins is known for visual as well as aural innovation. This time around, though, the revolution happens on the inside. The successors to its widely beloved 802 loudspeakers (favored by such sonic purists as George Lucas and Abbey Road Studios) are the new 802D speakers (\$14,000 a pair, [bwspeakers.com](http://bwspeakers.com)). Capable of handling 1,000 watts apiece, they feature enhanced midrange response for home theater use, an improved magnet/voice coil system for tight bass, Kevlar cones, carbon-fiber woofers and B&W's trademark: complete sonic isolation between the low-end, midrange and high-end assemblies. But the cherry on top of each of these sundaes is the tweeters, whose domes are molded from pure cultured diamond. Like so many things, sound propagation comes down to strength and stiffness, making diamond a miracle audio material. Plus, when your girlfriend asks why your speakers cost so much, you'll finally have a decent answer.



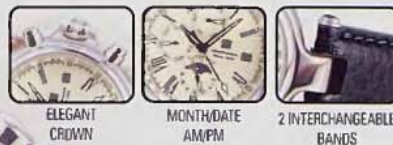
## Clothesline: Eric McCormack

HE'S NOT A GAY MAN, but Eric McCormack plays one on TV. And true to his character, the 41-year-old Toronto native and star of *Will & Grace* is quick to name his favorite designer. "John Varvatos. I love his colors, his unbelievable fabrics and his unique style, which always feels casual but looks like a million bucks—put-together and effortless at the same time. And John's a great guy. He gave me a pair of suede pants that I've worn only once." So McCormack likes a good suit, eh? "I love Armani or Prada for a classic feel, Varvatos for more fun and Dolce when I want to cause a stir." And when dressing down? "My favorite piece of all time is a thick gray sweater from Banana Republic. I wear it all winter long."

## Think Again: the Sink

SO MUCH MORE THAN a place to wash your face, your sink is one of the first objects you see each day and one of the last you see before bed. Think how much more at peace you'd be with an Italbrass Moody Aquarium Washbasin (\$7,000, [homeclick.com](http://homeclick.com)) to calm your commode. If live fish seem too high-maintenance, substitute a Zen rock garden or an idyllic seaside miniature. Or get out your old action figures and re-create the trash compactor scene from *Star Wars*.





1923WATCH.COM

"I collect timepieces. When I received my Steinhausen, I knew from the look, feel, and quality of the watch that this would be one of my favorites. I have spent thousands of dollars for inferior watches. It will be my gift of choice this holiday season."  
Sol S., Mt. Vernon, NY



# So rare that only a handful were made in 1923

In 1923, a Swiss watchmaker crafted the most advanced watch of its time. After 80 years, the Steinhausen watch has finally been "reborn," preserving its mastery of technology and classic design. Once only displayed in high priced collections, this rare timepiece from history can now be yours.

**S**tep back in time to Steinhausen, Switzerland circa 1923. A master watchmaker works for months, trying to create the world's most perfect watch. Finally he succeeds—the first of its kind to display the date, day and month, and the only one to designate AM/PM.

## Collectors Pay Thousands \$\$\$\$

He makes a limited number of these distinctive handmade timepieces, which eventually find their way onto the wrists of only the world's most distinguished gentry. Today, collectors are willing to pay thousands of dollars to add one of these original Steinhausen masterpieces to their own collection.

## Reborn After 80 Years

Until now, that was the only way you could own a Steinhausen, still one of the world's rarest and most prized wristwatches. But for the first time in 80 years, the original Steinhausen masterpiece is now being painstakingly reproduced for modern day collectors. Still manufactured by hand, this 21st-century reproduction carries the same graceful styling and features as the original. The scratch-resistant crystal comfortably rests in a surgical grade stainless steel case and bezel, which provides the ultimate in precision and protection.

## Powered by You

This handsome timepiece has been updated with a kinetic automatic movement that is powered by the motion of the wearer's arm, so the watch never needs winding or batteries.

## Hand-crafted Elite Movement

The Steinhausen movement consists of 185 parts, that are assembled entirely by hand. To prevent wear on gears, fine watches use tiny gemstones to reduce friction. The Steinhausen features up to 35 jewels, 15 more than most of the worlds elite watches. The movement is then rigorously tested for flaws and accuracy. Only 6% of the movements made ever meet the stringent requirements to be placed in this noble timepiece, making the Steinhausen one of the most accurate in the world.

## Adapted from Swiss Technology

A Swiss engineered movement comparable to the Steinhausen has never been produced at this low price. Each watch comes housed in a handsome storage case and includes two interchangeable leather wristbands in black and brown.

## \$14.95 "Wear It and Love It" Trial Offer

Until now, most of us couldn't afford an original 1923 Steinhausen. For a limited time though, the manufacturer has decided to offer this masterpiece of technology and design to watch lovers worldwide "risk free."

In fact, they are so confident you'll love the Steinhausen masterpiece, they want you to try it on your wrist for a full 30 days for only \$14.95 plus s&h. Experience this unparalleled value for thousands less than comparable collectable watches. If not satisfied, return the Steinhausen for a full refund of the trial fee.

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*Kinetic movement...never needs batteries...never needs winding!*

THE HISTORY OF WATCH MAKING				
1868	Steinhausen masterpiece is created	1923	1st Automatic movement in a wrist watch	1953
1868	Patek Philippe makes first wrist watch	1923	Lips produced the first battery powered watch	1953
		1966	Girard-Perregaux introduces the Swiss quartz watch	2003
			Steinhausen masterpiece is reproduced for first time	

\*FREE Trial Offer entitles customers to receive one of our Steinhausen watches for review for 30 days with the right to return the watch in that period with no additional charges (minus s&h). Customers who elect to keep the watch will be billed the corresponding purchase price plus applicable taxes for the model selected either in full or through available payment options.

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## Class Ax

### The Jimmy Page Signature Gibson Les Paul—talent not included

IF YOU'VE BEEN HAVING an internal debate about who the greatest rock guitar player in history might be, listen to the solo on Led Zeppelin's "Since I've Been Loving You" and move on to another subject. The new Gibson Jimmy Page Signature Les Paul replicates Number One, the 1959 Les Paul that Page used on that solo and virtually every Zeppelin album. Flip through any rock history book and you'll see Page whaling on the thing, carving it up with a violin bow, drenching it with his toxic sweat. The model pictured here has been professionally "aged" by Gibson's custom shop, so it carries many of the same dings and scratches as the hard-living original. The company released 25 guitars signed by the rock god himself, and they sold out almost immediately at prices up to \$55,000. You can get an authentic, if unsigned, version of this picker for just \$16,556 and try your hand at "Black Dog." Don't forget to turn up your Marshall to let your neighbors in on the fun. Go to [gibsoncustom.com](http://gibsoncustom.com) for info.

## Recording Artist

### A new breed of digital camera gives you room to experiment

JVC'S EVERIO GZ-MC200 (pictured, \$1,300, [jvc.com](http://jvc.com)) and GZ-MC100 mark the beginning of a new era in cameras and camcorders. Instead of using flash memory for storage, the Everios are the first snappers to record straight to removable hard drives, giving you an hour of near-DVD-quality video or around 5,500 2.1-megapixel stills, meaning you could take a picture of your toes every day for the next 15 years. We have faith that you'll find more interesting uses.



## About Time: Carl F. Bucherer

### This perfect Swiss model will look great on your arm

IF YOU'VE SPENT TIME in Europe, you might have laid eyes on a Carl F. Bucherer. The watches have been around since 1919, but they're found mostly on the Continent, and they don't exactly come cheap. In 2004 the company finally invaded the States with select watches available at high-end stores. This number, the Patravi Fritz Brun in pink gold, was created to mark the 125th birthday of Swiss composer Fritz Brun. (Remember him?) The chronograph features a perpetual month-and-day calendar and a moon-phase monitor that lets you keep constant track of the tides. The cost: a mere \$36,900. At that price, why not buy two? More info at [carl-f-bucherer.com](http://carl-f-bucherer.com).

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# The Playboy Advisor

I recently saw a vodka made from grapes. I thought all vodkas were distilled from grain or potatoes. What makes vodka vodka?—K.B., Leavenworth, Kansas

*Vodka is defined more by what it isn't than by what it is. Other alcohols are classified according to the ingredients used to make them and sometimes the place they were made. You need fruit to make brandy, sugarcane to make rum, barley to make scotch, corn to make bourbon and blue agave to make tequila. Scotch is from Scotland, bourbon from Kentucky and tequila from Mexico. But vodka can be made anywhere on earth, using any distillation process, from any raw material that ferments. It has been produced using beets, potatoes, sugar, rice, rye, wheat, barley, molasses, fruit, whey, corn, flour, soy and rutabagas—each ingredient is said to produce a distinct smell, flavor, aftertaste and burn. Ciroc (cirocvodka.com) distills the grape vodka you saw, Vermont Spirits (vermontspirits.com) has a vodka made from maple sap and another from milk sugar, and a Russian distributor says its Cannabis brand is created with hemp seeds. Flavored vodkas—a classification that includes gin and schnapps—are seasoned after distillation.*

Regarding the woman who wrote in September about her campaign to encourage single women to meet servicemen (Operation Take One for the Country): America has a long tradition of this sort of behavior. According to *No Magic Bullet: A Social History of Venereal Disease in the United States Since 1880*, during World War II doctors and social workers frequently commented that the professional prostitute had given way to the patriotic prostitute, or charity girl. One social worker wrote, "Girls idealize the soldier, and many feel that nothing is wrong when done for him. One girl said she had never sold herself to a civilian but felt she was doing her bit when she had been with eight soldiers in a night." These women were also known as amateur girls, khaki-wackies, victory girls and good-time Charlottes.—J.S., Los Angeles, California

*Why didn't they mention this in history class? We would have gotten better grades.*

Why doesn't my cell phone work in hotel rooms? Given the prices hotels charge for using in-room phones, I suspect foul play.—K.T., San Francisco, California

*Are you suggesting that a hotel would install a cell phone blocker? No U.S. hotels have been caught with jammers, but they do have incentive: Profits from in-room phones have fallen 76 percent since 2000. One Israeli company told The New York Times that it has sold the devices to hotels and bed-and-breakfasts around the globe, but it wouldn't say where. Jammers are illegal in the U.S., but the FCC doesn't appear to be looking for them (it's busy chasing sex talk on the radio). It's con-*



*ceivable that the walls of newly built hotels include metal screens tuned to phone frequencies or concrete embedded with electrically conductive materials. But rather than actively block wireless calls, hotels more likely just don't do anything to improve spotty reception caused by architecture or location. In the meantime, can someone please install a few jammers in theaters and restaurants? Several tech firms are developing devices to block service or automatically turn phones to vibrate or silent mode within designated zones. The cell phone industry isn't keen on the idea, arguing that the airwaves are public property.*

My husband loves it when I wrap a strand of costume pearls around his erection and slowly unravel it. The only thing we can think of for him to do with me is to slowly pull the strand out of my vagina. It feels good, but I prefer something more subtle. Any suggestions?—C.H., Elkhart, Indiana

*More subtle than pearls in your pussy? That's a tough one. Your husband could place a section of the strand over his tongue and go down on you; you may enjoy the pearls against your clit and vulva (gather and grip the other end of the strand and you have a nice bridle). He could roll the pearls under his palms as he massages you, including running them over your nipples and across the soles of your feet or lightly spanking your vulva and bottom. He could lay the pearls across your clit and vulva, hold them firmly in place and touch a vibrator to them, experimenting with speed and pressure. When it's your turn again, Laura Corn, author of *101 Nights of Great Sex*, has this suggestion: "Grasp one end of the strand in each hand. Slide it left, then right, over his erection, spinning the pearls high and low and fast and slow, so it feels like a hundred*

*fingers." Add your warm lips to the head of his cock and he'll be a puppet on a string.*

I've been in Baghdad for six months. A guy in my squad told me he isn't going to masturbate during our deployment. He hasn't yet, and I don't think he will. Is this healthy?—J.N., Baghdad, Iraq

*He'll be okay, but we hope he has other methods for relieving stress.*

Giving the green light in September to the reader who wanted to hire a debt-management service is like telling him to set his pants on fire. Most lenders consider credit counseling the equivalent of Chapter 13 bankruptcy, which disqualifies you from getting a mortgage or refinancing. As a loan officer I also often review credit reports on which a debt-management service has missed payment deadlines. These nonprofits mean well, but they aren't always the best option.—D.C., Scottsdale, Arizona

*Noted, but not every lender looks at debt management (which is impossible to hide on a credit report) as a deal killer. Naturally, the best strategy is to take charge of your finances by negotiating where you can and by making regular, on-time payments. Not everyone can manage that. If that's your situation, choose your course carefully.*

Your reassuring comments to the man who would not swim nude because he feared having his penis bitten by a fish prompted me to share this cautionary tale. While skinny-dipping in the Severn River near Annapolis, Maryland I was stung by a jellyfish on the most sensitive square inch of my body. I set a record for the one-armed dog paddle to shore. The pain and swelling eventually subsided, but I still have a faint red mark the size of a dime on the head of my penis. Fish attacks may be rare, but there is good reason not to swim nude at night in strange waters.—C.M., Richmond, Virginia

*While researching attacks on the penis, we found the case of a farmer in Brazil who was stung through his pants by a scorpion. You two should have a beer.*

As one of those women who view giving head as an art form, I take issue with a few of the suggestions you shared in September about giving a good blow job. Your source essentially recommended that a woman make her mouth feel like a pussy. But much of the pleasure a man receives from oral sex lies in the fact that it provides different sensations than intercourse. It's good to swirl your tongue at the apex of the upstroke, but never neglect the shaft. A blow job isn't a blow job if you sink only the tip. Rather than two fingers, use your entire hand

and squeeze gently, like a pulse, on the upstroke. See how he reacts if you turn your head to the right on every downstroke. Don't overlook the rest of his body. Caress his belly and the inside of his thighs. Gently run your nails through his pubic hair. Stroke a finger along his perineum. Continue sucking as he comes and you'll prolong his climax. Take your time about disengaging, and give his cock a good-bye kiss. The look on his face will be worth it.—A.M., Tacoma, Washington  
*Thanks for writing. We love your work.*

I shared your oral sex tips with my girlfriend but wanted to add one: If a woman starts a blow job with her mouth, she should finish with her mouth. It's not a BJ if she uses her hand.—D.L., Green Bay, Wisconsin

*You must be getting a lot of action to have such high standards. Our rule has always been "If a woman starts a blow job with her mouth, God bless her."*

In September you discussed sexual addiction. I recently spent a month fucking my way across Nevada, hitting nearly every brothel. When I got home, it was like trying to kick heroin. I had to fight the urge to walk up to every gorgeous woman I saw and offer her \$100. I blew \$2,000. Next year I intend to spend \$6,000. If this is sick, I don't want to be cured.—C.T., Riddle, Oregon

*The need for credit counseling appears to be a recurring theme this month.*

As a psychologist specializing in sexuality, I have many patients with questions about their sexual preferences and behavior. Although some sexual behavior patterns have addiction-like properties, no recognized diagnosis of sexual addiction disorder exists outside the recovery movement. The term *sexual compulsiveness* is commonly misused to describe what is essentially sexual impulsivity. Compulsions refer to repetitive, rigidly performed behaviors whose purpose is more likely to be relief from psychological pain than gratification. They typically cause distress and interfere with functioning. In contrast, sexual impulsivity refers to a failure to resist desires

that involve pleasure and gratification. Thus, the guy who does not want to curtail his enjoyment of Internet porn is not the same as the guy who is miserable and wants to stop but "can't." Both men may be impaired, but being driven by pleasure is not the same as being driven to reduce inner pain and depression. Any pathologizing of sexual behavior and desires must be done carefully. Chat-room sex, erotica, sex with prostitutes, extramarital sex, masturbation and fantasizing can all be labeled abnormal, sick, addictive, etc. One of the chief concerns of men and women who discover sexual secrets and deceptions is "Why?" They want cogent explanations that their partners often

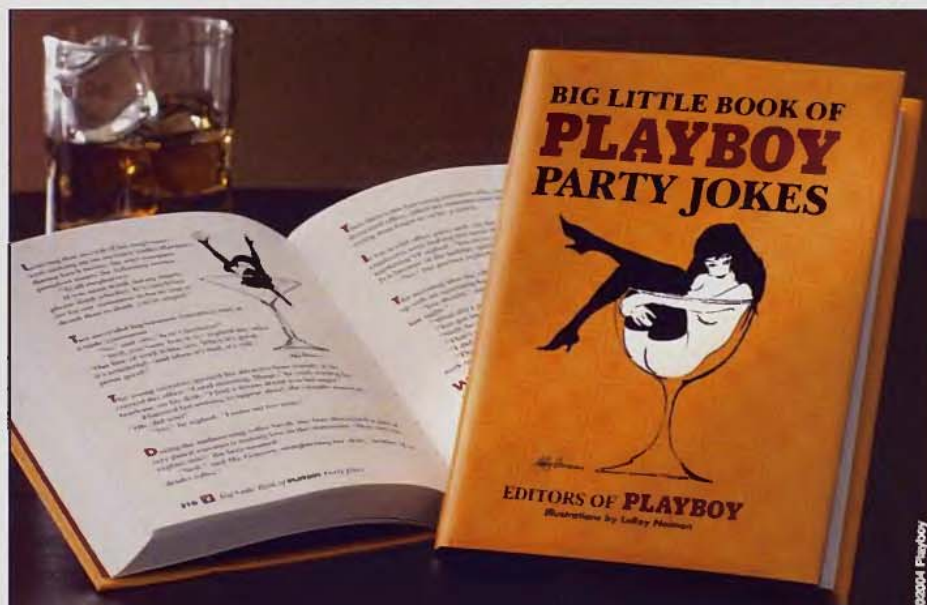
The problem occurs when people believe that sex in general—the wrong type of sex or the wrong amount, however they define it—is sick and then look for rationalizations for their values.—Dr. Charles Moser, Institute for Advanced Study of Human Sexuality, San Francisco, California

*Thank you both for your insights.*

I'm looking for a new pet. I've had cats and dogs but want something cooler. Would a pig be a good choice?—C.F., Harleysville, Pennsylvania

*Sure, if you like bacon. That's a joke, of course, because we know the owners of potbellied pigs take their duties seriously. If you want a pig, make sure it's okay by local ordinance and that you're ready to commit for*

*up to 15 years. Most potbellied pigs weigh 90 to 150 pounds and require room to roam and a wading pool. That's one reason so many end up in shelters. If you want exotic, how about a tiger? That's also a joke, although there are twice as many pet tigers (10,000 or more) in the U.S. as there are tigers living in the wild. The cubs are cute until they grow into 500-pound killing machines that require 10 to 20 pounds of horse meat or beef a day. People also attempt to domesticate cougars, lions, monkeys, bears, wolves and alligators, which is legal as long as the animals aren't imported and you don't live in one of 21 states with bans. If you're looking for female companionship, a lapdog on a leash has a magnetic effect on women. We're not sure*



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can't provide.—Bruce Friedin, Syosset, New York

Peggy Kleinplatz of the University of Ottawa and I have written about how psychiatry deals with sexual concerns in general and have particular concerns about flaws in the idea of "sexual addiction." The criteria presented to the Advisor in September by Dr. Aviel Goldman of the Minnesota Institute of Psychiatry, which include recurrent failure to control sexual behavior and continuation of the behavior despite harmful consequences, are quite problematic. By those criteria, many teenagers would be classified as sex addicts by virtue of their masturbation habits and their suffering from socially imposed guilt.

*what reaction you'd get with a pig.*

A reader asked in August if strippers ever date customers. The chances of hooking up with a dancer are slim, but I dated a few before meeting one who became my wife, so it can happen. The only advice I can offer is to be nice to the dancers you meet, spend some money on them and don't treat them like sex objects. Keep in mind that in most cases your jealousy will shut down the relationship. My wife quit dancing after we met—she said she suddenly felt strange when other guys touched her—but many women don't.—F.B., Chicago, Illinois

*Not treating a stripper like a sex object is more than most guys can manage.*

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**D**uring eight years as a dancer I dated customers at every club I worked in. I also met my husband on the job. He said he wanted to eat me like a Christmas turkey dinner. He was such a dork that he stood out.—A.T., Washington, D.C.

*The fact that your husband scored at a strip club with that line shatters everything in which we have ever believed.*

**A** few months back a reader wanted to know how to tell a woman he's well hung. Your response—"You don't have anything more interesting to talk about?"—was perfect. I talked to some of my girlfriends about this, and the majority of well-endowed guys we know are jerks. One guy I dated called his penis "the weapon." Has there ever been a study relating a man's penis size to his personality?—M.B., Glendale, Arizona

*No, just as there has never been a study of breast size and personality.*

**O**ne more note on the perils of being a lousy tipper: In Lake George, New York in September, the owner of Soprano's restaurant called the cops after a party of nine allegedly failed to tip. Soprano's has a policy that parties of six or more must leave at least 18 percent. In this case that would have been \$13.73. The police arrested the guy who paid the check for "theft of services."—L.P., New York, New York

*As if the cops and courts don't have enough to do. Prosecutors didn't pursue the charge, saying the wording on the menu made the tip a request, not a surcharge.*

**O**ne afternoon I noticed my wife picking her nose as she read a book. I can't explain why, but I got an instant erection. I let her in on my turn-on, and now she picks her nose on purpose. Have you ever heard of this?—T.P., Westlake, Ohio

*Nose picking is a social taboo, so it's not surprising that it would turn you on when a woman shows her nasty side. For wank material see [snotgirls.com](http://snotgirls.com), where nude models "poke their brains" and "dig for gold." Hard yet? You know your fetish has reached critical mass when someone creates a website about it—a pay site, no less—although in some cases critical mass may involve as few as two guys (one to post material and one to find it). We're still searching for the "girls aroused by good advice" home page.*

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



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# THE PLAYBOY FORUM

## WHO NEEDS RELIGIOUS MODERATION?

OUR POLITE ACCEPTANCE OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS  
FORCES US INTO A TREACHEROUS POSITION

BY SAM HARRIS

**A**ccording to Gallup, 35 percent of Americans believe the Bible is the literal and inerrant word of the creator of the universe. Another 48 percent believe it is the "inspired" word of the same—still inerrant, though some of its passages must be interpreted symbolically. Only 17 percent doubt that a personal god has authored this text or, for that matter, has created the earth, with its 250,000 species of beetles. If polls are to be trusted, nearly 230 million Americans believe a book that shows neither unity of style nor internal consistency was created by an omniscient deity.

Given this situation, we might wonder what it means to be a religious moderate in America today. Many of us claim to be religious moderates, of course. The problem, however, is that moderation in religion is completely without intellectual or theological support. It offers us no bulwark against the threat of religious extremism and religious violence.

Religious moderation springs from the fact that even the least educated person knows more about certain matters than anyone did 2,000 years ago, and much of this knowledge is incompatible with scripture. Most of us, for example, no longer equate disease with demonic possession. About half of us find it impossible to take seriously the idea that the universe was created 6,000 years ago. But such concessions to modernity haven't made faith compatible with reason. It's just that the utility of ignoring (or "reinterpreting") articles of faith is now overwhelming. Anyone who has flown to a distant city for heart bypass surgery must concede that we have learned a few things about physics, geography, engineering and medicine since the time of Moses.

The problem with religious moderation is that it doesn't permit anything critical to be said about religious literalism. By failing to live by the letter of the texts—while tolerating the irrationality of those who do—we betray faith and reason equally. We can't say fundamentalists are crazy,



because they are merely practicing their freedom of belief. We can't even say they are mistaken in religious terms, because their knowledge of scripture is generally unrivaled. All we can say as religious moderates is that we don't like the personal and social costs imposed on us by a full embrace of scripture. Religious moderates have merely capitulated to a variety of all too human interests that have nothing in principle to do with God. Religious moderation is the product of secular knowledge and scriptural ignorance. It has no credibility, in religious terms, to put it on a par with fundamentalism. Each text is perfect in all its parts. By this light, moderation appears to be nothing more than an unwillingness to submit to the law of God. Unless the core dogmas of faith (i.e., there is a God, and

we know what he wants from us) are questioned, religious moderation won't lead us out of the wilderness.

Insofar as it represents an attempt to hold on to what is still serviceable in orthodox religion, such moderation closes the door to more sophisticated approaches to human happiness. Rather than bring the force of creativity and rationality to bear on the problems of ethics, social cohesion and spiritual experience, moderates ask that we relax our standards of adherence to ancient superstitions while we otherwise maintain a belief system passed down from men and women whose lives were ravaged by ignorance. Not even politics suffers from such anachronisms.

Moderates don't want to kill anyone in the name of God, of course. But they do want us to keep using the word *God* as though we knew what we were talking about. And they don't want anything critical to be said about people who believe in the god of their fathers, because tolerance, perhaps above all else, is sacred. To speak truthfully about the state of our world—to say, for instance, that the Bible and the Koran both contain reams of life-destroying gibberish—is antithetical to tolerance as

moderates currently conceive it.

Religious moderates can't fathom that when jihadists claim to "love death more than the infidels love life," they are being scrupulously honest about their state of mind. Consequently, moderates imagine that factors other than religious faith lie at the root of Muslim violence. They especially are beguiled by the dangerous euphemism "war on terror." It is ironic that we rely on our own religious dogmatists—men such as Jerry Falwell and Billy Graham—to publicly appreciate the threat Islam poses to the world, while our newspapers testify daily to the fact that religious affiliation is the greatest predictor of terrorist behavior. The next time you see a 70-year-old woman from Norway struggle to take off her shoes at airport security, realize that in a world of limited resources their misallocation always comes at a price. The political correctness that is now the soul of religious moderation may get many of us killed.

There are still places in our world where people are put to death for imaginary crimes such as blasphemy and where a child's education consists solely of learning to recite from an ancient book of religious fiction. There are countries where women are denied almost every human liberty except the liberty to breed. And yet these same societies are acquiring arsenals of advanced weaponry. If we can't inspire the developing world, and the Muslim world in particular, to pursue ends compatible with a global civilization, a dark future awaits us all.

Nothing is more sacred than facts. Where we have reason, we don't need faith. Where we have no reason, we have lost both our connection to this world and to one another. People who harbor strong convictions without evidence belong at the margins of our societies, not in the halls of power. We should respect a person's desire for a better life in this world, not his certainty that one awaits him in the next.

But religious moderates imagine that the path to peace will be paved once we learn to respect the unjustified beliefs of others. This ideal of religious tolerance now drives us to the abyss. As every fundamentalist knows, the contest between our religions is zero-sum. Religious violence is still with us because our religions are intrinsically hostile to one another. Where they appear otherwise, it is because secular interests have restrained the most lethal improprieties of faith. It is time that religious moderates recognize that reason, not faith, is the glue that holds our civilization together.

## A TRAGEDY OF ERRORS

DNA COULD PROVE MISTAKES. BUT PROSECUTORS WON'T TEST

By Rob Warden

**W**hen William Jackson Marion was executed for murder in 1887, his guilt seemed beyond question, having been resolved by a jury and affirmed by the Nebraska Supreme Court. Yet Marion was innocent. Four years after his execution, his presumed victim turned up alive and well in Kansas.

Surely Marion is not the only innocent among the 15,000 people exe-

cuted in the colonies and the U.S. since the founding of Jamestown. The issue in the current debate is whether any have died unjustly since 1977, when Gary Gilmore became the first American put to death after Supreme Court-mandated reforms in capital punishment. Not one of the more than 925 people executed following that decision has been proven innocent—but not for lack of trying. Identifying a victim of a mistaken execution would have profound political ramifications

in states where activists are attempting to abolish the death penalty or reinstate it.

It's doubtful we will ever see another William Marion. Dental X-rays and DNA science have all but eliminated the possibility of mistaken identity of a corpse. And DNA testing is generally done before an execution proceeds. In 14 cases it has spared an innocent man. Once an execution occurs, testing is another story. In at least three cases, two in Virginia and one in Texas, authorities have refused to allow tests that might have exonerated an executed prisoner. In one case, the prosecution argued that testing should not be allowed because, if it proved to be exculpatory, "it would be shouted from the rooftops that the Commonwealth of Virginia executed an innocent man."

As executive director of the Center on Wrongful Convictions at the Northwestern University School of Law, I have studied the evidence from hundreds of disputed convictions. We have found 38 capital cases in which there is compelling, often disturbing, evidence that an executed prisoner did not commit the crime for which he was killed.

The name the residents of Virginia could well have shouted from the

rooftops is that of Joseph Roger O'Dell. He was executed by lethal injection in 1997 for the murder, 12 years earlier, of a woman who had been abducted, raped and strangled. Because DNA testing was not being used in 1985, a forensic lab could conclude only that the blood on O'Dell's clothes was "consistent" with the victim's. (O'Dell said, and witnesses confirmed, that he had been in a bar fight.) Following his execution, a group of death penalty opponents asked a judge to allow DNA testing of



a vaginal swab taken from the victim. Prosecutors fought the request, saying that, besides the result's potential to embarrass the state (an argument that included the infamous "rooftops" quote), the legal system needed to provide "finality." A judge agreed and ordered the evidence destroyed.

In the other case from Virginia, Roger Coleman, a coal miner, had been convicted of the 1981 rape and murder of his sister-in-law. As the execution neared, Coleman's lawyers won an order allowing DNA testing on a vaginal swab. The tests were performed by pioneering forensic geneticist Edward Blake, who concluded that Coleman was among about two percent of the population who could have been the source of the semen on the swab. In other words, there was a 98 percent

probability that Coleman was guilty. That was good enough for Governor Douglas Wilder. Coleman went to the chair in 1992, proclaiming, "An innocent man is going to be murdered tonight." Eight years later Blake told the trial judge that DNA technology had advanced to the point at which he might be able to prove with certainty whether the semen had belonged to Coleman. The judge refused to allow Blake to retest the sample. The state supreme court upheld the decision.

In the Texas case, Richard Jones was executed in 2000 for the murder of a housewife 14 years earlier. The woman had been abducted, apparently at random, from a parking lot near Fort Worth. Jones undeniably had something to do with the crime; his fingerprint was found in the victim's car. During his appeals he said he had only helped dispose of the body at the behest of his drug-addled sister, Brenda Jones, whose boyfriend, Walter Sellers, had committed the murder. Brenda Jones and Sellers denied the crime. But two witnesses came forward claiming that Sellers, who by this time was in prison for mail theft, had told them Richard Jones was innocent. Three other witnesses said they had seen Sellers with stolen checks and with blood on his clothes around the time of the crime. More important was the existence of evidence that could be tested for DNA—eight cigarette butts recovered from the victim's car.

Since the victim was not known to smoke and Richard Jones smoked a different brand, the butts suggested someone else

had been involved. Yet the Texas courts refused to allow DNA testing. Jones went to his death—the 141st person executed under Governor George W. Bush—saying, "I want the victim's family to know I didn't commit this crime." The butts have since been destroyed.

Not every questionable case involves DNA. In 1999 Missouri executed Roy Roberts for the murder of a prison guard stabbed to death during a riot. The investigation of the murder implicated two other prisoners but not Roberts. Two weeks later he was accused by a guard who had neglected to mention him in two written reports. A prisoner and two other guards also then implicated Roberts. The prisoner soon recanted, saying he had been coerced. The other two suspects, who did not testify at Roberts's trial because they were facing trial themselves, later insisted he had nothing to do with the murder.

Given the many questions about the case, Roberts would have been a strong candidate for clemency. But he was ultimately a victim of bad timing. Shortly before his appeal landed on the desk of Governor Mel Carnahan, the governor heeded a plea from Pope John Paul II and suspended the death sentence of an admitted killer of three. Carnahan, a Democrat, planned to run for the U.S. Senate against incumbent Republican John Ashcroft and could not afford any more hits about being soft on crime. Roberts went to his death saying, "You're killing an innocent man."



Clockwise from top left: Coleman, Roberts, O'Dell and Jones.

## MARGINALIA



### FROM A GUIDE

for sex-industry workers prepared by the New Zealand Department of Labor: "At a practical level, occupational health and safety means (1) making sure beds are in good repair and give proper support, (2) ensuring that outfits worn by workers when seeing clients are comfortable and do not affect posture if worn for long periods, (3) supplying water-based lubricants and massage oils, (4) ensuring that workers have adequate breaks between clients and (5) maintaining work spaces at between 66 and 75 degrees in summer and from 64 to 72 degrees in winter. In some rooms, such as those where employees spend extended periods with little or no clothing, the temperature may need to be maintained at higher than 77 degrees."

### FROM COMMENTS

made on CNBC by Wendy Wright of Concerned Women for America, in which she charged that our September Olympians pictorial, besides being "degrading to all women," could incite terrorism: "American athletes are being told they should not wave the flag too much because it might set off violent elements. But the violent elements aren't set off by the flag. They're more set off by things like our decadent culture. What these women have done is incredibly irresponsible."



Amy Acuff.

**FROM AN INVOCATION** delivered by Michael Harvey, a member of Atheists of Florida, at a meeting of the Tampa city council. Three council members walked out before he spoke. Harvey had challenged the ritual as a violation of the separation of church and state: "An invocation is an appeal for guidance from a supernatural power. It is also a petition to positive action on behalf of and for a diverse citizenry. We invoke this council and all of our leaders to be guided and inspired by the invaluable lessons of history, the honest insights of science, the guileless wisdom of logic and the heart and soul of our shared humanity—compassion and tolerance."

### FROM A BILL

introduced by California state legislator Loni Hancock: "This bill would prohibit the mass mailing of CDs or DVDs to households that are assessed a solid-waste disposal fee unless the recipient is provided a postage-paid envelope or similar return mechanism that would allow the recipient to return the disc to (continued on page 59)"



## T H E

## DEBUNKER

## MYTH:

### BIG COMPANIES PAY BIG TAXES

**REALITY:** Of 275 profitable companies on the 2004 *Fortune* 500 list, 82 paid no federal income tax in at least one year between 2001 and 2003. A study on corporate tax avoidance produced by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy shows the number of companies that paid no tax or received tax rebates increased from 33 in 2001 to 46 in 2003. An expansion of corporate tax breaks and incentives in President Bush's 2002 and 2003 tax cuts—supposedly to encourage capital investment—contributed to a three-year

cumulative drop of \$175 billion in taxes paid by these 275 companies alone. According to the Commerce Department,



from 2001 to 2003 these companies cut their federal taxes by 21 percent while increasing their pretax profits

by 26 percent, to \$1.1 trillion. The corporate tax savings were not applied to capital investments, which fell by 15 percent over the three-year period for all the companies in the study. General Electric received the largest amount in tax breaks during this time—\$9.5 billion. It paid only \$3.4 billion in taxes on pretax profits of \$36 billion from 2001 to 2003, an average corporate tax rate of 9.2 percent. In 2002 it had a negative tax rate, which added \$33.3 million to its \$11 billion in pretax profits.

# READER RESPONSE

## CHASING THE RAPTURE

As George Monbiot writes in "Political Rapture" (October), raptured Christians will have the best seats following the big event. It is doubtful, however, that we will be watching the calamities as if they were a fireworks display. More likely, glorified believers will be cheering on the people left behind who have realized their mistake in rejecting Christ. Our purpose is not to rain fire and brimstone



on anyone's parade. But biblical prophecy offers a lopsided advantage to people on God's side. Most students of prophecy look forward to the end-time because they are eager to meet their Lord and Savior. People who are not so religious-minded view prophecy as a threat to their way of life.

Yet there is good news of a temporary nature for people such as Monbiot who believe that many Christians welcome war in the Holy Land or that God's presumed servants in high places are hoping to trigger Armageddon. God has already determined the schedule, and no man can force his hand. We can neither hurry the coming of the rapture nor slow the coming of those prophecies. We trust God completely to handle such colossal matters.

Todd Strandberg  
RaptureReady.com  
Bellevue, Nebraska

Monbiot could use a lesson in Christianity. Our beliefs about future events come mostly from the Book of Revelation, in which St. John the Divine writes about the return of Christ and the end of the world. There have been many interpretations of his writings. Consider this passage: "The locusts looked like horses prepared for battle. On their heads they wore something like crowns of gold, and their faces resembled

human faces." Some believe John is literally writing about locusts, while others believe he's describing men in helicopters. The return of Christ has also been variously interpreted. Some Protestants believe Jesus will return to take believers to heaven before the end-time; others believe this will occur in the middle of the tribulation. It is up to each individual to read the Bible and come to his or her own conclusion. I don't disagree that George Bush has a pro-Israeli policy because of his faith, but I resent the statement that belief in a coming rapture is "an extraordinary delusion."

Darin McDaniel  
Grand Prairie, Texas

Monbiot's essay reads like an Islamic tract when he writes that Israel and its leader, Ariel Sharon, are tools of American aggression and Christian fundamentalists. It surprises me that this type of propaganda, which travels fast on the wings of oil money, would find its way into *Forum*.

John Wolner  
Forest Hills, New York

## A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

In September you wrote that the Project for the New American Century's report "Rebuilding America's Defenses" was published in 2000 ("What Would a Second Bush Term Hold for U.S. Policy?"). But it has its origins in an earlier report prepared in 1992 for then-Defense Secretary Dick Cheney [below]. The more recent report includes a telling paragraph in a section about the need to rebuild U.S. fighting forces: "The process of transformation is likely to be a long one absent some cata-



strophic and catalyzing event—like a new Pearl Harbor." *Hmmm....*

Gary McKeon  
Rancho Cucamonga, California

## A CALL FOR A TRUCE

You would think, in a country with so many ethnic identities intertwined, that we would not have such a distorted and isolated view of the world. Instead of dropping bombs, shouldn't we be asking ourselves why we are so disliked in the Middle East? Many Muslims look up to the U.S. but feel Americans look down on them. They are angry because they have lost their dignity in the one place they feel at home. Muslims are also angry about U.S. hypocrisy. You cannot advocate the destruction of terrorism while also supporting it. Israeli terrorism is the same as Palestinian terrorism. Americans need to remember their own history of revolution and the fight against English oppression. Nowadays "all men are created equal" has been replaced with I, me and us, instead of what the forefathers intended: we. We must live together because the planet is too small for us to live alone.

Tiernan Lee  
Walnut Creek, California

## MORE ON GAY MARRIAGE

I did not realize such ignorance existed in this country until I read the letters about gay marriage in the September *Forum*. It amazes me that the activities straight couples take part in (e.g., anal sex, fellatio) are considered deviant only when a gay couple practices them. Religion is an argument against gay marriage only if you believe God judges you on whom you love. Sure, gays can't reproduce, but I know a lot of straight couples who can't either and choose to adopt. I can't understand why gay people aren't treated with the same decency and respect as anyone else.

John Schipper  
Iowa Falls, Iowa

There is a great deal of concern over the rights of same-sex couples to marry yet little discussion of updating laws that affect all marriages. When are alimony and the division of assets going to be reformed? I may sound like a guy who has been burned by an ex, but in fact I'm just afraid to marry because of the chance I would have to give up half my assets and keep someone on a payroll for the rest of my life.

Kenneth Osborne  
Johnson City, Tennessee

E-mail: [forum@playboy.com](mailto:forum@playboy.com). Or write: 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019.

# NEWSFRONT



## Did Police Go Too Far?

EUREKA, CALIFORNIA—In 1997 environmental activists began a campaign to protest logging in Humboldt County. In three incidents, protesters locked their arms inside metal tubes, a common tactic. In the past, officers had used handheld grinders to cut the devices. This time they tried something new: They held the protesters' heads and applied pepper spray with cotton swabs near their eyes (the photos at left were captured from a police video). If the protesters refused to release their grip, police sprayed the irritant directly into their faces. If this also failed, officers cut through the tubes. Nine activists sued in federal court, saying police had used unreasonable force. In the most recent trial a jury deadlocked 6-2 in favor of the protesters. An earlier jury had deadlocked 4-4. An attorney for the police argues that preventing officers from using pepper spray on nonviolent protesters is like "asking them not to use a gun when they respond to a robbery."

## MARGINALIA

(continued from page 57)

the sender." America Online opposed the proposal, saying that consumers are free to return its ubiquitous CDs for recycling. It just won't pay the postage.

**FROM A DECISION** by a New York City judge in a criminal appeal: "After the jury delivered its verdict, Juror Number 4 approached the defendant, who was sitting with his brother and his wife, and told him how sorry he was that the jury had found him guilty. The juror was unsteady on his feet, his eyes were glassy, and his breath smelled of alcohol. This is not the first time a court has been confronted with this issue. In *Tanner v. United States* (1987), the defendants moved for a new trial upon allegations that members of the jury consumed alcohol, smoked marijuana, ingested cocaine, sold marijuana to one another, fell asleep and were self-described as 'flying.' One juror stated that he 'felt like the jury was on one big party.' The Supreme Court denied the motion. It ruled, 'However severe their effect and improper their use, drugs or alcohol voluntarily ingested by a juror seems no more an outside influence than a virus, poorly prepared food or a lack of sleep.' This court finds it reprehensible that a juror would imbibe alcohol at any time during trial. Nevertheless, the defendant has failed to show that Juror Number 4 was affected in the performance of his duties."



**FROM THE TRANSCRIPT** of a July 2003 conversation between Kobe Bryant and two Eagle County, Colorado detectives after a hotel worker accused the NBA star of rape:

DETECTIVE LOYA: Did you ask her if you could come on her face?

BRYANT: Yes. That's when she said no.

LOYA: So you like to come on your partner's face?

BRYANT: That's my thing. Not always. I mean, so I stopped. Jesus Christ.

DETECTIVE WINTERS: What next?

BRYANT: I stopped pumping and just stood there.

LOYA: And then what happened?

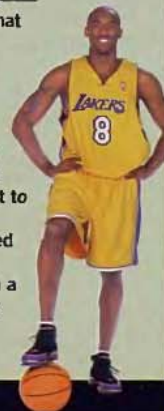
BRYANT: Nothing. She was like, "Can I have an autograph?"

WINTERS: I don't think we're getting all the facts. I look at it this way: She's an attractive young lady—

BRYANT: She wasn't that attractive.

WINTERS: Well, she's okay. She's young; she was excited to see you. You both got caught up in the moment. She started thinking, I don't want to do this. I think you tried...you just wanted to finish.

BRYANT: I didn't finish a fucking thing. Matter of fact, I jerked off after she left.



## Dark Side of the Moon

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE—A father who mailed a photo to his ex-wife of their five-year-old son mooning the camera pleaded guilty to sexually exploiting a child. The photo showed the boy standing with his underwear around his ankles and his head between his legs. The father, a former attorney, said he had been taking a playful shot of his son when the boy dropped his shorts. He mailed the image to his ex-wife, he said, to ask where his son had learned such crude behavior. The prosecutor justified the sex charge by noting that the child's scrotum is visible in the center of the shot. The couple had been in court over the photo before. In an earlier ruling a judge scolded the mother for attempting to use the image as evidence of sexual abuse, which would have limited her husband to supervised visits.

## Gayer Than a Gay Homosexual

BOSTON—A federal judge ruled that it is not defamatory to imply that a straight person is homosexual. One of Madonna's former bodyguards sued a publisher after a biography of the singer confused him with a man who is openly gay. The judge ruled that because the Supreme Court in 2002 overturned the last state laws banning gay sex, calling someone homosexual no longer suggests a criminal act. Not everyone got the message. A North Carolina runner named Chris Harbinson sued Outsports.com because one of the 150 uncaptioned photos it posted from its coverage of the 2004 Los Angeles marathon was of him stretching. Harbinson claims this caused him "extreme

embarrassment, public humiliation, mental agony and damage to his reputation."

## Get It in Writing

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA—A former flower shop owner serving 30 years in prison for the sexual torture of a Texas man asked a judge to throw out his conviction. Roger Van says the man, whom he met online, consented to be tortured but that the pair agreed not to have a "safe word" to end the role-playing. The victim says he tried to stop the game after the first day but that Van wouldn't take no for an answer.

## Popeye the Porno Man

NEW YORK CITY—Back in the 20th century Mayor Rudy Giuliani cracked down on sex shops. Soon after, Disney moved into Times Square. But the porn merchants are slowly returning to the city, with at least 20 opening in Greenwich Village. To operate in neighborhoods, 60 percent of a store's stock must be nonexplicit, which explains the rows of nightgowns, vibrating toys and golf videos. One city inspector told *The New York Times* that he refers to these often dusty products as Spanish Popeye because he once visited a store with 12,000 porn videos and 18,000 copies of Popeye cartoons dubbed in Spanish. Inspectors hope to drive newer shops out of business by repeatedly citing them for minor code violations.



# OPERATION FOOL THE PEOPLE

**F**or years the federal government has relied on unusual code words to conceal its adventures. The forthcoming book *Code Names* (Steerforth) blows the cover off cloak-and-dagger nomenclature. Much of the accumulated mystery surrounding government programs serves to divert public debate and congressional oversight.

Below is an exercise in transparency—consider it the ABCs of secret codes. These encrypted programs hint at what goes on beneath the surface in the world of warfare and espionage. Breaking the codes may be the only option for Americans who want to know how public resources are used and what our true relationships and commitments are.

**Ambient Breeze:** Counter-biological weapons bioaerosol detection system wind tunnel, first built at a Battelle Institute facility in West Jefferson, Ohio in late 2000, culminating in the first operational test of several biodetection systems in April 2001. Battelle built a second Ambient Breeze tunnel at Dugway Proving Grounds, Utah.

**Carnivore:** FBI e-mail monitoring system that collects metadata on the origin, size and routing of Internet-based messages.

**Clear Vision:** CIA program to build and test foreign-designed biological weapons, 1997 to 2000.

**Cloudy Office:** Exercise simulating a pro-Iraqi terrorist attack on the Office of the Secretary of Defense in the Pentagon, May 30, 1998. Involving more than 500 people from federal, state and local agencies, it was a follow-on to the Crucial Office exercise.

**Crucial Office:** Pentagon exercise simulating a hostage situation in the defense secretary's office.

**Diamond Flame:** Nuclear weapons accident and incident training.

**Dreamland:** Nickname for Area 51, a restricted location in Groom Lake, Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada.

**Dull Knife:** NSA reconnaissance project to monitor a North Korean ground-based system, 2001.

**Dull Sword:** Flag word for a nuclear weapons incident.

**Glory Trip:** ICBM test launch from Vandenberg AFB, California in 2001.

**Idealist:** Early code name for Air Force U-2 program.

**Infinite Justice:** Initial name for Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan after the 9/11 attacks. The name was changed on September 25, 2001 after Muslim scholars objected to the designation on the grounds that infinite justice can be dispensed only by Allah.

**JEEP (Joint Emergency Evacuation Plan):** National-level continuity-of-

government program to evacuate key government and military leaders. JEEP-1 cardholders are provided 24-hour helicopter transportation to emergency relocation sites.

**Jefferson:** Research project, taken over by the Defense Intelligence Agency in 2001, to develop enhanced anthrax biological warfare agents using genetic modifications.

**Just Cause:** Panama operations to expel Manuel Noriega, December

Pacific region airborne reconnaissance.

**Nifty Package:** Deployment of special operations forces to Panama for Just Cause, 1989.

**Nine Lives:** Presidential continuity-of-government exercise series.

**Pine Cone:** Classified "Technical Agreement" between the U.S. and Belgium relating to the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons on Belgian soil.

**Pinnacle Empty Quiver:** Program to report the seizure, theft or loss of a nuclear weapon or nuclear component.

**Rock and Roll:** Federal government mass casualties in a WMD exercise, D.C. General and Bethesda Medical Hospitals, Washington, D.C., 1998 to 1999.

**Solar Sunrise:** Series of attacks by hackers that compromised several DOD machines. They occurred shortly after military computer systems were scanned by an unknown entity that appeared to originate from the United Arab Emirates as the U.S. was preparing to take military action against Iraq in February and March 1998. Intruders penetrated at least 200

unclassified military computer systems, including those at seven Air Force bases, four Navy installations and Department of Energy national laboratories, and NASA and university websites.

**Surf Fisher:** DIA-led program that provided intelligence information to the Iraqi military during the Iran-Iraq war, 1987 to 1988. Formerly known as Druid Leader.

**Toy Chest:** Highly classified Technical Agreement allowing the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons in the Netherlands.

**Urgent Fury:** U.S. invasion of Grenada in 1983.

**Yankee/Zulu:** White House Communications Agency VHF network, used for encrypted presidential and VIP limousine communications.

BY WILLIAM ARKIN



1989 to January 1990. It was the first U.S. combat operation since the Korean War whose nickname was designed "to shape domestic and international perceptions about the mission it designated," wrote Army Lieutenant Colonel Gregory Sieminski in "The Art of Naming Operations" for *Parameters*, the Army War College journal.

**Lincoln Gold:** Department of Energy-DOD special operation capability involving the retrieval and neutralization of stolen nuclear weapons and improvised nuclear devices.

**Lucky Warrior:** Exercises to prepare for combat operations with Iraq.

**Marilyn:** Intelligence "ferret" satellite nickname, 1970s. Other satellite names included Brigitte, Farrah and Raquel.

**Nickleback:** Emergency condition associated with North Korea and



Jamie Ireland is a freelance writer in the areas of sex, fitness, romance, and travel.

# Hot Spot

# Great Sex!

by Jamie Ireland

the inside story on

## Learning "The Ropes"...

**T**his month I got a letter from a reader in Texas about a "little secret" that has made her sex life with her husband absolutely explosive. (Those Texans know their stuff, let me tell you.)

Tina writes:

Dear Jamie,

*Last month my husband returned from a business trip in Europe, and he was hotter and hornier than ever before, with more passion than he has had for years. It was incredible. He flat wore me out! And the best part of all—he was having multiple orgasms. I know what you're thinking... men don't have multiples, but trust me he was, and his newfound pow! pow! power! stimulated me into the most intense orgasms I've ever had. So, before we knew it, we were both basking in the glow of the best sex of our lives!*

*We tried tantric stuff in the past, and the results were so-so. But this was something new and exciting, completely out of the ordinary. I asked my husband what had created such a dramatic change in our lovemaking and he told me he'd finally learned "the ropes."*

*On the last night of his business trip my husband spent an evening dining out with a Swedish nutritionist and his wife of 20 years. The couple was obviously still quite enamored with each other, so my husband asked their secret. The nutritionist told him their sex life was more passionate than ever. Then he pulled a small bottle from his satchel and gave it to my husband. The bottle contained a natural supplement that*



*the nutritionist told my husband would teach him "the ropes" of good sex.*

*My husband takes the supplement every day. The supply from the nutritionist is about to run out and we desperately want to know how we can find more. Do you know anything about "the ropes," and can you tell us how we can find it in the States?*

Sincerely,

Tina C., Ft. Worth, Texas

**T**ina, you and the rest of our readers are in luck, because it just so happens I do know about "the ropes" and the supplement your husband's Swedish friend likely shared.

The physical contractions and fluid release during male orgasm can be multiplied and intensified by a product called Ogöplex Pure Extract™. It's a daily supplement specially formulated to trigger better orgasmic experiences in men. The best part, from a woman's perspective, is that the motion and experience a man can achieve with Ogöplex Pure Extract can help stimulate our own orgasms, bringing a whole new meaning to the term simultaneous climax!

The term used by the Swedish nutritionist is actually fairly common slang for the effect your husband experienced. The enhanced contractions and heightened orgasmic release are often referred to as ropes because of the rope-like effect of release during climax. In other words, as some people have said, "it just keeps coming and coming and coming."

As far as finding it in the States, I know of just one importer—Böland Naturals. If you are interested, you can contact them at 1-866-276-1193 or [ogoplex.com](http://ogoplex.com). Ogöplex is all-natural and safe to take. All the people I've spoken with have said taking the once-daily tablet has led to the roping effect Tina described in her letter.

Aren't you glad you asked?

Jamie Ireland

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# PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: TOBY KEITH

*A candid conversation with country's fiery rebel about his famous feuds, his time with the troops and why people are surprised that he's a Democrat*

At six-foot-four and 240 pounds and with more than 20 million albums sold, Toby Keith is the most imposing presence in country music in more ways than one. Over the past five years nobody in the genre—and few artists in any field of music—has sold more concert tickets, spent more weeks at number one, made more money, garnered more headlines, become embroiled in more controversy and gotten less respect than the hardheaded Oklahoman.

In contrast to Nashville's usual pretty boys singing other people's songs in well-pressed shirts and spotless cowboy hats, Keith is a plain-spoken maverick with a raunchy sense of humor, an independent streak and a chip on his shoulder. He has defied conventional Music City wisdom on his way to 19 number one hits, a dozen best-selling albums and unassailable status as the biggest male star in country music since Garth Brooks, who petered out several years ago. Keith is the guy who appeared in TV commercials alongside Terry Bradshaw and Mike Piazza; who famously feuded with the Dixie Chicks' Natalie Maines when she lambasted his flag-waving (and, she said, war-mongering) song "Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue (The Angry American)"; who got into a public spat with Peter Jennings when Keith claimed the ABC anchorman didn't want him singing that song (with its inflammatory

couplet "We'll put a boot in your ass/It's the American way") on a Fourth of July special.

Nashville can't ignore Keith—he sells far too many albums for that—but for most of his career the city hasn't particularly liked him, either. He was too outspoken, too contrary, more in the mold (philosophically if not always musically) of outsiders and rebels such as Johnny Cash, Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson. The city's disdain for its biggest seller was made clear in November 2003: Although he'd been the hottest country act of the year and had garnered the most Country Music Association award nominations—seven—he didn't win a single one. The cold shoulder was so blatant that Alan Jackson felt compelled to apologize for his best male singer award, pointedly commenting from the stage, "I'd just as soon hand this off."

Six months later, though, something remarkable happened. At the Academy of Country Music awards show in Las Vegas, Keith swept his categories, winning four awards, including entertainer of the year, best male vocalist and best album (for *Shock 'n Y'all*). The ACMs, the newer of the industry's two big awards shows, finally acknowledged what Nashville had been resisting for years: Like it or not, this brazen Okie had become the standard-bearer for a style of music that often

tried to put on a milder, nicer public face.

Keith, 43, who was born Toby Keith Covell, grew up in the small Oklahoma town of Moore. He followed his dad into the oil fields after graduating from high school, working as a roughneck until the bottom fell out of that business. He tried his hand at semipro football, then gravitated back to music, leading a successful bar band for several years before Nashville took notice. When he released his first album, in 1993, Keith seemed to be just another polite cookie-cutter act. Not until Keith threw off the conventional repertoire did he truly establish his blunt, hard-assed persona through songs such as "How Do You Like Me Now?," "I Wanna Talk About Me," "Who's Your Daddy?" and "Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue." Along the way, noted Rolling Stone, Keith "put the grits and gravy back into mainstream country."

Keith, who just released his second greatest-hits album, now tours constantly with a high-octane, effects-laden stage show that may be the most elaborate country concert since Brooks's heyday. Writer **Steve Pond** spent a few days on the road with Keith. His report: "Our interview sessions always took place a couple of hours before the show and always in the location that serves as the nerve center for any country singer worth his twang—the tour bus. His bus is pretty standard: There was usually



"I'm looked on as being this outrageous right-wing nut, but I'm a very conservative Democrat. My dad was a Democrat. And one of the last things my granddad said before he died was 'Go cast my Democratic vote.'"



"We're going to Iraq for what? For terrorism? I haven't seen the smoking gun. But the second I said I wasn't sure about Iraq, people said, 'He's trying to save his career.' What? My career is boommin', buddy."



PHOTOGRAPHY BY TONY BAKER

"I can't even fake it. I'm just straight country. They can't even remix my singles and make 'em sound pop enough to get played. Faith, Shania and the Chicks all get across-the-board play. I get just country."

a guitar on the couch, a parade of crew members and colleagues trooping through and a muted TV monitor tuned to the news. Matter-of-fact, a little guarded and clearly wary of the press, Keith nonetheless can get rolling when the conversation turns to his favorite subjects—and politics is clearly one of those subjects.”

**PLAYBOY:** Can the latest reports be true? Toby Keith is a registered Democrat?

**KEITH:** Yep. I'm looked on as being this outrageous right-wing nut, but I'm a very conservative Democrat. My dad, who I wrote "Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue" about, was a dyed-in-the-wool Democrat. And one of the last things my granddad said before he died was "Go cast my Democratic vote."

**PLAYBOY:** Do you usually vote that way?

**KEITH:** Yeah. The governor of Oklahoma's a Democrat. He's one of my best friends, and I did everything I could to get him elected. The governor of New Mexico, Bill Richardson, is a real good friend of mine. I've had some correspondence with Zell Miller.

**PLAYBOY:** Miller is the Democratic senator who gave the keynote speech at the 2004 Republican convention—not exactly most people's idea of a true Democrat.

**KEITH:** People say, "You're one of those Zell Miller kind of guys," and I go, "Yeah." They asked me to come to the Republican convention too, but I think all those celebrities who showed up at Kerry's gig did so much damage to him that the last thing President Bush needed was people like me flyin' in there.

**PLAYBOY:** But you did support the president.

**KEITH:** I've never thought Bush is as right-wing and extreme as people believe. He's a family man, a Christian guy. The Republican Party as a whole has a lot of terrible things I don't agree with, so I could be either a somewhat lefty Republican or a righty Democrat. I feel I'm in the middle. And I think the majority of people feel the way I do. Maybe they're the people who don't vote, but I think they're in the middle. They don't necessarily support the Iraq war, but they support the troops and feel we should defend ourselves if we're attacked.

**PLAYBOY:** And that's how you feel?

**KEITH:** I'm pro-troops. And after a war starts, I think you have to support the troops. Now, I do think we need to find something in the middle and defend our country without running off and bombing a bunch of people for no reason. But you can't stick your head in the sand and let your only means of defense be denial. We weren't invading Iraq or

anywhere else when they blew up the World Trade Center, so that had nothing to do with why they blew it up. They did it because they hate us. And the people behind all that terror stuff, they want Michael Moore dead, too, you know what I mean? They want our soldiers dead, and they want the guys who are pro-peace dead. There's no difference to them.

**PLAYBOY:** Did you support invading Iraq?

**KEITH:** I'm pro-war on terror. Whether we should go from country to country, like with the Iraq thing, I don't know. I'm not smart enough to say we should go to war every time somebody says we should, but I'm not smart enough to say we shouldn't be in there, either. Just



I love old-school people. I love to sit around and listen to them. I think a little of that leaks out in me.

because I don't think we should be at war, or just because I don't think the math adds up on a certain war, doesn't mean we shouldn't go.

**PLAYBOY:** Sounds like you're hedging your bet. Does the math add up with Iraq?

**KEITH:** I don't know. This ain't as simple as Afghanistan. We're going to Iraq for what? For terrorism? Have we seen any terrorist training camps? I haven't seen the smoking gun. And they haven't found the weapons of mass destruction. But the second I said in the press that I wasn't sure about Iraq, people said, "He's trying to save his career." What? My career is boomin', buddy.

**PLAYBOY:** This past spring and summer you went on a USO tour to European

bases and to Afghanistan and Iraq. Were you surprised by what you found?

**KEITH:** You think when you go there that bombs will be going off everywhere, you know? And it's nothing like that. There were people in Baghdad shopping, going to the market. It was bustling. And we've got 20,000 troops walking around on the streets every day, helping civilians. Not that everybody wants us there, but a lot of people do, and a lot of people are glad Saddam's gone.

**PLAYBOY:** Did it change your feeling about the war?

**KEITH:** It didn't change the way I feel about it, but it did change some things. I learned a lot over there. I think people have to be cautious about how they get their news.

I'd always trusted CNN to be my source and never really thought about it. But now, to me, CNN gives a very liberal, slanted view of the news. I don't feel that Fox always gets it right, but I think it at least makes an attempt to give me a balanced show.

**PLAYBOY:** Isn't it more accurate to say that Fox is also biased but in a direction you happen to agree with?

**KEITH:** All I know is that I talked to 15 or 20 generals while I was there. I talked to the commanding officers and the troops, and they all feel in their heart they're doing the right thing. Who am I to say otherwise? The one thing the soldiers kept telling me was, "Be careful where you get your news, man. They lie, lie, lie." So I came back and started watching Fox, and it was more like what I saw over there, a more accurate report of what the soldiers felt was going on.

**PLAYBOY:** The song that gave you a reputation as a right-wing nut, as you put it, was "Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue." You've said you initially resisted releasing that song. Why?

**KEITH:** I knew the people it was written for—the military—would love and appreciate it. But you

can't draw the line. You can't say, "I'm never gonna play this anywhere except when there's only military in the room." And the second you play it for liberals, they're gonna be disappointed or outraged or whatever. I didn't want to have to deal with that.

**PLAYBOY:** Why did you change your mind?

**KEITH:** I played it about three times in six months. See, this is the part of the story nobody even knows about. I wrote that song in September, right after 9/11. I wrote it, sat on it and then played it at Annapolis. It was the biggest song of the night 10 times over. Then about two months later I went to the Pentagon and played a show. And right in the middle of it I gave them a little speech.

I said, "This is my version of a patriotic song. I'm the son of a veteran, who was raised to appreciate the flag and all who died for it, and I just want to give this as a gift to you guys." I played it, and again people were crying; people were throwing their fists in the air. And then a four-star general came out and said, "We need that song. Are you going to be putting that song out?" I said, "No, sir," and he said, "Well, I highly recommend that you do. We've got the best equipment and the best fighting men, but we travel on our morale, and that song needs to be heard by everybody who's going into combat." So at the 11th hour we cut it and released it, and seven weeks later it was number one. And then here come those people I didn't want to have to deal with.

**PLAYBOY:** Including, apparently, Peter Jennings. You claim you were booked to play the song on a Fourth of July special in 2002 but that Jennings wouldn't allow it.

**KEITH:** Yeah. What made me mad was that once he saw the public was outraged that the song couldn't be on the show, he didn't just say, "We stand behind that decision." He attacked my credibility and said I wasn't even booked on the show. But there's indisputable proof. The last thing they want is for us to break out a bunch of e-mails and show 'em.

**PLAYBOY:** What did happen?

**KEITH:** They asked us to be on the show, worked out all the logistics, and then he mouthed off and threw a fit. It was, "Who does this Toby Keith think he is?" and "He's not doing this song on my show." They didn't kick me off; they asked if I'd do a different song. But that song was going to be number one on the Fourth of July. If anybody's tuning in to watch a patriotic show and I've got "Red, White and Blue" sitting at number one, what are they tuning in to hear? You're using my name to get people to watch your show, and they're going to be disappointed if I don't sing that. And I'm not going to look like a fool because of you.

**PLAYBOY:** Did that sour your relations with ABC?

**KEITH:** Well, ABC talked to me later about doing a sitcom. I said, "Are you sure you guys want to pursue this? Because I done hammered your ABC anchorman." And they said, "We don't like him either." I guess he's treated enough people ugly that maybe he just needed the right hillbilly to come along and call him out on it.

**PLAYBOY:** The song also put you into probably the biggest country music feud of recent years.

**KEITH:** [Sighs] Yeah.

**PLAYBOY:** After she told a British audience she was ashamed that George W. Bush comes from Texas, Natalie Maines of the Dixie Chicks said the song was "ignorant"

## Ultimate Country Rebels

Toby Keith isn't the only one to get on Nashville's bad side



**Hank Williams:** the patron saint of honky-tonkers everywhere

**Crime against Nashville:** Disillusioned, alcoholic and stricken with back pain, he was kicked out of the Grand Ole Opry for his drunkenness and unreliability in August 1952. Five months later he was dead.

**Legacy:** He was posthumously forgiven, because Nashville needed him more than he needed it.



**Johnny Cash:** the Man in Black

**Crime against Nashville:** Fried on amphetamines, Cash ended a 1965 show at the Grand Ole Opry by dragging the microphone stand along the edge of the stage, shattering several dozen footlights.

**Legacy:** Even though *At Folsom Prison* was a hit, Nashville has just realized Cash spent his last decade making some of the most remarkable music of his life.



**Waylon Jennings:** outlaw, highwayman, hit maker, gun waver

**Crime against Nashville:** He broke the standard Nashville contract, insisted on reporting to execs in New York and once threatened to shoot musicians who played conventional country licks on his records.

**Legacy:** Nashville tried to forgive him—Jennings had too many hits for it not to—but he was too ornery to let it.



**Merle Haggard:** ex-con, champion of the common man

**Crime against Nashville:** In his autobiography he wrote, "When I think of the people Nashville has destroyed, or tried to destroy, it makes me kinda sick." He called the Grand Ole Opry "anonymous bastards who don't know doodle-shit."

**Legacy:** He's occasionally honored, but mostly he is ignored and gets no airplay.



**Steve Earle:** beefy ex-con, recovering addict and confirmed rabble-raiser with five ex-wives and a gravelly voice

**Crime against Nashville:** The outspoken Earle burned every bridge in town with his heroin and crack use, his stubbornly noncommercial recordings and his increasingly leftist politics.

**Legacy:** A total outsider, he's the Michael Moore of the alt-country movement.



**K.D. Lang:** Canadian lesbian vegetarian who once claimed to be the reincarnation of Patsy Cline

**Crime against Nashville:** Music City turned its back on her when her anti-meat crusade alienated a few too many farmers and ranchers.

**Legacy:** She's been forgotten and forsaken, not that Lang cares: Her recent albums are pop, not country.—Steve Pond

and bad for country music. And then you went after her as well.

**KEITH:** Yeah, I did. I disappointed myself tremendously with that exchange. The whole thing ended up a fiasco.

**PLAYBOY:** Certainly you helped make it a fiasco when you put a doctored photo of her and Saddam Hussein on the video screens at your concerts.

**KEITH:** Yeah. She caught enough flak without my having to be a part of it. I felt like I lowered myself. I took the bait and went down that road, to the point where people were going, "You guys are staging this." And then when she wore the shirt that read FUTK at an awards show, people went, "Oh, we know it's staged now."

**PLAYBOY:** None of that was done for publicity?

**KEITH:** We never spoke to each other, not one time. I tried to say hi to her a couple of times, years ago. She wouldn't speak to me. It got to be a big carnival. And then one of my best friends had a two-year-old girl who had a rare children's cancer, and I came home one day and got a phone call that she wasn't going to live but about another week. I just walked into my office with a big pit in my stomach, and I looked down at a country magazine, and there on the cover it said TOBY AND NATALIE, FIGHT TO THE DEATH, or something like that. And it just about made me sick. I made a vow right then. I said, "I'm done with that. I may be stupid and let myself get into other fights, but I'm not gonna be in this one no more."

**PLAYBOY:** Do you take any satisfaction from the fact that the Dixie Chicks suffered a backlash?

**KEITH:** No. The bad part about it is that the Chicks were important. They were different, original. They made great music. But I think the American people spoke. It's hard to love somebody for their music when you don't like the personality behind it.

**PLAYBOY:** Was that your problem with the Nashville establishment for years? You sold millions of records, but you rarely won any of the big country awards. Some speculated that the industry just didn't care for your image and your personality.

**KEITH:** It's not that; it's their agenda. Only a couple thousand people vote in those awards shows, and the big record companies control them. They give it to the people they want to reward. And I'm not their Nashville poster boy. I never wanted to be that guy. I'm never gonna be that guy, and they know it. So I'm never getting the votes from those big companies. I was like one for 35 or something at that one show and three for 40 at the other one. Nobody had a worse win percentage than I did.

**PLAYBOY:** And then, last May, you went four for four and swept the big awards at the ACMs. What happened?

**KEITH:** The jester overthrew the king. What finally happened was that the open pool of voters, the people whose votes aren't controlled by the major companies, just reared up and said, "He's gonna win something this year."

**PLAYBOY:** In a way, didn't you enjoy being the outsider who was always snubbed? Did it help drive you?

**KEITH:** Yeah. As much as I bitched about it, it was kind of good being in that position. If you win, nobody says anything. And if you don't, people go, "How did you go zero for eight with the year you had?" It was cool that that was the headline the next morning.

**PLAYBOY:** So now that you've been accepted, do you need to find other things to motivate yourself?

**KEITH:** Well, after a long enough time of being overlooked, I've still got a bitterness that's hard for me to get rid of.

**PLAYBOY:** The last time you got shut out was at the 2003 CMA awards. That was the night three awards went to Johnny Cash, who rarely won when he was alive.

**KEITH:** That was the part of the night that made me be quiet and go away.

---

*I'll drink whiskey and beer,  
but I've never been a drug  
guy. I'm not a good party  
guy. I don't have great  
conversations. I just close  
up—paranoia and all that.*

---

I respect Johnny Cash. I wish Cash would have won 'em all. But it took his dying to get them to recognize him. I remember when Waylon Jennings was inducted into the Hall of Fame and had his big industry night, and he said, "Y'all didn't want to give it to me then, you're not gonna give it to me now." If you go all those years that Waylon and Cash went without getting any sort of recognition, why on the way out does everybody want to prop you up?

**PLAYBOY:** Were guys like Cash and Jennings your musical heroes?

**KEITH:** I liked those guys, but Merle Haggard was my guy. Hag and Willie were my era, and they were the two who probably influenced me the most. And to me, our industry is missing what Haggard and Willie had and what Dolly and Waylon and Hank Williams Jr. had. They all wrote their own songs, they performed, and their personalities backed it up.

**PLAYBOY:** You don't see that in country stars today?

**KEITH:** I don't think our industry allows that today. Now it's a "Video Killed the Radio Star" kind of thing. When some-

body says, "I found a great singer-songwriter over here," the record companies say, "Yeah? What does she look like?" They want to know what she'll look like on video to make sure they can market her.

**PLAYBOY:** You and Merle Haggard recently cut a couple of songs together, which will probably give him the first significant country radio airplay that he's had in decades.

**KEITH:** Same with Willie. When we did "Beer for My Horses," Willie hadn't had a number one record since the 1980s.

**PLAYBOY:** Do you think it's right that that's the only way these legends can get on the radio?

**KEITH:** I know they hate it. I know they wish they could be in the mainstream. But I get a lot of airplay, so to take advantage of that and have them with me on a duet really fills my heart with joy. And listeners always come up to them and say, "Man, it's really good to hear you back on the radio."

**PLAYBOY:** Is country radio selling its listeners short by not playing those guys more?

**KEITH:** No, I think everybody has a job to do. They're gonna do whatever sells tickets and advertising. I think the labels are probably as much to blame for feeding radio certain types of music. Why should radio be the one to stand up and say, "We need Merle Haggard"? The labels are the ones who dictate what radio receives.

**PLAYBOY:** You wrote a song called "Weed With Willie" about your experiences on Nelson's bus. We take it that marijuana's not your drug of choice.

**KEITH:** It's not my bag. I wish it was, I really do. It'd save me a lot of time and effort from being really stressed. But I get very sleepy. I'm not a good party guy, and I don't have great conversations. I just close up—paranoia and all that. It's not my favorite high.

**PLAYBOY:** What is? Alcohol?

**KEITH:** Yeah. I'll drink whiskey and beer, but I've never been a drug guy. Not that alcohol isn't a drug, but it's my choice of stimulation.

**PLAYBOY:** You have a flagpole in front of your house, just as your dad did.

**KEITH:** Yeah, but I've got a car dealership flagpole. I've got one of those big 75-footers out on my ranch. His flagpole was an old piece of two-and-seven-eighths tubing that he painted white and cemented in the ground. And it didn't have a rope on it, so you couldn't tend to the flag every day. He flew that sucker 365, man. It'd get tattered, and he'd go get a new one.

**PLAYBOY:** He was a role model for you in a lot of ways, wasn't he?

**KEITH:** Incredible. He had so much integrity and was such a John Wayne-type figure. There are 10 commandments in the Bible, but he had only two: lying and stealing. And he said, "If you

**KEITH:** Yeah. I would carry a guitar

**KEITH:** I think in fifth or sixth grade it was pass a note, hold hands, everybody had to have a girlfriend on the field trip. Sex and all that other stuff came when I was in my middle teens. Sports was so big in my life that I had girls around, but they weren't as important as sports at the time. But there came a

**KEITH:** Well, we got to be one of the top regional acts. But I remember our first gig outside Oklahoma. It was in Pascagoula, Mississippi, and we drove there in two pickup trucks with camper shells and a trailer and about \$200 to our name. We got there, and a hurricane had just hit. The town looked like a bomb had gone off. They stuck us in a hotel with no power, and that night the National Guard came in and shut the club down because there was a curfew. The owner gave us \$500 instead of \$1,500, and we drove all the way back to Oklahoma. And I thought, Man, if

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that's the way it's gonna be, maybe we shouldn't be doing this.

**PLAYBOY:** You married at this point, right?

**KEITH:** Yeah. I had two little girls, too. But my wife was always supportive. She laughs at people now when they say, "Doesn't he work too much?" She says, "No, he don't work enough."

**PLAYBOY:** Were you playing original songs in the bars?

**KEITH:** Sometimes. You know what's funny, though, we played "Should've Been a Cowboy" in the bars, and nobody cared. Original songs in nightclubs usually go over like a turd in a punch bowl. We'd do a Garth song and a George Strait song and a Bob Seger song and an Eagles song. Then we'd drop in one of mine, and all of a sudden the dance floor would empty. But the second it hit the radio it was like, "Oh yeah." That's the way people are. We need to be told what to like.

**PLAYBOY:** Your career got off to a great start with three number one hits from your first album, but things slowed down over the next few albums.

**KEITH:** Yeah. About 1995, 1996 and 1997 I wrote some great songs, industry-choice stuff. People at the record company were saying, "These are great. These'll take you to the next level." But I didn't feel like they were me. They weren't impact songs. They wouldn't release the stuff on the album that I thought would work great for me and my fans. They said, "Oh no, those will offend people." And I was saying, "But these songs you've got here don't mean anything to anybody. They're just like everybody else's songs."

**PLAYBOY:** A few of your early songs, like "You Ain't Much Fun (Since I Quit Drinking)," show some of the attitude and sense of humor of your later stuff.

**KEITH:** See, that song got to number two on the charts and stayed there for several weeks. A few radio stations resisted it. The second it didn't go to number one, the record company was like, "Okay, you got that out of your system. Now let's move on." With the next album, they put out three stinking ballads in a row as singles. Two went number one, and one went top 10.

**PLAYBOY:** What's wrong with that?

**KEITH:** Well, they believed that going to number one with those singles was building my career, but I was like, "You gotta leave a mark." I left a bigger mark at number 18 with "Getcha Some" than I did at number one with "Does That Blue Moon Ever Shine on You" and "Me Too." Those are songs people never even remember.

**PLAYBOY:** Is that why you left Mercury Records and moved to DreamWorks?

**KEITH:** It was do or die. I had the best album I'd ever made in my life, and I turned it in and they rejected it. We were at a point where I had an entire

staff that didn't believe in me.

**PLAYBOY:** That was the album *How Do You Like Me Now?*!

**KEITH:** Yeah. I finally said, "If you guys think this sucks, why am I here? Why don't you just drop me?" Thinking that was ridiculous, because all they'll ever do is shelve you, make sure nobody else can have you—record deals are for life and a day, and they're never going to let you go. But they got together and said, "He's right." And they let me go.

**PLAYBOY:** Since then your albums have been a lot brasher, ruder and funnier than they had been.

**KEITH:** I knew right then—somewhere around 1998 or 1999—what kind of music I wanted to make. And I just put both feet down and said, "This is it. Deal with it." I don't know how many weeks we've spent at number one with singles since then, but it's ridiculous. More than 40 or 50 weeks since 2000 we've been number one, I'd bet.

**PLAYBOY:** Your visibility increased tremendously when you did a series of TV ads for the 10-10-220 long-distance service. Is it true that was the only way you

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*I finally told Mercury Records, "If you guys think this sucks, why am I here? Why don't you just drop me?" They got together and let me go.*

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could get on TV?

**KEITH:** At the time my problem was that to make it to the top level of our industry you have to appear to the masses as one of the all-stars. And our all-star game was the awards show. If you're nominated, you get to perform on the show. But I had never been nominated for a friggin' thing, so I wasn't getting any television. So my manager and I made an effort to find some television. And 10-10-220 made all the sense in the world. I did eight or nine of those things for them, and that allowed me to reach the mainstream people country radio doesn't reach.

**PLAYBOY:** Another way to reach a non-country audience would be by getting into acting, as some country singers have. You were signed to DreamWorks until the company sold its music division to Universal last year. Did you ever talk to the heads of the company—Steven Spielberg, Jeffrey Katzenberg and David Geffen—about branching out into movies?

**KEITH:** I never met Geffen or Spielberg. I met with Katzenberg a lot, but it was all music-related. There was never an

opportunity there. When I signed with DreamWorks I was told I was going to feel the synergy, but I never even got a soundtrack. Here we were selling 4 million records a pop, and somebody wasn't sharp enough to grasp that they had one of the hottest-selling artists here. Why weren't they trying to create some other ways to bring money to the table? That didn't happen one time. No movie offers, no television, no jack. I don't think they had a grasp on what their music business was doing.

**PLAYBOY:** Do you have any interest in acting?

**KEITH:** You know, I've tried several times to be interested in that, but every time the right part comes along it gets screwed up for me in the end. I've been called for things, but I'll never read again. Because in the end they're going to lie to you. If Billy Bob Thornton or somebody shows up with a part for me and I can just go in and do it, I'll be there. I think my commercials and my videos show I can do it. But I'm not gonna go stand in line with a bunch of people dressed like me trying to get a part.

**PLAYBOY:** Do the mainstream media treat country music badly?

**KEITH:** They do. I get treated pretty fair at those all-genre awards shows. But I watch our other artists, and I think country as a whole gets looked down on as some kind of ancient pastime that shouldn't be out on the market. It really bugs me that country gets cast aside like a bad stepkid, and country artists get tired of getting treated like that. It's just complete nonsense.

**PLAYBOY:** Have you considered trying to make records that could cross over to pop radio?

**KEITH:** No. I can't even fake it, you know? I'm just straight country. They can't even remix my singles and make 'em sound pop enough to get played. Faith, Shania and the Chicks all get across-the-board play. They get play on AC, pop and country. I get just country. And still, you know, I had one of the highest-debating numbers, first week, over the past 15 years. Think about that. In a day when downloading has affected music by 30 percent, for a straight country act to scan almost 600,000 units in a week and top the pop charts with the great albums that were coming out that week is almost impossible. What would have happened if there was no such thing as downloading? You can't even imagine what it would be like if I was getting AC and pop play.

**PLAYBOY:** Does downloading hurt you much?

**KEITH:** It doesn't affect me the way it affects the little guy. It bothers me that it's there, but at the same time I've got income in this business coming from everywhere, so I don't have much to

*(concluded on page 177)*

The longer you wait



PHOTO TEST #2  
MAR 22, 98



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**Aged longer to taste smoother.**

Please act your age and drink responsibly. Evan Williams Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey.  
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# THE SUCKER WITH THE MONEY

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## HOW

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A TERRIBLE BUSINESSMAN NAMED  
**HOWARD HUGHES**  
~BECAME~ THE MOST LEGENDARY  
**BILLIONAIRE** IN HISTORY

**A**lmost from the moment he arrived on the national stage in the late 1920s as a young bumpkin millionaire, Howard Hughes seemed to capture the American imagination, and for more than 50 years thereafter he never relinquished his role as the country's most legendary eccentric. He not only dominated headlines with his escapades, he inspired novels and plays; one movie, *Melvin and Howard*; and at least half a dozen other films that never got produced, with everyone from Warren Beatty to Jim Carrey considering the part. This month, nearly 30 years after Hughes's bizarre death in 1976, director Martin Scorsese has finally brought his story

to the big screen in *The Aviator*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio as the enigmatic industrialist, giving testimony once again to Hughes's stubborn grip on America. Throughout his life and even after his death, Hughes was a man of abiding mystery. Of the many questions that swirl around him, the persistence of his legend may well be the most intriguing: How did someone of so little accomplishment, personal charm, magnetism, compassion and decency manage to captivate his country and become an enduring cultural icon?

One hint comes from Hughes's roots. When he emerged as a national figure, certainly part of his appeal derived from how

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BY  
**NEAL GABLER**

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Few men have manipulated the media as skillfully as Hughes. In 1936 he made a record-breaking transcontinental flight of nine hours, 27 minutes and 10 seconds. It made him a hero, and he posed accordingly (top). *Time* magazine put him on its cover in 1948. After his first nervous breakdown, in 1944, he started shrinking from public view. The bottom-left photo (1947) is one of relatively few from that period. Another breakdown, in 1958, forced him into almost total seclusion. While no one is sure, the picture at bottom right is believed to be of Hughes during a 1972 stay in Vancouver.

quintessentially American he seemed and how much he confirmed his country's possibilities. Hughes was one of us. His father, Howard Hughes Sr., though from a privileged upbringing and having been a Harvard student before dropping out, became a roustabout and roamer, mostly wildcatting for oil before finally making his fortune fairly late in life by patenting and manufacturing a drill bit that could chew through rock to the oil deposits below. The bit made him a millionaire. Howard Jr., born in Houston, where his father had set up operations, was a neurasthenic youth, shy and sickly, and an unlikely successor to his overbearing namesake. But when young Howard's mother died after failing to recover from surgery and his father was suddenly felled by a heart attack less than two years later, the 18-year-old inherited the Hughes Tool Co. and the fortune that went with it.

His was an appealing story. A young orphan with money, he was a self-made man once removed, and he looked the part. He was tall—six-foot-four—and lanky, with a diffident air, and he was rustically attractive, a Gary Cooper type. There was nothing dandified about him. In Houston he was obviously a catch, and he quickly wooed and won a beautiful local heiress from the city's illustrious Rice family, marrying her when he was 19 and decamping with his bride soon after the wedding for Hollywood, where the Hughes legend really began.

Hughes was routinely described as shy, reclusive and private, a man who abhorred the bright lights, so Hollywood would hardly have seemed his likeliest destination. In fact, despite the image of reticence Hughes assiduously cultivated, his decision to go to Hollywood betrayed the grail he would seek all his life and the mechanisms that would help him get it. Money alone would have won him atten-

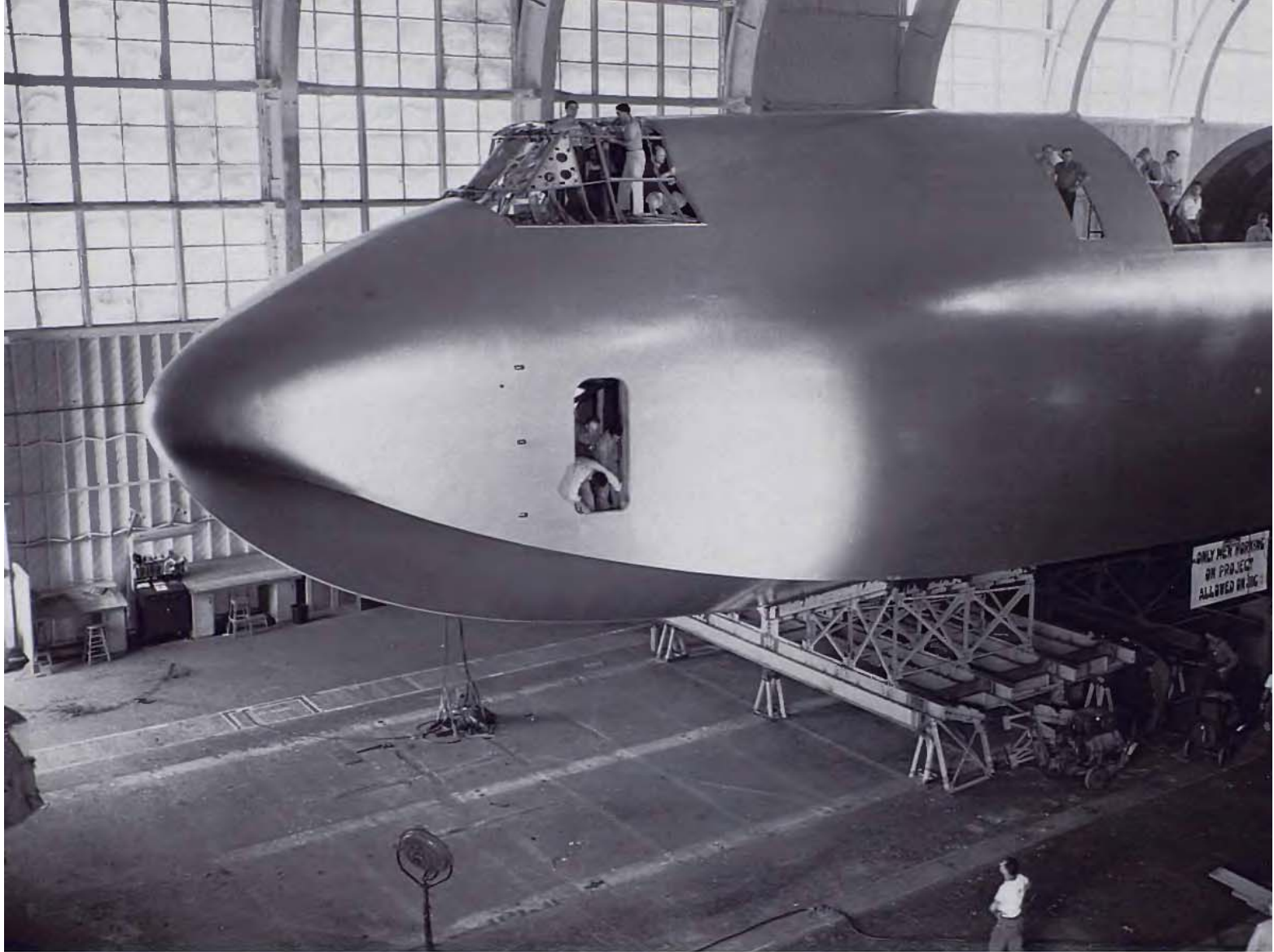
HUGHES HAD A GIFT  
FOR FATHOMING  
EXACTLY WHAT PRO-  
PELLED ONE INTO  
THE HEADLINES AND  
INTO THE AMERICAN  
CONSCIOUSNESS.

tion, especially when yoked to his homespun image and good looks. He could have played the rich naïf from the Southwest and made occasional appearances in the society and gossip columns, but he understood how paltry a fame that would be. Above all things, Hughes had an intuitive gift for fathoming exactly what propelled one into the headlines and into the American consciousness. Barely 20, he decided—perhaps as compensation for the attention he had been denied through his parents' premature deaths—to re-create himself as a celebrity, and in doing so he provided a template for everyone who harbored the same desire. In effect Hughes invented the modern idea of celebrity and then devoted his entire life to it by making himself into one of America's longest-running soap operas.

Of course, in going to California in 1925, Hughes was plugging himself into the largest publicity apparatus in the world: the movies. Though he had absolutely no connection to film other than an uncle who had become a successful screenwriter, he determined he would be a motion picture producer—not only a producer but, as he once confessed, “the most famous producer of moving pictures.” His first effort, titled *Swell Hogan*, which he was snookered into financing by a marginal actor-director named Ralph Graves, was so inept it proved unreleasable. His second, a comedy called *Everybody's Acting*, made a small profit, and his third, *Two Arabian Knights*, a war comedy, was a major success and won its director, Lewis Milestone, an Academy Award. Hughes, however, got little recognition. “The sucker with the money,” screenwriter Ben Hecht later called him.

With his fourth feature Hughes wanted to make a bigger splash. He'd had a long-standing interest in airplanes, so he decided to produce a film about World War I pilots that would feature dazzling aerial photography. Subsidized as he was by the Hughes Tool Co., money was no object. Neither, it seemed, was discipline. Hughes began shooting *Hell's Angels* in October 1927 and continued through 1930, when the film finally premiered, even recasting it at one point because he wanted to convert the silent production to sound and his lead actress had a thick accent. (The new role went to the then-unknown Jean Harlow.) By the time he finished, he'd spent not only three years but \$4 million, an unconscionable sum in those days, and had shot 300 feet of film for every foot he used; the typical ratio was roughly 10 to one. The movie received a polite reception, with critics marveling at the dog-fights, but that seemed beside the point. Hughes knew *Hell's Angels* was not so much to be seen as to be publicized, or at least to have its producer publicized, which made the runaway production worth whatever it cost. A film that would have sunk anyone else's career made Hughes a Hollywood luminary—the man who could afford to make *Hell's Angels*.

By this time, his young wife, feeling neglected, had returned to Houston and divorced him, but Hughes had discovered another surefire route to celebrity:



Hughes with (from left) actresses Ida Lupino, Jean Harlow, Ginger Rogers and Ava Gardner. The Spruce Goose under construction (top).

romance. He'd begun an affair with actress Billie Dove, who was married at the time to a bullheaded, abusive director named Irwin Willat. It was soon common knowledge that Hughes and Dove, despite her marriage, were an item. But far from scandalizing the public, Hughes's relationship seemed to tickle it. Whatever status he had achieved as a young millionaire or profligate producer was elevated by his new role as playboy industrialist. Eventually, Dove left him, after he had paid off Willat handsomely to secure her divorce, but again marriage, love and even sex didn't seem to be the point. The point was adding to his saga and keeping himself in the public mind.

Hughes could have sailed along, producing films and squiring beauties, and in fact he did. Over the next 20 years his list of conquests would include Gloria Vanderbilt, Ava Gardner, Ginger Rogers, Lana Turner, Linda Darnell and, perhaps most famously, Katharine Hepburn, with whom he would fly on his seaplane to Long Island Sound to skinny-dip. The problem, Hepburn later wrote, was that each of them wanted to be famous, and the mutual determination doomed their relationship by making it impossible for them to concede anything to the other. Indeed

Hughes, with his uncanny sense of how to command public attention, seemed to realize that romance was no more enduring a form of celebrity than wealth. He needed more.

If the first scene in Hughes's life movie was of the naive heir, the second of the Hollywood mogul and the third of the romantic leading man, the next scene was of an adventurer. Enamored with airplanes since his boyhood, Hughes had gotten his pilot's license when he was only 22 and had even flown in *Hell's Angels*. By the early 1930s he had founded Hughes Aircraft to make plane



Hughes testified before the U.S. Senate in 1947 (above left) after being accused of misusing funds during World War II (the hearings were inconclusive). That same year the Spruce Goose had its first test flight (above). Hughes had earlier been hailed as a hero in a New York ticker-tape parade after his record-breaking 1938 around-the-world flight of just over 91 hours (left), then went on to direct 1943's *The Outlaw* (far left).

equipment, and he was having planes redesigned so that he could fly them in competitions. (He grew his famous mustache to cover scars from an air crash.) At the time, after Charles Lindbergh's 1927 solo flight across the Atlantic, aviators were among the brightest of celebrities, every bit as famous as athletes or actors and much more highly regarded—a fact that Hughes acknowledged by deciding, after serious consideration, to forgo a career as a professional golfer. Instead, effortlessly turning from Hollywood to the sky, Hughes decided to grab that ring.

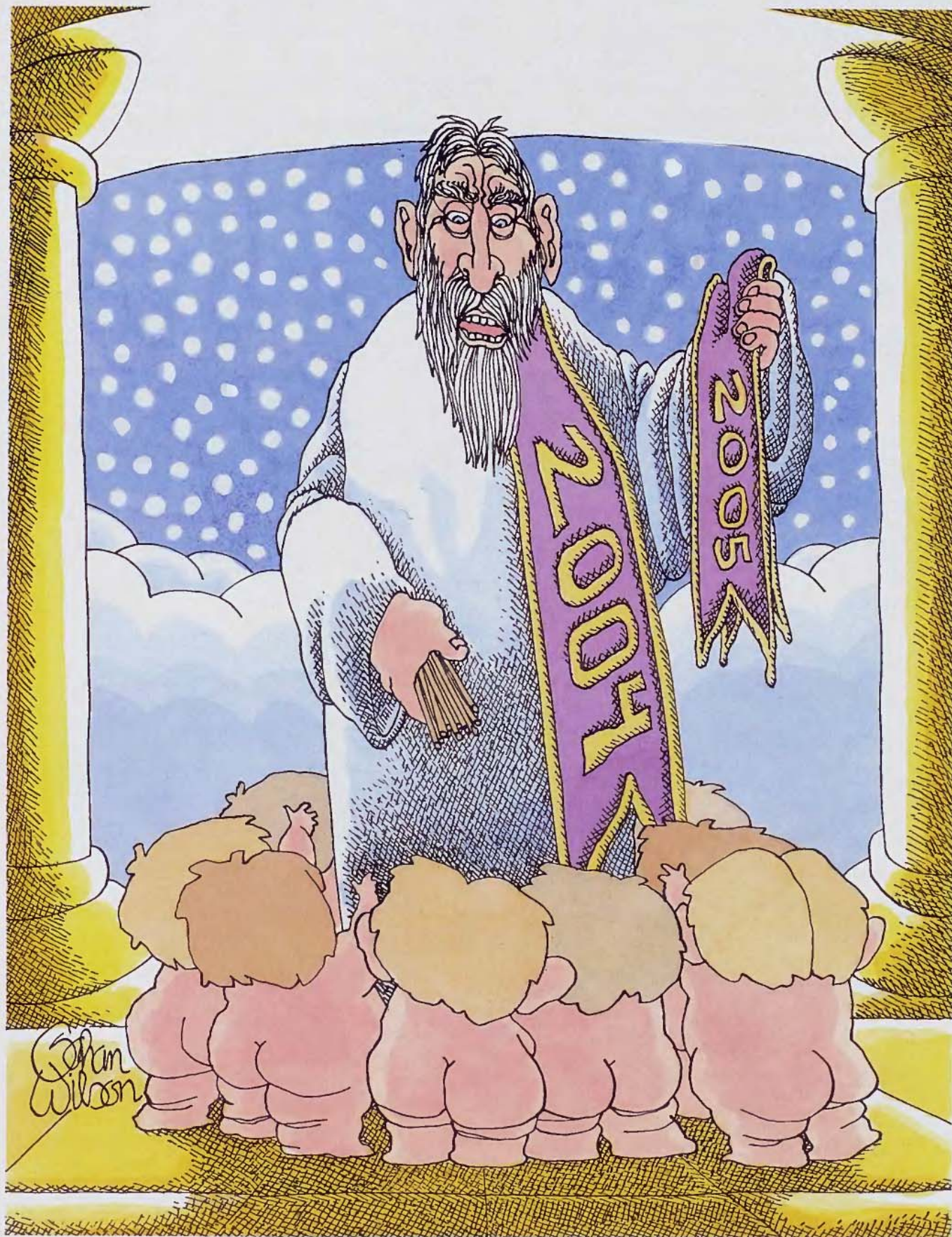
With his resources it wasn't difficult. In 1935 he set an overland speed record for an airplane. In 1936 he set a record for transcontinental flight, racing from Burbank, California to Newark, New Jersey in nine and a half hours, and then broke that record a year later by two full hours. But what really made Howard Hughes a household name, not just to movie aficionados and devotees of gossip columns but to people across America, was his record-breaking three-day, 19-hour, 17-minute around-the-world flight in July 1938. Like Lindbergh in 1927, Hughes returned to New York a hero, feted with a ticker-tape parade and a cheering throng of 1 million—the

first of several such celebrations around the country. Reporters commented on his bravery and also his modesty. He became a homegrown Odysseus who had succeeded in spanning two forms of American veneration that had increasingly diverged: celebrity and heroism.

As the new poster boy for flight, Hughes next embarked on becoming an air industrialist. He bought stock in Transcontinental and Western Airlines, which would become TWA. He began working on experimental aircraft for the military, and when war broke out he contracted with the government to make three huge flying transports, only one of which would be manufactured, and then a new reconnaissance plane. This activity constituted yet another phase in Hughes's ongoing life movie. From a celebrity and a hero he had suddenly become a dashing entrepreneur. Put another way, he had in short order transformed himself from Don Juan to Charles Lindbergh to Donald Trump.

In the end Hughes proved he wasn't even a Trump. Most of his schemes lost money, sometimes enormous amounts. He failed to deliver on many of his defense contracts, and he was forced to defend himself before the Senate War Investigating Committee. When he returned to film production and decided to buy RKO Pictures in 1948, he promptly ran it into the ground and was forced to sell it for a fire-sale price. In later years he was defrauded of millions of dollars by a con man, dropped \$90 million by underpricing a helicopter he had designed for the Army and had a judgment for nearly \$150 million rendered against him in an antitrust suit involving TWA. To support his other enterprises, he constantly had to raid his profitable tool company, until that too was drained.

Yet for all his incompetence, Hughes made his greatest claim on the American consciousness as an industrialist in the early postwar years. If he was a terrible businessman, careless and distracted, he was a good *idea* of a businessman—intrepid at a time of caution, iconoclastic at a time of bureaucratic conformity, flamboyant at a time of organization men in gray flannel suits. Men of wealth, power and celebrity typically appeal to a certain vicariousness, allowing the public to triumph through them. Hughes's vicarious appeal was especially potent because he exercised his power so willfully and wantonly and because he seemed obligated to follow no rules but his own. Hughes had everything. (continued on page 175)



*"Short straw gets the ribbon and the diaper!"*



PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WAYDA

## Have no doubt: Jenny is back with a vengeance

Jenny McCarthy has conquered a lot of territory since the 32-year-old Chicago native became our Playmate of the Year in 1994. Guys lined up to be harangued by her on *Singled Out*. Then she created a self-titled comedy show for MTV, had recurring roles on series such as *Just Shoot Me* and spoofed herself in *Scream 3*. She also somehow found time to get married and have a kid. Those in need of a new Jenny fix—and who isn't?—relish her return to the small screen on UPN's *The Bad Girl's Guide*, based on the popular book series. She'll be back on the big screen as well, in *Dirty Love*, directed by hubby John Mallory Asher, and the *Swingers*-esque *Cattle Call*. While pregnant with her son, Evan, Jenny wrote her hilarious best-seller, *Belly Laughs*, which exposes the untold side of pregnancy. "I remembered all the books I read, and I thought, Damn it, everybody lied," she says. "I was not in the mood for sex for at least eight months after," she says. "It took that much time and a naughty weekend in Vegas, and now I'm back with a vengeance. It came down to letting go and having fun with my husband. So I could say, 'Hey, let's play some blackjack and—ooh, let's go up to the room, and I'll give you a blow job.' Now that I'm in my 30s, I feel sexier than ever. I'm so happy to be able to pose again and show off my stuff after being a mom." Would she like to clear up any misconceptions? "I'm not scandalous," she says. "I never got busted for drugs or married a rock star. I'm just a focused, hardworking girl. Now that I say that, I'll probably get arrested for public indecency this weekend."

THE NEW

*McCarthyism*





Hard to believe, but it's been a decade since super-Playmate Jenny first posed for PLAYBOY. "I'll take anything that has *super* in front of it—except superslut," she says. For her return, Jenny wanted to be photographed at Elvis's honeymoon house in Palm Springs. "After turning 30, I feel more comfortable in my skin and with my sexuality," she says. "I was kind of scared the first time I posed, and I cried in the bathroom. This time I had a lot of fun being naked and naughty during it."











See Jenny's original Playmate pictorial at [cyber.playboy.com](http://cyber.playboy.com).







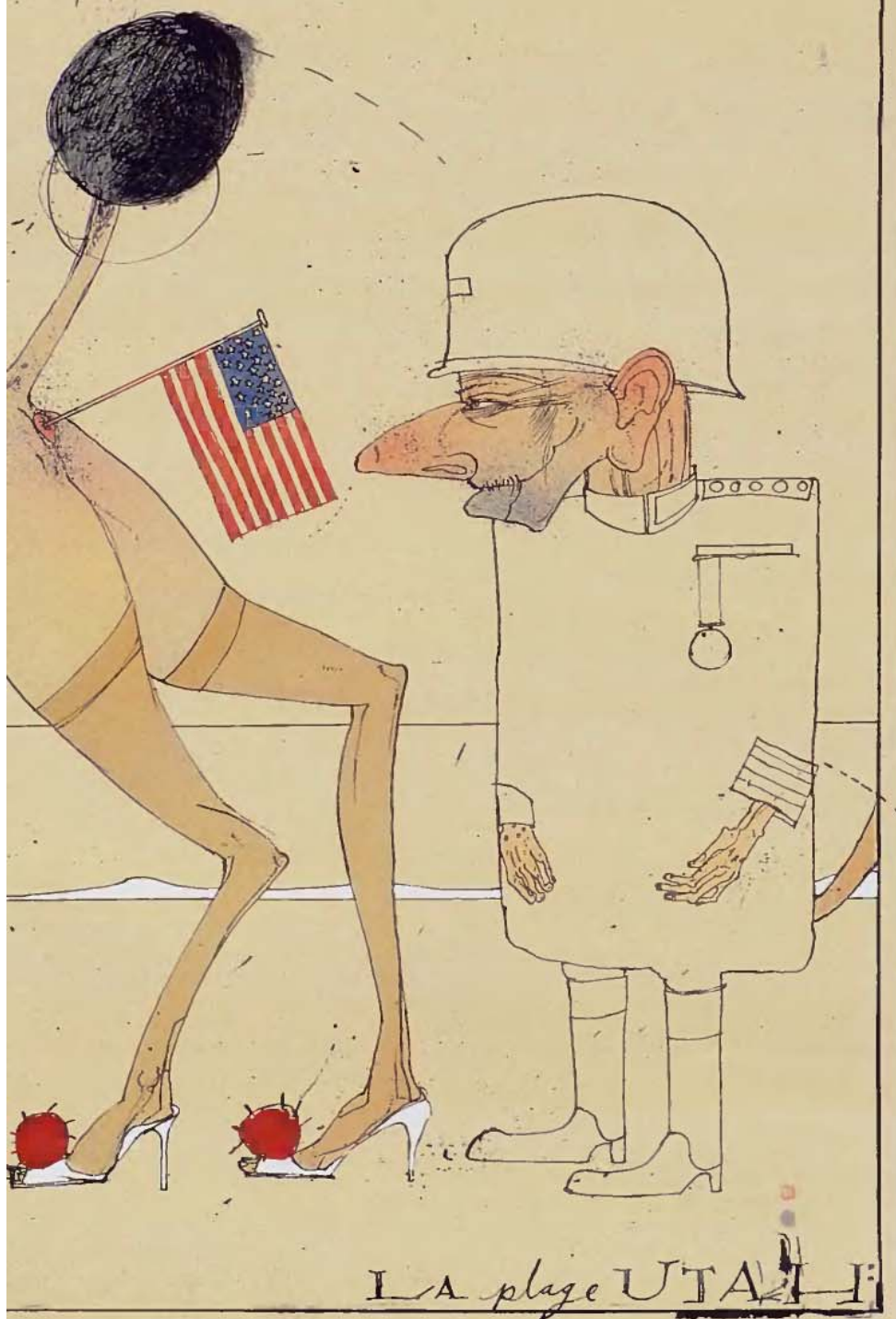
Le BONE : (Buried)

David Hughes



# DIGGING UP PRIVATE RYAN

FICTION BY  
CHRISTOPHER  
BUCKLEY



*It was PR man Rick  
"the Fox" Renard's  
toughest job yet: Make  
France look good. Merde!*

One day a few months ago I was in my Washington, D.C. office when my assistant, LaMoyne, buzzed to say that the French ambassador wanted to see me. LaMoyne is highly efficient but a bit of a snob, so even he was impressed. The client list of my firm, Renard International Strategic Communications, tends toward the less upscale. (I don't like the terms *disreputable* or *criminal element*.)

I took the call and within an hour found myself in the office of Jean-François Foussee, French ambassador to the United States. Whatever else you may think about the French, their diplomats are as polished as a chrome-plated trailer hitch.

"Renard," he said, rolling my surname around like a mouthful of Montrachet. "It is a French name?"

"Huguenot," I replied, lighting a cigarette. If you can't smoke in the French embassy, where can you? "My ancestors came over after the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre. Nasty business."

To be honest—and in my line of work I don't get to be very often—I have no idea when the first Renard set foot on American soil. But when Rick Renard is in hot pursuit of a new client, truth is only another word for obstacle.

He handed me that day's *Washington Post*. There was a front-page headline: DIGGING UP PRIVATE RYAN. A Florida congresswoman had introduced a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives to allow American World War II soldiers buried in France to be disinterred and reburied back home. Relations between the U.S. and *la belle France* had deteriorated somewhat as a result of French opposition to the Iraq war.

The article noted that the congresswoman's bill was attracting co-sponsors faster than flies on *merde*, including one senator who was running for president.

I pursed my lips thoughtfully to convey to His Excellency that Rick Renard was the answer to his problems.

"May I be frank?" he said.

"If a Frenchman can't be frank—"

"Ah, very good. *En tous cas*, if the

American Congress wants to make a spectacle of itself, then it is not for France to stand in the way. If it wants to turn the Normandy cemetery into a field of gopher holes, well, that is very sad—for the soldiers, for everyone, including France. It is sad for the memory of Lafayette.”

I lit another cigarette in anticipation of a long lecture on how America would never have won independence from England if it hadn't been for France. I'm no historian, but my understanding is that the French came to our aid not to promote democracy in the New World but to punish the Brits, their age-old nemesis, for kicking their derriere in the French and Indian Wars.

“For my part, personally,” said His Excellency, “if you want to dig up your dead soldiers, fine. We can use the space for a golf course. Or a casino. At this point we are out of patience with the proposition that we must do anything America wants simply because you intervened in World War II. Okay. We helped with your revolution; you helped us with our little problem in the 1940s. So we're even, yes?”

There's nothing more refreshing than an indignant Frenchman.

He leaned back and made a Notre Dame steeple with his fingers. “Naturally, this is not an opinion you will hear me expressing on the TV. But here is the *pressing* problem: France is about to sell billions of dollars of airplanes to various U.S. airline companies, most of which are going bankrupt.” He picked up the newspaper. “But if this grotesquerie becomes a reality and the TV is suddenly showing pictures of American coffins being dug up and shipped back home, ooh-la-la, there is going to be a *huge* anti-French sentiment, and there will be *enormous* political pressure not to buy our airplanes and instead to give subsidies and tax breaks to the U.S. carriers to buy American planes.”

He sat back as if exhausted by all this candor.

“Yes,” I said, “that's probably how this would play out.”

“So we must find a way. *Renard* means ‘fox.’” He smiled. “You must be the fox for us.”

“May I speak frankly, Mr. Ambassador?”

“But of course.”

“Reversing anti-French sentiment, that's not going to be easy.”

“Yes, Mr. Renard, I understand you will need a lot of money. That is *entendu*. That is not going to be a problem.”

Say what you will about the French, they and I understand each other.

At the door he said, “You remember Voltaire's prayer?”

“Remind me,” I said.

“‘Oh Lord, make my enemies ridiculous.’”

LaMoyné hadn't been this excited since I was covertly hired to try to get an American cardinal elected pope. He began dropping Gallic phrases around the office and showing up with French books, including the recent best-seller alleging that no plane had flown into the Pentagon on 9/11, that it was all a hoax by the U.S. government.

“We're trying to improve relations with France, LaMoyné.”

“Don't you want to know what the other side is thinking? And by the way, the author is writing a sequel. It's about how the Normandy invasion never took place.”

“It'll be huge, I'm sure.”

“I read a chapter of it in *Le Hebdo de Déconstruction*.”

“What are you talking about?”

“I forgot you don't read French,” he sniffed. “It's an intellectual quarterly. Not your thing. He's serializing the new book in it. The amazing thing is, it's convincing.”

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*New York-bound Air  
France flights were diverted  
to Montreal by air traffic  
controllers, and the city  
council of Des Moines voted  
to rename the city.*

---

I want to fire LaMoyné three or four times a day, but he's too good to let go.

“That's a promising start,” I said. “Why don't we mount a media campaign saying there wasn't a Normandy invasion in 1944, so there's no Private Ryan to dig up. Brilliant. Bring me a grande latte. And if I catch you smoking Gauloises, you're fired.”

You have to assert yourself with a LaMoyné every now and then. They get ideas.

If you've represented such clients as the government of North Korea, the Mink Ranchers Association, the Ozone Manufacturers of North America, the National Unlicensed Pistol Owners Coalition and various Hollywood celebrities who have murdered spouses and bystanders, making France look good shouldn't be all that hard.

And yet, after I did a *tour d'horizon* of U.S. sentiment toward our erstwhile ally, it was clear that Rick “the Fox” Renard had his work cut out for him. There was not a lot of hugging going on between the two countries. Wine store

owners were pouring champagne into our gutters; American tourists were staying away in droves; McDonald's had officially changed the name of its fries to the English-sounding “chips”; New York-bound Air France flights were routinely being diverted to Montreal by jingoistic U.S. air traffic controllers for petty reasons; the city council of Des Moines, Iowa had voted to rename the city the Monks; and the Rotary Club and the Kiwanis were sponsoring Anti-French Bowling Nights, during which the pins were painted with the likenesses of various French officials. Meanwhile, the Florida congresswoman's bill to repatriate the remains of Private Ryan now had more sponsors than an Indy 500 Formula One.

I do a bit of teaching at the Georgetown University School of Advanced Spin, and I tell my graduate students that if you can't make the bad guys look good, make the good guys look bad. Is this ethical? I'll leave that to the naysayers and second-guessers who have the luxury of sitting on the sidelines. As Lyndon Baines Johnson—one of my first heroes in this business—used to say, “Better to have him inside the tent pissing out than outside pissing in.”

LaMoyné and I war-gamed late into the night, soaking the old gray matter in coffee and pumping up the metabolic rate with nicotine. Say what you will about cigarettes and the so-called health issue (I used to represent the tobacco industry), if there's better brain food than caffeine and nicotine, I'd love to hear about it.

By four A.M. the air inside the conference room would have killed a sparrow in midflight. We had the thousand-yard stares common to desperate PR men. But I've found that the best ideas often come around four A.M. if they're going to come at all. And sure enough, it was 3:56 A.M. by the digital clock when I had my eureka moment. Even LaMoyné was impressed, always a good sign.

●

The next day I presented myself in the office of U.S. Senator Karl Klemmer Kilbreath. How a man with those initials managed to get himself elected governor and later senator for life of a state in the Deep South is one of the great stories in American political life. At any rate, half a century after he ran for president on a platform of restoring slavery, old Karl adapted to the times. He married his extremely attractive African American chief of staff—a woman 40 years his junior—had three children and ended up a champion of civil rights. As Yogi Berra said upon being informed that a Jewish man had

(continued on page 170)



*"Did you ever go up in an elevator and forget what you went up for?"*

# THE HIGH

FASHION BY JOSEPH DE ACETIS

SPIKE IS IN A  
VELVET JACKET  
(\$2,350), PAISLEY  
SHIRT (\$1,160) AND  
PANTS (\$705),  
ALL BY **VERSACE**.  
HIS SHOES ARE BY  
**MEZLAN** (\$175).

# L I F E

Formalwear has it all.

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show deference

to your host and

send a bold message:

I'm the Man


**PLAYBOY  
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TEX'S VELVET JACKET  
(\$325), PAISLEY  
SHIRT (\$165) AND  
PANTS (\$90) ARE  
ALL BY **MARC ECKO**  
COLLECTION. HIS  
SHOES ARE BY  
**JOHN LOBB** (\$885).

ALI G. LOVE IS IN A  
TUX BY **GIANLUCA**  
**ISAIA** (\$2,595)  
AND A SHIRT (\$185)  
AND TIE (\$95)  
BY **ALEXANDER**  
**JULIAN PRIVATE**  
**RESERVE.**

SPEX IS IN A TUX  
(\$1,295) AND SHIRT  
(\$185) BY **ARNOLD  
BRANT**, A POCKET  
SQUARE (\$65) AND  
TIE (\$110) BY **ROBERT  
TALBOTT** AND  
SHOES BY **FRATELLI  
ROSSETTI** (\$395).





LUCKY IS IN A TUX  
(\$1,535), SHIRT (\$410)  
AND BELT (\$300) BY  
**RICHMOND X UOMO**  
AND SHOES BY  
**FRATELLI ROSSETTI**  
(\$395). SMOKEY IS  
IN A JACKET (\$718),  
SHIRT (\$750) AND  
PANTS (\$220) BY  
**VALENTINO**. BOTH  
POCKET SQUARES  
ARE BY **ROBERT**  
**TALBOTT** (\$65).


THAT PAGE: BEADED DRESS BY HOUSE OF DIEHL VINTAGE COLLECTION (\$1,800) AND SHOES  
BY STUART WEITZMAN (\$250). THIS PAGE: GARTER BELT BY SIMONE PERELE (\$77) AND  
THONG BY NINA RICCI (\$116), BOTH FROM LA PETITE COQUETTE, AND BRA BY AUBADE (\$79).

JACKPOT WEARS  
A TUXEDO BY  
**TURNBULL & ASSER**  
(\$2,895). HIS SHIRT  
(\$225) AND CUMMER-  
BUND AND TIE SET  
(\$245) ARE BY  
**ROBERT TALBOTT.**

THIS PAGE: DRESS AT LEFT BY BINETTI (\$600); DRESS AT RIGHT BY  
HOUSE OF DIEHL VINTAGE COLLECTION (\$2,400). THAT PAGE: DRESS  
BY VALENTINO (\$2,100) AND NECKLACE BY TEMPLE ST. CLAIR (\$2,000).



MR. GENEROUS,  
AT LEFT, IS IN  
A TUX BY LUBIAM  
1911 (\$995) AND  
CUFF LINKS BY JAN  
LESLIE (\$250). BEN  
E. FICIARY IS IN A  
TUX (\$2,500) AND  
SHIRT (\$595) BY  
MOSCHINO. BOTH  
TIES (\$85) AND  
POCKET SQUARES  
(\$65) ARE BY  
ROBERT TALBOTT.



ANGELINA'S WEARING  
A JACQUARD TUX  
JACKET (\$1,095) AND  
CREPE PANTS (\$350)  
BY VESTIMENTA. HER  
SHIRT IS BY ALEXANDER  
JULIAN PRIVATE  
RESERVE (\$185), AND  
HER TIE IS BY ROBERT  
TALBOTT (\$110).



DOM P. IS IN A SUIT  
(\$1,170) AND MULTI-  
COLOR SHIRT (\$390) BY  
**JUST CAVALLI**. HIS  
BELT IS BY **JOHNSTON  
& MURPHY** (\$55),  
AND HIS NECKLACE  
IS BY **TEMPLE ST.  
CLAIR** (\$4,975).

THAT PAGE: CORSET GOWN BY GAI  
MATTIOLO (\$930).

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 175.

# diary of a threesome fanatic

He was a TV star. She was a writer. When their love life started adding friends and strangers, things took an odd turn. A true story

article by anonymous

## **O**ur first threesome is after the opera.

I've been dating my boyfriend—let's call him John—for a few months. I have a toothbrush at his apartment but not a set of keys. John is getting rich; he's in a popular TV show—in fact, I can barely open a magazine without seeing his face.

What he's doing with me is a little unclear. I'm about 10 years his junior and absolutely unfamous. But I work in the media, which I guess he finds intriguing, and we get along rather well. Although he says up front that he can't—and won't—commit, he's funny and charming, and I'm 24 and up for anything.

Which leads us back to the opera. At the intermission of *La Bohème*, we drink champagne on the terrace overlooking the fountain at New York's Lincoln Center. He asks me what I want to do afterward.

"Well, we could hire a hooker," I say, wanting to turn him on. We've been talking about it for weeks. I'd told him I wanted to be with a woman, and he—shock—said he'd always wanted to be with two. We're really no different from anyone else. For men and women the threesome has evolved into the Mount Everest of sex—almost everyone I know wants to try it, and if they haven't they want to know what it's like. Is it sexy? Is it too...much?

I'm interested also for strategic reasons. John keeps talking about how he can't be monogamous, and I figure if we cheat on our relationship together it's not really cheating. As for hiring a hooker, I had never thought I'd do that, but it would allow us to avoid creepy solicitations of our friends (of course, we'd move on to that later).

Not surprisingly, John is intrigued by my hooker suggestion. "Not a bad idea," he says, grinning. And though I'm not sure I meant what I said, he's now so excited it's too late to turn back. After the opera we race to his apartment, where he starts hunting for escorts online as I scour the classifieds in his magazines. In the back of a city magazine I find an ad for "high-class" escorts. He calls and orders us a young blonde one with "lots of experience with women." The price is \$1,000 an hour. Yikes. The rent for the apartment I share with two friends is \$1,000.





John gives his credit card information and his real name to the person on the other end of the phone. I know what you're thinking: He's a well-known person—what the hell is he doing? But John doesn't care. It's as though he's ordering take-out Chinese. The woman on the other end says something. John laughs, rolling his eyes at me.

"I'm glad you're a fan," he tells the woman, who I guess is the escort service's madam. "That's very flattering. Thank you." I wonder if the madam will sell the story to *The National Enquirer*. I keep that to myself.

Now it's time to get ready. We jump into the shower; it seems like the polite thing to do. I wish I had some lingerie. We don bathrobes. The shower has sobered us up, which is not necessarily a good thing. John rolls a joint with some dried-out pot. Then we start cleaning furiously. He's making the bed, and I'm washing the dishes. "I feel like I'm expecting my in-laws," John says. He opens a bottle of wine. He puts a Massive Attack CD in the stereo. It feels as if we're staying at a W hotel. I dim the lights more.

The doorman calls up to announce our "visitor." He must know—doormen know everything. There's a knock on the door. I freeze, but John lets in a small blonde Russian woman. She's maybe 21, and she seems a little innocent for a hooker. Her English is broken, she has small real breasts, and I'm prettier. Perfect.

I offer her a drink, and while I get it John gives her an imprint of his credit card. (That will fetch a nice price on eBay, I think.) We make our way to the bedroom, where John has thoughtfully, if a bit cheesily, arranged and lit candles.

And so here we go. It kind of goes down the way you'd think it might. John tells the hooker I've never been with a girl and asks her to kiss me. "I want to watch," he says. You know, it's amazing how you can think the dialogue in porno movies is stupid, but then you find yourself in a real-life porno film, and you say the same dumbass things. I tell her to "go down on me." I can't believe I've said that, but down she goes. Then John shows me how to go down on her. For a guy who claims never to have done this before, he's got the fantasy mapped out.

I wish I could tell you it's the most amazing sexual experience ever. It isn't. But it isn't bad, either—it's a little like a boozy sex-ed class or a horny slumber party. You have to pay attention to other people's feelings, and you have to keep your ego in check. I watch John have sex with the hooker, and strangely I don't feel jealous, just a little competitive. Then we give him a blow job. "I've never been this hard before," he says. (See what I mean about the porno dialogue?) But—and here I lay down my first threesome rule—I don't let him finish. "You two should make porn," the hooker gushes.

And then she gets up to leave. Charlie Sheen knew what he was talking about when he said he doesn't pay a prostitute just for sex but also to leave. I've heard the Metropolitan Opera, I've heard church bells in Paris at dawn, but the sweetest sound I've ever heard is the door slamming behind that hooker.

The next morning John's out of bed early—he's appearing on a talk show. I watch it in bed and wonder if the Russian will figure out who he is and brag. When I get to my office the next morning the woman who sits next to me asks how the opera was.

"Nice," I say.

It was nice. And we're just getting started.

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I've heard the  
Metropolitan Opera  
and church bells in  
Paris at dawn, but  
the sweetest sound  
I've ever heard is  
the door slamming  
behind that hooker.

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The very next night we hire another hooker from the same place. The madam tells John she's got a "good one" for us, as though she's got a fresh batch of Atlantic cod. (Frighteningly, she also tells John he looked cute on TV this morning.) But the madam needs glasses. The girl who arrives at the door has stretch marks and fake boobs the size of beach balls, and worst of all she keeps talking about her little girl. It's horribly depressing. She gets John to use some strange sex toy—a pair of mini silver vibrators—on both of us simultaneously. It feels like a scary gynecological exam. We shuttle her out the door after half an hour. Later the woman on the phone tells us, "You can always send her away for a refund or an upgrade." Great. But John and I decide to go for a nonhooker partner, a civilian. A civilian would be exciting, sexier and a hell of a lot cheaper.

And John has just the girl—he confides to me that he recently got a blow job from a pretty European woman at a nightclub. And, he says, she likes girls!

"Let's fuck her!" I say.

I know how twisted that seems, but in the moment, John's fortunate round of philandering feels like great luck for both of us. We have a girl! We meet the European at another club a few nights later. She has short, silky blonde hair and a tight, trim body, and she doesn't speak English all that well. She's hotter than the hookers and has much better style, too.

The threesome isn't exactly proposed as much as it just occurs. John's hands are all over us in the club. Then we're out the door and riding in John's town car and—hello!—the European and I are giving John a blow job together while she has her hands between my thighs. I think, Do other people do these kinds of things? And do cars really have security cameras in the back?

We go back to John's apartment, and when I walk out of the bathroom they're already sprawled on the bed, which makes me feel insanely jealous—so I join them. Her stomach is flat, and I hate that. But she's hot and makes me

come quickly. Then I return the favor. It goes on for a while.

Here's the thing, though: Unlike with a hooker, I can't ask the European to leave after an hour. Worse, John snuggles with both of us. I keep panicking that I've started something I can't stop.

But once a week for about two months, we keep doing it. It evolves into a strange relationship. The European starts sending me e-mails. I e-mail back. On my birthday she sends me beauty products as a gift. A co-worker asks me who they're from. "Um, a friend," I say. She comes to my birthday party, and my friends ask about her. "A friend of John's," I say. I guess she is a friend, but I wish John hadn't invited her.

My birthday night ends at a strip club, just the three of us with a stripper in a private room. Not exactly *Eloise at the Plaza*, I know. The stripper and the European are hitting it off. John gives the stripper an extra key card to the nearby hotel suite he has rented for us for the night. I think he's nuts. Won't she tell a gossip column? We all wind up in a Jacuzzi in the hotel room. John's assistant—whom he made sign a confidentiality agreement, thank God—has stocked the place with water, candles, condoms, champagne and (a nice touch) extra toothbrushes.

Everyone eventually gets it on. The European and the stripper, me and the European, the stripper and John, John and the European, me and the.... I lose track. To be honest, it's exhausting, and I feel I'm fighting for face time with John. When he notices that my underwear matches the European's, he says, "Look, she's trying to be like you! Isn't it cute?" I want to punch them both in the face.

And I know it's going to get worse when John insists the European join us at his summer (concluded on page 190)

Remember what they used to say about crack—that all it takes is one puff and you're hopelessly addicted? John and I become that way about threesomes.



*"How about my Christmas special? I give you a blow job while humming  
'Santa Claus Is Coming to Town.'"*



# CHAMPAGNE

## WITH A TWIST

BY A.J. BAIME

### A TOAST TO THE ART OF THE BUBBLING COCKTAIL

There are reasons champagne is the default drink for romantic occasions. Soon after a blind monk named Dom Pérignon produced the first vintage in 1690 (or so the myth goes), champagne as we know it became the original cult wine. It was so elegant you could sip it out of a lady's slipper—and that's saying something in the days before the shower was invented. Because the wine was expensive and carried an aura of mystery ("I'm drinking stars!" the monk supposedly shouted after his first taste), it became the *de rigueur* prop for a guy on the make. *For you, sweetheart, nothing but the best.* The pop of the cork said everything about a man's intentions, and the heady buzz was just the thing to get her in the mood.

Now, centuries later, the bubbly-by-the-bed bit has gone a little flat. The routine is more Peter Sellers than James Bond—you'll get the laughs but not the ladies. You need to blow the dust off this ritual and mix it with a dash of creativity. Naturally we have some suggestions. The drink menu on this page is our list of the best champagne cocktails out there. Each offers the opportunity to serve up that same heady buzz in a less formal way, while also letting you showcase your virtuosity when it comes to the realm of the senses. Go with a \$25 brut such as Piper-Heidsieck or Moët & Chandon's White Star, and make sure the wine is properly chilled. New Year's Eve and Valentine's Day are the obvious occasions, though any night can be worthy. When you're in the right company, there's always a reason to celebrate.

#### HARRY'S PICK-ME-UP

Harry MacElhone had quite a clientele at Harry's New York Bar in Paris way back when. Ernest Hemingway, Jack Dempsey and Simone de Beauvoir were known to drink the cocktails invented there, such as the bloody mary and this luxurious mood lifter.

3 ounces brandy  
1 teaspoon grenadine  
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice  
6 ounces chilled champagne

Shake all the ingredients except the bubbly with ice and strain into a 10-ounce goblet. Top with champagne.

#### BLACK VELVET

You'd think the moniker comes from the texture and color, but this drink was named after the black velvet armband worn in England to honor Prince Albert when he died in 1861.

Equal parts chilled champagne and Guinness  
Pour the stout into a flute and carefully layer the wine on top.

#### FRENCH 75

Legend has it that during World War I some Allied soldiers got stranded in a French château, where the only thing to drink was champagne and gin. The resulting cocktail had "the kick of a French 75," as in a 75-millimeter howitzer. Here's the updated recipe:

1½ ounces gin  
½ ounce fresh lemon juice  
1 teaspoon superfine sugar  
5 ounces chilled champagne

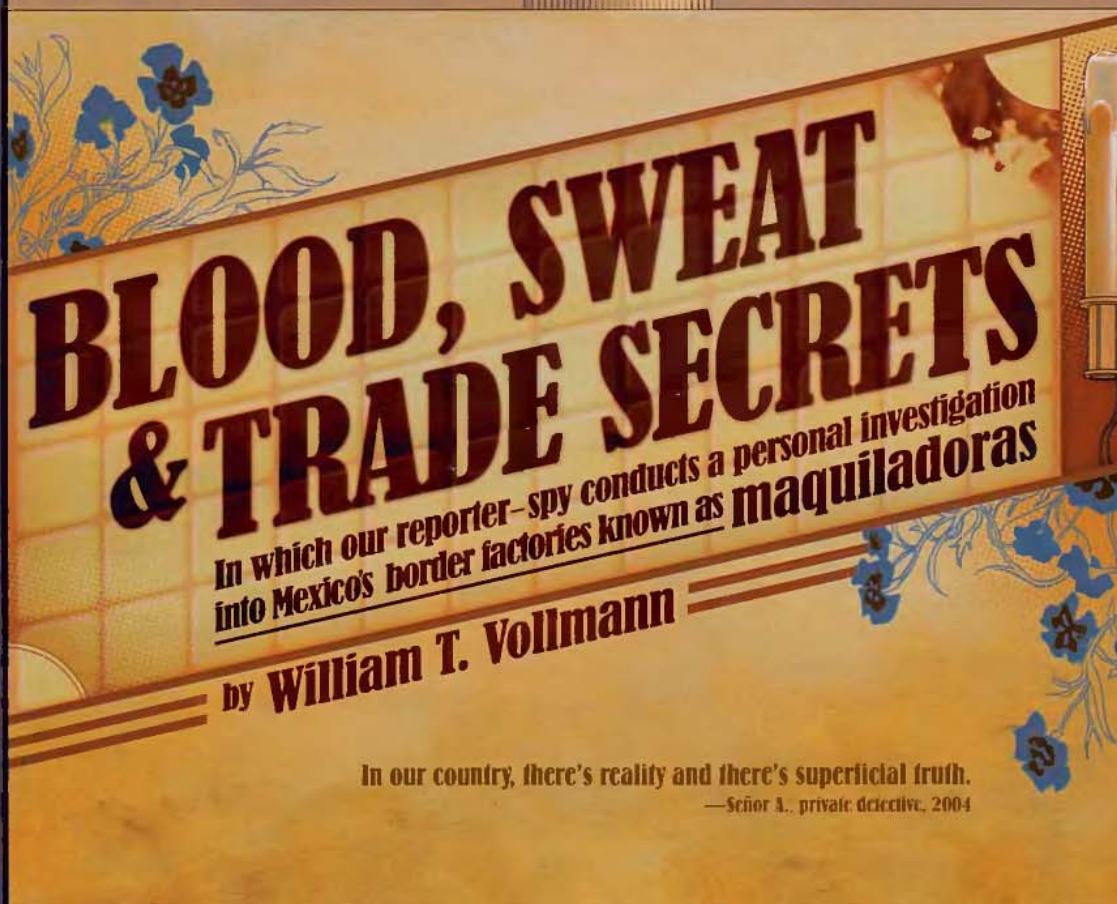
Shake all the ingredients except the bubbly with ice and pour into a tall glass (don't strain). Top with champagne.

#### OLD CUBAN

The mojito is following in the daiquiri's footsteps. The Caribbean damsel is getting bent over bars across America, compromised with any number of unnecessary ingredients. But the old cuban is a twist that takes the drink to a new level. You'll find it on Audrey Saunders's menu at the Carlyle hotel bar in Manhattan.

2 mint sprigs  
¾ ounce fresh lime juice  
1 ounce simple syrup  
1½ ounces Bacardi 8  
2 dashes Angostura bitters  
Chilled champagne

Muddle mint, lime and syrup in a shaker. Add rum and bitters, shake with ice and strain into a cocktail glass. Top with champagne.



# BLOOD, SWEAT & TRADE SECRETS

In which our reporter-spy conducts a personal investigation  
into Mexico's border factories known as **maquiladoras**

by William T. Vollmann

In our country, there's reality and there's superficial truth.

—Señor A., private detective, 2004

## THE TAMPON PARADE

Once upon a time, in a concrete house on the west bank of the Río Hardy, on one of those 110-degree, humid afternoons that in Southeast Asia would have imparted an air of Buddhist dreaminess to everything but that in Mexico expressed itself in simple torpidity, a woman from the Cucapah reservation, who traveled by slow bus five days out of every seven to the maquiladora in Mexicali where she assembled unknown components for the better than average wage of \$100 a week, informed me that before she'd given birth to those four children who now sprawled on the dirt—one of them sleeping, two of them playing, the eldest slowly fighting the flies over his can of soda pop—she had worked in a different maquiladora managed entirely by men and staffed mostly with single young women like her. In this establishment, the name of which she'd forgotten, every female on the line was required to bring in a bloody tampon each month for inspection. No tampon or no blood and she'd get fired. My driver-interpreter, a young Mormon named Terrie Petree, was skeptical. She said Mexican women usually wore pads, not tampons, and besides, how difficult would it be to borrow a neighbor's bloody tampon or procure a splash of chicken blood? All the same, I knew of a book that seconded the indictment, an angry little book whose certitude glared as inescapably as Imperial sunshine. Its author was none other than Ramón Eduardo Ruiz, whose exaggerations about the feculence of the New River my own laboratory samples had underwhelmingly verified. His tract ends thus: "A healthy and prosperous American economy will not forever endure if the mass of Mexicans to the south, many of whom labor for greedy American employers, live in Third World dependency." Señor Ruiz had been apprised that a certain maquiladora in Ciudad Juárez compelled its female employees to bring in bloody tampons each month for the first three months on the job.

What was it about this now twice-told anecdote of the tampon parade that most offended me? I suppose it was the violation of dignity. The massive drug testing in American workplaces angers me enough; I see all too well the culture of bullying and cravenness it leads to. Repeated pregnancy testing as a condition of continued employment is worse; the humiliations of the tampon parade reminded me of the anal search to which I was once subjected by functionaries of my government; that was more than 20 years ago now, and I will never forget it. As Emerson wrote, "Could not a nation of friends even devise better ways?" To institutionalize such invasiveness with monthly replications would be an easy achievement of the reprehensible.

It really wasn't my concern, because I live over here on Northside, where inexpensive Mexican-assembled products arrive by magic, but I did start wondering how bad it really was in the maquiladoras. "They are very closed," said everybody, which increased my suspicions. One day Terrie and I breezed into a large feedlot in the Mexicali Valley, and the office girl invited me to take any photos I yearned for; all she asked was that I close whichever gates I opened so that the stock wouldn't get loose. A cowboy posed for me. I wandered into another office after closing time, and the man there, who never even asked my name, looked up all the statistics I wanted. On that same day we had visited a glass factory where our welcome was decidedly different. We would need to apply in advance for authorization, said the man for whom the receptionist had rung. This application must be in writing and delivered by post, and the chances of its being accepted sounded equivalent to those of my being elected president of Mexico. The man was, moreover, inquisitive in that unpleasant fashion of FBI agents. He wanted identification, which for some reason I declined to show him. His clever little eyes never stopped trying to see through me. He was an exemplar of monotonous diligence. He showed no hurry to eject us from the factory; he was perfectly willing to undress our motives for as long as we liked. This must be how one guards trade secrets.

Whenever somebody with a badge tells me not to do something, my inclination is to do it, so I must thank the glass factory's sentinel for encouraging me to peek into a few maquiladoras, with or without permission. Of course I'd respect their little trade secrets, excepting a certain ingredient called exploitation.

**The sky was paling, and the one bare bulb, which illuminated a portion of the ceiling molding quite nicely, could no longer reach my bed, so I got the white plastic chair, moved it directly beneath the lightbulb, listened to drumbeats, traffic and barking dogs, and then read Mr. D.'s report, which began, "We were assigned to conduct an investigation in order to locate maquiladoras in the Tijuana, Mexico region that were abusive to both people and nature."**



My high school friend Chuck is a private eye. I asked him how I should proceed. Since his line of work has more to do with trolling databases and standing outside subway stations with the odd suspect's photo hidden in a newspaper, he referred me to his colleagues Mr. W., for surveillance equipment, and Mr. D., who was described to me in Chuck's words: "He infiltrates factories for a living."

I called Mr. D; he was skiing or swimming or something. "Their security is horrible," he explained to me. "What you do is you come up with a product you wanna produce. Then you tell their local chamber of commerce, and you go in."

He opined that there was worse exploitation in small Mexican industries than in the maquiladoras, especially since the latter's facilities were newer. "Maquiladoras have created a base of power for Mexican women," he insisted. "The real scandal is the murder of women in Ciudad Juárez."

He did remark that he'd heard a story about a Chinese plant in Tijuana that involved "women from China who were locked in and never let out except to work." He couldn't say whether this factory was still in operation, and indeed nobody I met in Tijuana knew anything about this. He chuckled, "Here you have an example of Chinese labor being even cheaper than Mexicali labor!"

Seven or eight years ago he'd found maquiladoras where U.S. mail was being sorted in Mexico. "All these girls out there" were photo imaging misdeliv-

Nueva Tijuana, above the ejido Chilpancingo...which was once a fairly clean residential neighborhood...[and] is now a fetid, polluted barrio.... Some claim that up to 40 percent of the people in this area have become ill from the pollution at this plant," which would have cost \$7 million American to clean up, so it stayed the way it was.

"In 1995 a Mexican judge issued an arrest warrant for the owner of this plant, Jose Kahn, of the New Frontier Trading Co. He and his son both live in San Diego County"; their addresses and telephone numbers followed—"You'll love this!" Mr. D. added, regarding the latter information.

So that sounded promising.

A page later, under the heading



**Señor A. told me, "There's a lot of trafficking going on by boat near Ensenada, trafficking in Chinese. One Chinese is worth about \$10,000. It's rumored that some of them are transported in metal containers. It's very dangerous." Across the street, well within range of that rotten-metal smell, two men sat eating their lunch. I asked if I could photograph them, and they said I could, but they'd get in trouble if they failed to don their protective gear first.**

ered mail for corporations despite a federal order not to do it. "U.S. postal workers were upset that their jobs were outsourced down there," said Mr. D., but he believed "the privacy concerns are overblown." He was a real card, Mr. D.

He'd also found Texas motor-vehicles records being processed down in Juárez, so I figured his offer to fly down to Tijuana for two days and three grand might provide me with the knowledge about where exactly to focus my newly acquired but untested button camera. He promised me "four or five baddies." He was a free spirit, Mr. D.; I liked that about him. He enjoyed playing the guitar.

And so two weeks later, I lay on my bed at sunset in a Tijuana hotel room that smelled like pipe smoke and body odor, reading Mr. D.'s report, which begins: "We were assigned to conduct an investigation in order to locate maquiladoras in the Tijuana, Mexico region that were abusive to both people and nature." The sky was paling, and the one bare bulb, which illuminated a portion of the ceiling molding quite nicely, could no longer reach my bed, which after all was meant to be used for activities pertaining to darkness. So I let my gaze leave the pages of Mr. D.'s report, whose type and whose paper were now nearly the same shade, and I listened to the bells of the cathedral, whose twin towers and image of the Virgin of Guadalupe were almost identical to their counterparts on Avenida Reforma in Mexicali. Then I got the white plastic chair, which was spattered with brown stains, moved it directly beneath the lightbulb, listened to drumbeats, traffic and barking dogs, and then read a little further into Mr. D.'s report.

"Metales y Derivados," read one heading. "This is a shut-down battery manufacturing facility that was on four acres and is located in the Ciudad Industrial



"Plants With Bad Reputations," I was first informed of the existence of Optica Sola, a maquiladora that "manufactures all kinds of lenses and is on a pollution watch list.... The production line is predominantly women, and the floor and ground below are reportedly contaminated.... You need a good pretext to get in, and as we didn't have anything ready we were unsuccessful." (Amelia Simpson of the Environmental Health Coalition, a nonprofit group based in

San Diego, was unaware of any such list or of contamination at Optica Sola.)

Evidently, security was better than Mr. D. had thought.

### HERE THERE'S LIFE

This project was proving to be more difficult than I had expected. To be human is to complain, so I had anticipated an infinitude of criticisms, sob stories and denunciations, but far more emblematic was the old man in the cowboy hat who had once assembled electronic components for a maquiladora down on the street called Boulevard Insurgentes, which lay below us in the smog.

"I am sure that you've had many experiences in your life," I began.

why I asked the man in the cowboy hat, "Do you remember what it was like before the maquiladoras?"

"When we got here there were already a lot of them in Tijuana."

"Where do you come from?"

"Durango, 20 years ago."

He kept saying, "Well, here there's life. There's work! There are lots of maquiladoras."

Since he had come 20 years ago, all he knew about the age of his own neighborhood—which already had concrete sidewalks and shade trees and was called Colonia Azteca—was that it must be at least 20 years old. "Maquiladoras brought life," he repeated, smiling with his big false teeth.

I interviewed two shy girls during their lunch half hour in front of Optica Sola, not the main Optica Sola on Insurgentes, which Mr. D. had fingered for me and failed to enter, but a smaller, dirtier plant, more piquant with solvent perfume and which stood upon the Otay Mesa in the New Tijuana Industrial Park. The address was perfect: just off Industrial Avenue.

"It's good work," they informed me, "and the best thing is the ambience inside. It's very clean, and it's air-conditioned."

One girl, a 20-year-old, had been there for two and a half years; she made 99



"Well, naturally. We're old," he said, nodding to his amigo.

Private detective Señor A., whom you will meet in due course, once told me that some factories begin illegally in the basements of large houses in order to avoid taxes; if they last long enough, the owners build overt factories. And I wondered whether the tales of the maquiladoras had begun in this stealthy way or whether they came heralded by trumpets. That was

pesos a day, equivalent to less than \$10. Her companion, who had just reached the four-month mark and was a year older, earned 74 pesos. So both of them were comparatively well-off, the daily minimum wage in Tijuana being 45.24 pesos, a wage that, in a local reporter's words, "can't sustain life."

I might mention that I had begun my engagement with this branch of Optica Sola on my very best behavior, approaching the windowed booth at the gate, whose security guard in his green uniform and sunglasses explained that I would need to get authorization and that unfortunately the sole person or agency who could authorize me (he actually made a phone call) was absent, for how long he couldn't predict; it might be awhile, perhaps as soon as the end of the next Ice Age. He was trying to let me down easy. All the while he kept peering and scrutinizing. Now, as I interviewed

the two laughingly reluctant girls, we stood in such a way as to interpose the Optica Sola shuttle bus between us and the gate, but the girls were getting nervous because the security guard had left his post to come peering and peering around the windshield of the bus—and, by the way, oh, what a smell! It was not an unpleasant smell, really. It took me back to my boyhood, when I used to build model rockets in the basement, dabbing airplane glue onto this or that plastic part; I used to get flushed, and my heart would race. I loved that smell in those days.

I asked them if there was any smell inside the factory, and they said they didn't know. Then they said no, there wasn't. Then they said that anyhow all factories had that smell.

"Is anyone affected by the chemicals?"

"It depends on which area people work in, but they're very careful with people's security," said the longtime girl piously.

The security guard craned his snakelike neck further around the corner of the bus, so I ended the interview with my customary question.

"Are maquiladoras good or bad for Mexicans?"

"For work they're good, because we need work."

Translation: Here there's life.

said: "You have many maquiladora industries that have a lot of vacancies. They want people! Tijuana grows by about a hundred thousand people per year. It's been that way for at least five years. The maquiladora is good for many people because it's sure work. They come here having nothing at all, and the first job they have is a maquiladora job. When they enter a maquiladora, they have all the social securities that Mexican law permits. First the man comes from a southern state. When he finds a job, he brings with him his family, and the population grows—with one salary. They come to a little wooden house, and they have to rent, without water, without light."



**Now here came Perla with a big smile on her face; Matsushita had hired her. She'd make 870 pesos a week! In the covert video she made with the button camera, we watch the wide street sway with a womanly stride and white storage tanks get closer and closer, then veer away; it is wonderful how briskly Perla walks! The long, white wall of the maquiladora on her left, cars on her right, and presently the white wall gives way to a black-barred metal fence; then after 5:07 the security booth swims into view.**

### THE BLACK COUGH

A legal assessor for a federation of labor unions was sure the climate of Baja California rendered maquiladora work superior to picking squash or watermelons out in the campo, and I'd certainly prefer to work in an air-conditioned building on a 118-degree day. Moreover, he said, maquiladora wages generally exceeded pay for field work: "Sometimes you can make a little more money working in the campo than in the maquiladoras, especially with green onions. If the whole family goes and works, they can earn 300 or 400 pesos a day. But they work only three or four days a week, and they earn no benefits."

Therefore, exploitation in the campo may be worse than exploitation in the maquiladora.

In the immense Valle Pedregal development in Mexicali, dirt-colored houses in the dirt form subdevelopments: Casa Exe, Casa Muestra and God knows what else; the storekeeper I spoke with neither knew about them nor cared. Almost everybody worked in maquiladoras. This cubescape went on as far as I could see, and it brought to life something a dapper reporter with a Tijuana paper (the one who said the minimum daily wage couldn't sustain life) had

Pedregal was a step above those colonias in the hills of Tijuana. Here people frequently owned their houses, which were more often than not made of respectable cinder block; here I saw evidence of electricity, and some of the windows even framed little air conditioners. And here came a young couple, obviously in a hurry to get to bed for their Sunday afternoon tumble, but they were nice enough to give me a moment. The man, who was older, stood on the wide dirt street with his arm around the shoulders of his dark, pretty girl, who said she made remote controls in the Korema maquiladora (I never found (continued on page 164)



*"Have you got any  
New Year's resolutions you'd like  
to break...?"*



# DESTINY'S CALLING

Miss January is loving Las Vegas

**D**estiny Davis studies economics and business law at a college less than a mile from the blinding glow of the Las Vegas Strip, but this determined 19-year-old isn't easily distracted. "I worked hard to graduate from high school when I was 16," she says. "I wanted to get a head start and do something more productive." With Sin City's demand for models constantly high, Destiny soon found herself posing at conventions and other events—and even got certified as a lifeguard to be part of a *Baywatch*-themed resort production. "Vegas is cool, but it's not cultural," she says. "It's a transient town. No one develops roots, and it's difficult to sustain friendships when you're always on the go. Growing up here, I never appreciated it, but I love it now. Locals know there's an entire city to explore beyond the Strip." After Destiny won first place in a bikini contest, Playmate Angela Melini, Miss June 1992, took pictures of her and whisked them off

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ARNY FREYTAG AND STEPHEN WAYDA



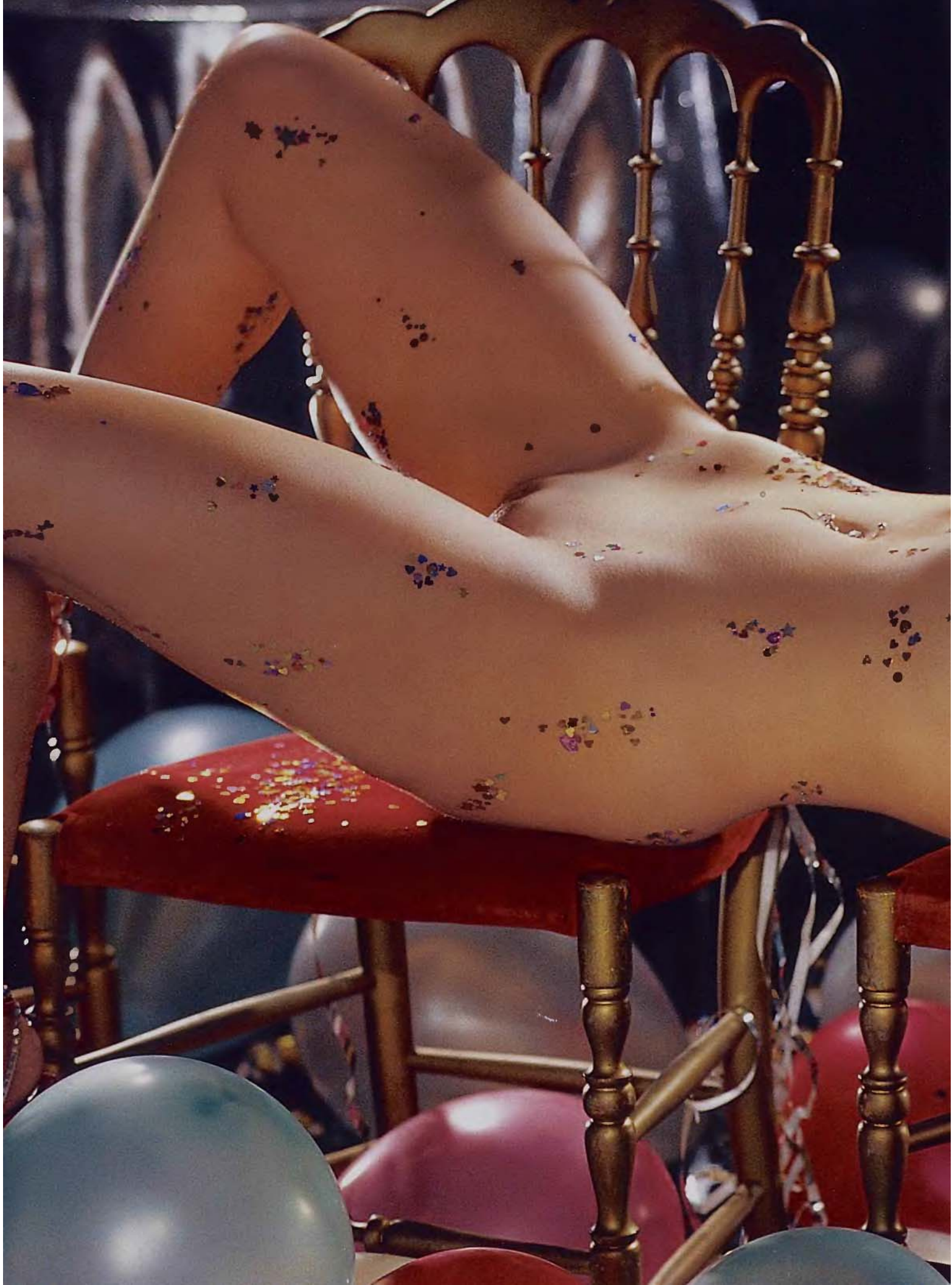
to PLAYBOY. Miss January's blend of Irish, Swedish, English and Syrian features wowed us, and her distinctive name sealed the deal. "I don't know what my mom was thinking when she named me," Destiny says. "People ask, 'Is that a stage name?'"

Unguarded and talkative, Destiny is especially open when the subject turns to men. "I love Southern accents and country music," she says, twirling her hair around a well-manicured finger. "They don't grow many Southern gentlemen where I'm from, but a guy in a pair of Wranglers and a cowboy hat—that's hot! I love it when you feel sparks with someone right away. When a guy doesn't have the same energy as me, it's the worst." Asked how her date will know she's feeling sparks, Destiny smiles. "Women send subtle signs," she says. "A sexy bat of the eye, a bit of skin showing. I'm friendly, but I won't make the first move. I'm looking for Mr. Right, and I'll find him someday."

Although classes and modeling tie up most of her time, Destiny thrives on close relationships with her girlfriends. "We have girlie nights, when we drink wine and do mud masks," she says. "I play tennis anytime I can. There's usually one day every few weeks when I don't have anything to do, so I'll pig out, watch movies and chill. People always ask, 'What do you want to be when you grow up?' I say, 'Retired.' My philosophy is the harder I work now, the less I'll have to work later. I just love learning and trying to do things that make me well-rounded."

"I don't think of modeling as a job, because I love doing it," says Destiny. "It's mind-boggling that people pay me to get my makeup done and smile for the camera. I truly appreciate every assignment I get. This shoot is so exciting because it's sparkly and pink and totally reflective of my personality. It's fabulous!"

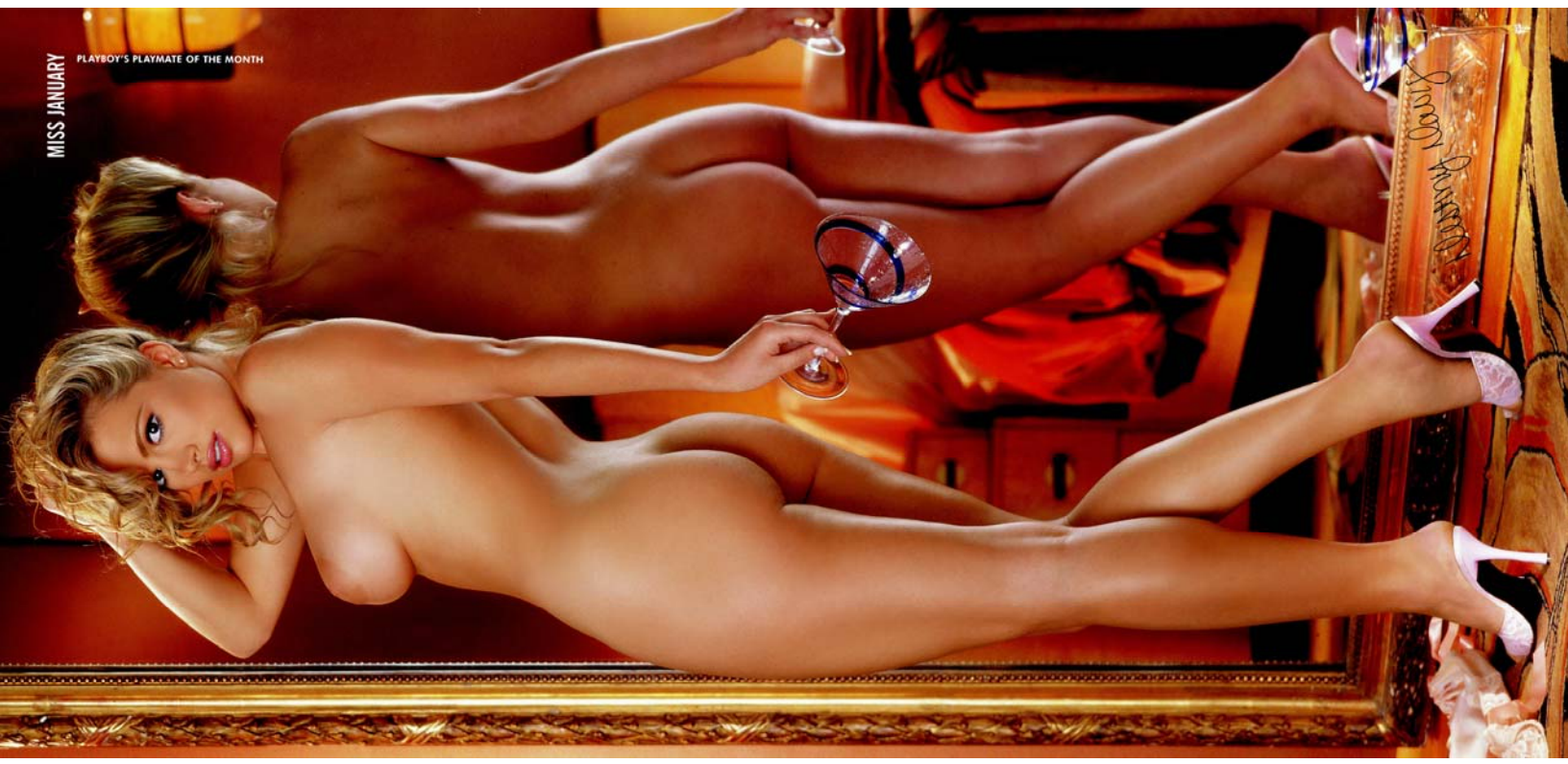








See more of Miss January at [cyber.playboy.com](http://cyber.playboy.com).



MISS JANUARY

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET



NAME: Destiny Davis  
 BUST: 30D WAIST: 24 HIPS: 34  
 HEIGHT: 5'5" WEIGHT: 110

BIRTH DATE: 8.24.85 BIRTHPLACE: Glendora, CA

AMBITIONS: To expand my mind, become a successful person and enjoy the ride!

TURN-ONS: Athleticism, gentlemen, a Southern accent, intelligence and nice muscles & Oh la la!

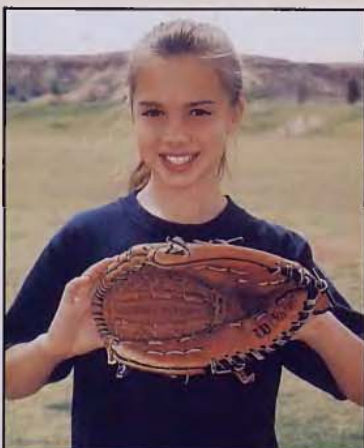
TURN-OFFS: Narcissism, rudeness and sandals with socks.

THREE THINGS I WISH I COULD DO BETTER: Golf, Cook, speak French

YOU KNOW YOU'RE IN LOVE WHEN: Everything is prettier, everyone is nicer, and life seems to have more meaning. (oh yeah-and a lot of giggling!)

MY BABY: A Newfoundland named Shelby, she's 3 &

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD HAVE: A sexy pair of Jimmy Choo stilettos, a juicy Couture sweat suit, girls' night once a week and a little attitude!!



Me playing softball at 12 yrs old.



15 yrs old. Yuck! (My mom's fave.)



1st big photo shoot. ~I was soo nervous~



# PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

**W**hat's the difference between getting stoned in Iran and getting stoned in Los Angeles?

In Los Angeles you get stoned before committing adultery.

**B**LONGE JOKE OF THE MONTH: A blonde caused a car accident and had to appear in court. The judge asked, "What gear were you in at the time of impact?"

The blonde replied, "Gucci shoes and a Donna Karan dress."



**T**here's a rumor circulating in the restaurant industry that Hooters is planning to open a new division. It will offer the same food menu and employ a staff of women with large breasts, but the women will deliver the food to your home. It plans on calling this new operation Knockers.

**A** boy walked into his classroom 20 minutes late. "Sorry I'm late," he said, "but I didn't get my fucking breakfast."

"How dare you use language like that," the teacher said. "Go stand in the corner."

The boy did as he was told. Carrying on with the geography lesson, the teacher asked, "Who can tell me where the Canadian border is?"

The boy standing in the corner was the only student to raise his hand, so the teacher said, "Okay. Where is the Canadian border?"

The boy replied, "He's in bed with my mom. That's why I didn't get any fucking breakfast."

**A** redneck went to his travel agent and said, "I reckon it's time for another vacation. But this year, I wanna do things a little different. The last few years, I took your advice. Two years ago you told me to go to Hawaii. I did, and my wife got pregnant. Last year you told me to go to the Bahamas. I did, and nine months later my wife had a baby."

The travel agent asked, "Are you saying you'd rather go somewhere cold this year?"

"No," the redneck replied. "I'm saying that this year I'm taking my wife with me."

**W**here do they post pictures of missing transsexuals?

On cartons of half-and-half.

**A** husband returned from a long business trip and found evidence that his wife had been unfaithful. "Who was the man?" he yelled. "Was it my so-called best friend?"

"No," his wife replied. "It wasn't him."

He yelled, "Oh, then it must have been my friend Tommy."

"No," she replied. "It's not him."

Even more upset than before, the husband said, "What's the matter? None of my friends are good enough for you?"

**A** man in Las Vegas was down on his luck. He had gambled away all his money and had to borrow a dime from another gambler just to use the men's room. The pay-toilet stall door happened to be open, so afterward he put the dime in a slot machine and hit the jackpot. He took his winnings and went to the blackjack table, where he won \$10 million. Wealthy beyond his wildest dreams, he went on the lecture circuit and told his incredible story. He told every audience that he was eternally grateful to his benefactor and that if he ever found the man he would share his fortune with him. During one lecture a man jumped up and said, "I'm that man. I was the one who gave you the dime."

The millionaire replied, "Sorry. I'm not looking for you. I'm looking for the guy who left the door open."

**A** man came home early from work and found his wife screwing their neighbor. The husband yelled, "What the hell are you doing?"

The wife turned to the neighbor and said, "See. I told you he was stupid."



**H**ow is pubic hair like parsley?

You push it to the side before you start eating.

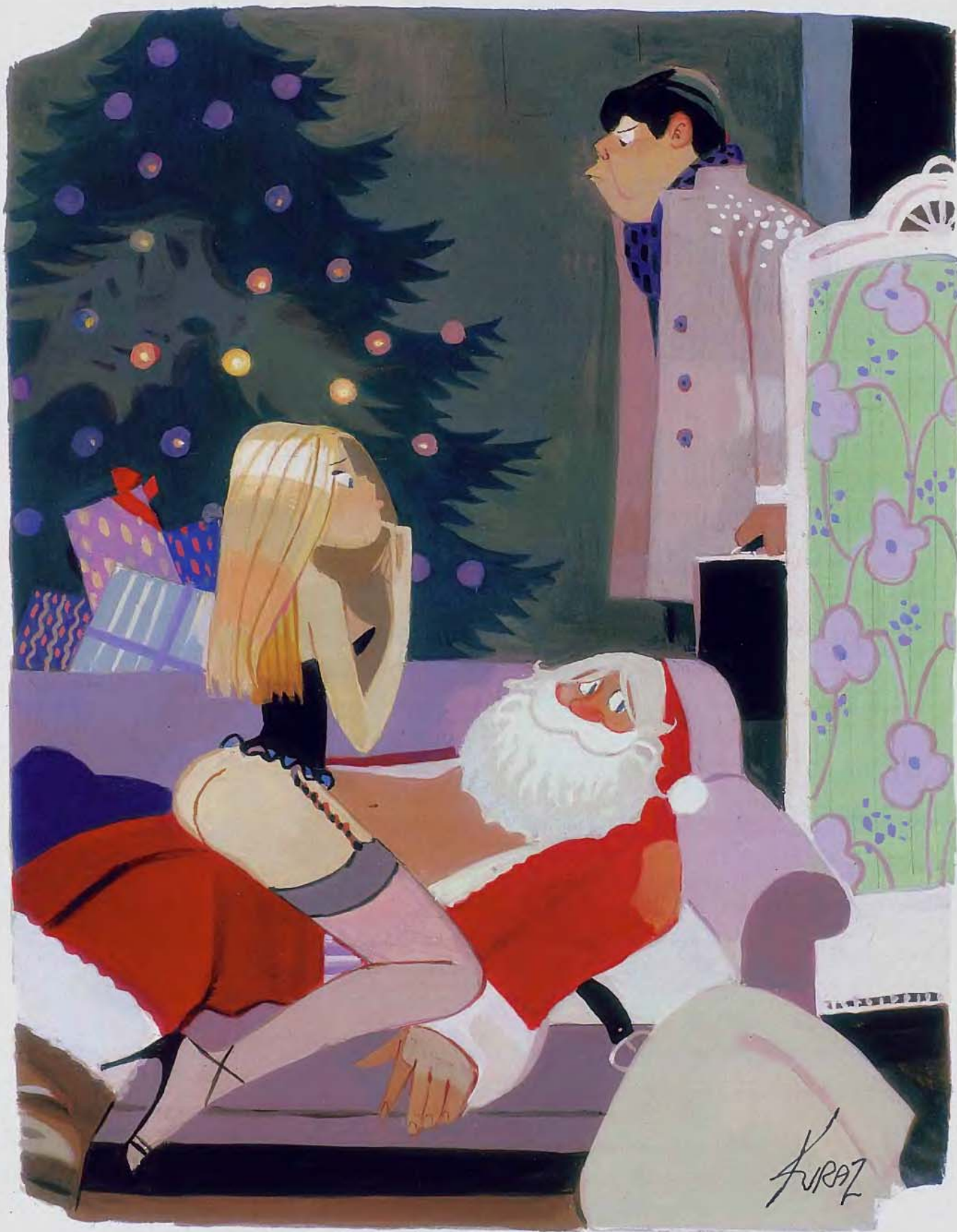
**A**n older man wearing a stovepipe hat, a waistcoat and a fake beard walked into a bar. The bartender asked, "Going to a costume party?"

"Yes," the man answered. "I'm supposed to come dressed as my love life."

The bartender said, "But you look like Abe Lincoln."

The man replied, "That's right. My last four scores were seven years ago."

Send your jokes to Party Jokes Editor, PLAYBOY, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, or by e-mail to [jokes@playboy.com](mailto:jokes@playboy.com). \$100 will be paid to the contributor whose submission is selected. Sorry, jokes cannot be returned.



*"Remember, you disguised yourself as Santa last year—so I thought it was you!"*

# THEATER OF THE REPUBLIC

AMERICAN  
PEOPLE



LIBERTY &  
PROSPERITY

The Public and Sporting Gents of the United States are respectfully informed, that

# TOM JEFFERSON

## CHAMPION OF THE PEOPLE

AND ALEXANDER

# HAMILTON

## THE GIANT, CHAMPION OF CORPORATIONS

TOGETHER WITH

### BANKS & VARIOUS POWERFUL TRUSTS

INTEND TAKING A BATTLE FOR

### THE SOUL OF OUR NATION

on Monday next

---

In consequence of many concepts being announced in print for the Set-to and then not appearing, the following Principles will positively Set-to on this occasion, *or the Money will be returned*

## Banks & the People

### SCIENCE and RELIGION

The Evening's Amusements will conclude with a grand display of science and analysis

## BY WORLD AUTHORITY,

# GORE VIDAL

Stage \$300--Box \$200--Pit \$100

Unique among the founders of our republic, Thomas Jefferson has a reputation that has been something of a fever chart recording the wild ups and downs not only of the simple-minded politically correct who periodically, at the dark of the moon, learn to their horror that a dozen or so of our early presidents were slave owners and ought, retroactively, to be consigned to the trash bin of American history along with that racist republic for which they stood. To the more serious-minded, the very idea of what we like to refer to as our democracy is suddenly thrown into shadow—no bad thing, since the peculiar system of slavery has kept us from ever achieving a democracy, that rule by the people, which, to be fair, was tried only once in human history at Athens, briefly, and has never been repeated anywhere else to this day. (The jury, of course, is still out on those model states Iraq and Afghanistan.)

Meanwhile, the image of Alexander Hamilton is being refurbished in order to preside over a society in thrall to the golden calf. Ron Chernow's recent *Alexander Hamilton* is a workmanlike biography for what he refers to as "an auspicious time to reexamine the life of Hamilton, who was the prophet of the capitalist revolution in America. If Jefferson enunciated the more ample view of political democracy, Hamilton possessed the finer sense of economic opportunity. He was the messenger from a future that we now inhabit." Fair enough, if you like the "finer things." But this does not quite account for recent Jefferson bashing, ostensibly because he was a slave owner.

Even so, why should Thomas Jefferson, the most interesting—and interested—of the founders, be singled out as peculiarly guilty of profiting from an economic system that so hugely benefited such paladins as Washington and Jackson? Perhaps this is the result of Jefferson's virtues, not his weaknesses. Although as given to hypocrisy as any major politician, he was also fiercely consistent in certain unpopular beliefs, such as "I have sworn upon the altar of god eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man." Note that he does not say "over man," because with his tacit acceptance of slavery, the condition of his time and place, he must go even deeper into the matter with "over the mind of man" (which means to him, above all, established religion, a daring position to take since the church was a bulwark of his personal great beast, monarchy, as personified at the time of the revolution by the British king and, worse, later by homegrown religious fanatics eager to traduce a thinker as free as he). He also had other surprises for his fellow republic builders: "The earth belongs in usufruct to the living...the dead have neither powers nor rights over it." This certainly set on edge the teeth of his friend James Madison, who wondered how laws without a history of generational usage could command respect. Jefferson was ready for that one: He suggested a constitutional convention every 30 years or so.

What was he really after? The recognition of an evolving, living state, designed for the living to live in and change as it needed changing. Jefferson was a natural democrat, as the polio-ridden Franklin Delano Roosevelt—a politician of

equally great ambition—grasped as early as 1925, when he reviewed for the *New York Evening World* Claude Bowers's study *Jefferson and Hamilton*: "I have a breathless feeling as I lay down this book," he wrote. "Hamiltons we have today. Is a Jefferson on the horizon?" Did he suspect even then that he—the first president for life, as it turned out—was Jefferson's avatar? From Social Security to the GI Bill of Rights, he would extend and enrich the world of the living of his time, even to providing us with the great imperial globe itself so like Jefferson's weird Empire of Liberty, otherwise known as the Louisiana Purchase.

As FDR predicted so many years ago, we always seem to have a great many Hamiltons on the scene, including in the election of 2004, which offered us one relatively sane Hamilton and one with a bit too much froth about the lips. But the Jefferson that book reviewer FDR yearned for was not in sight last November, as he had been when Roosevelt made his first plea to the gods of the republic, no doubt suspecting even then that he was Jefferson's heir. Corporate America, as we know and revere it, is pretty much in Hamilton's image. And government by the best (richest) people continues to exert total governance over the entire homeland's alabaster cities—along with those amber fields of marijuana (or was that Wonder bread?) now asphalted over—as we go forth in Halliburton's name and bring creative accounting, soft-money elections and Diebold electronic voting machines to all the world.

Finally, there was Jefferson the poet of what humanity freed from superstition might become if granted, by majority governance, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. This last was something new under the political sun and so was recognized by that other great presidential poet Abraham Lincoln, who wrote, "All honor to Jefferson—to the man who, in the concrete pressure of a struggle for national independence by a single people, had the coolness, forecast and capacity to introduce into a merely revolutionary document [that "merely" announces the presence of a great writer on the case] an abstract truth, applicable to all men and all times, and so to embalm it there, that today, and in all coming days, it shall be a rebuke and a stumbling block to the very harbingers of reappearing tyranny and oppression." Incidentally, Lincoln was notorious for his lack of enthusiasm for his predecessors—except, sadly, Henry Clay, who favored, as did Lincoln for a time, the removal of millions of former slaves to Africa or Central America.

But let us put to one side the praise of Roosevelt and Lincoln. What is the real case against Jefferson today? The admirable Gary Wills, usually a Jeffersonian, is now undergoing yet another of his agonizing reappraisals. In *Negro President* he makes the case that Jefferson's election to the closely contested presidency in 1800 was entirely due to a wicked definition in the Constitution highly favored by the South. This is not exactly news, but Wills gives weight to the "three-fifths clause," which reduced each Negro slave from full humanity to that of only three fifths of a voteless person in order to add his three fifths to the total votes commanded by his owner; when all those three fifths of a person were neatly added up



Buried on Wall Street (bottom), Alexander Hamilton has become the spiritual father of corporate America. Is that why Thomas Jefferson, interred in the family plot in Monticello, Virginia (top), has been the subject of much revisionist bashing?

into orderly five-fifths slices, it fleshed out the infamous electoral college, a straitjacket still in place to ensure that a true democracy will forever be denied us. That Jefferson used the so-called slave power to gain election is hardly surprising. But he could hardly use (even if he had wanted to) Article V of the Constitution, which makes it practically impossible to amend the Constitution—until, of course, it was finally invoked after a bloody civil war had abolished slavery. Nor could he alter Article I, which by mandating two senators for each state, no matter how few its inhabitants, thus perpetuated the power of the nonpopulous South in the electoral college. But we must not in our righteousness forget that Jefferson was obliged to play chess with all its eccentric moves and not the easygoing Chinese checkers we like to insist that presidents of the past, not lucky enough to live in our enlightened time, were obliged, constitutionally, to play.

picture of Monticello as teeming with youthful Jeffersonian males promiscuously impregnating what was, in effect, the aging lady of the house.

Rather worse has been some of the recent rejection of Jefferson because he did not free his slaves; since they were his capital, he could not give up his slaves any more than the wealthy Washington could until death freed him and he them. As for Jefferson, Lincoln explained his greatness in the Declaration of Independence, while his dedication to the freedom of religion (and the necessity of that wall between church and state) puts us all, even to this very bad day, in his debt. Although criticized for his apparent willingness to break up the union over the Alien and Sedition Acts, he had foreseen the necessity of some mechanism to keep a president and a partisan Congress from arbitrarily overriding the Constitution.

In old age, Jefferson began to rethink the idea of the state

itself. Ironically, he who had added more than a dozen states to the union was brooding on the necessity of ever-smaller units of community. He wanted to divide the nation's counties into self-governing wards. "Each ward would thus be a small republic within itself, and every man in the state would thus become an acting member of the common government, transacting in person a great portion of its rights and duties." Thus the poet of 1776 saw happiness as best pursued in an Athenian-size community, to whose inhabitants Pericles once said, "The man who says politics is not his business has no business." Years ago Murray Kempton chided me for my criticism of Jefferson, which was not entirely unlike our neoncon lamentations. "After all," said Kempton, "we need Jefferson in a way only bankers will ever need Hamilton."

• Today's odd worship of Hamilton and odder denigration of Jefferson is simply reflective of our current political and economic arrangements. A writer in *The Nation* seems unaware that we commentators of the 1970s were quite conscious that we were living in a Hamiltonian world and that "Jeffersonian regression versus Hamiltonian progress," to use *The*

*Nation's* oddly discordant description, were not—then—in any significant contest. But lately something more subtle, even sinister, is going on, of which our current polemicists seem unaware. Although most of the founders were imperialists in the sense that they were expansionists when it came to the American continent, the Hamiltonian genius was expansionist economically through manufactures, banking and, finally, as we have lived to see, enormous multinational corporations that are dissolving nation-states like so many sand castles during a rising money tide. That is the Hamiltonian legacy today, while the Jeffersonian "regression," as the polemicist sourly puts it, seems quaint, even "musty," but less apt to blow up the world. Compare that to the Hamiltonians, who regard the fiery loss of any city as a great opportunity for Halliburton's very special gift for urban renewal. No one can argue with so much progress.

Except, apparently, me, because the Hamiltonian writes, "Given Vidal's roots in the Virginia (concluded on page 184)

## FOUNDING FATHER

**Sexual liaisons with slave women—both as mistresses and as victims of rape—were an open secret in the early days of the Republic**



Master-slave relationships were so prevalent in America that Sally Hemings, the slave with whom Thomas Jefferson is thought to have fathered several children, was also in essence his sister-in-law. Jefferson inherited Hemings with the estate of his father-in-law, John Wayles. Wayles fathered Jefferson's wife, Martha, of course, but he was the likely father of Sally Hemings as well. Born in 1773, Hemings attended Jefferson's daughters from 1784 on, lived with Jefferson and his daughters in Paris from 1787 to 1789 and remained at Monticello until Jefferson's death in 1826. (Jefferson's wife died in 1782.) Monticello records list six children born to Hemings between 1798 and 1808. Two died as infants; three of the four who survived passed into white society when they were freed. The Jefferson-Hemings link was first alleged by a political opponent in 1802. (The cartoon above is from 1805.) Largely discounted for the next two centuries, the probability of a connection was bolstered when a 1998 DNA test determined that descendants of one Hemings child carried genetic material from a male Jefferson. While 25 males in Virginia at the time had Jefferson genes, circumstantial evidence adds to the probability that Thomas Jefferson himself fathered some if not all of Hemings's children. Though he traveled frequently, he was present nine months before the birth of each child. And he freed all her children.

—TIM MOHR

Thirty years ago I wrote a book centered on Aaron Burr, who added to Jefferson's slave votes in the election of 1800 the votes of the nonslaves of New York state. Under the cumbersome electoral procedure of those days, Burr and Jefferson each got the same number of votes for president. As previously agreed, Burr honorably committed himself to Jefferson's election and behaved well. The edgy Jefferson busied himself to ensure his own election. Wills is so good on this shadowy business that one cannot think what the ghost of Dumas Malone (author of a wondrously dull multivolume life of Jefferson) would make of so much heresy. In 1973, when I made mention, prematurely it would seem, of Jefferson's children by his slave Sally Hemings, Malone denounced my portrayal as "subversive." Today, thanks to recent DNA decoding, we know that Jeffersonian blood is indeed mingled with that of Hemings. Even so, white loyalists maintain it could not have been the blood of the great man but of his kinsmen, which presents a curiously raffish



*"I'll tell you. I wouldn't need a TV elimination to hire her as my apprentice."*

2 0 0 5

CAR

THE

YEAR

CARMAKERS HAVE FINALLY REALIZED THAT A VEHICLE ISN'T WORTH DRIVING IF IT DOESN'T HAVE PANACHE. THESE NINE 2005 MODELS SET A NEW STANDARD FOR THE OPEN ROAD • BY ARTHUR KRETCHMER

Can you feel it? The heat is on in the car business. Enormous pressure from globalization and new technology has spurred designers to trash decrepit corporate traditions. Engineers have been freed to design for singular perfection—if it isn't sexy, no one wants it. This year a decadelong flirtation with electronics culminates in new standards for adhesion, performance and safety. Automobiles have never before been so able to give you what you ask for or what you need. PLAYBOY's role in this renaissance was to choose the most appealing new cars for 2005. We assembled an experienced team of car writers with a bias for things that go fast and hug the road but also for cars that take the drudgery out of daily driving. We put countless miles on scores of new cars and judged them everywhere from switchbacks north of Turin to traffic jams in downtown Tokyo. Our feature ends with PLAYBOY's choice of the best of the best, our car of the year. As you'll see, we were players in a no-limit game.



# S O F E A R

• **BEST SPORT ROADSTER** The 2005 Corvette is an astonishment. Not an improvement, an astonishment. A six-liter, 400 hp engine. Four hundred foot-pounds of torque. GM got this one right all the way down to the seats and dials. The suspension—so harsh in past Vettes—doesn't jounce your senses; it embraces them. The body transmits a sense of immense strength. Just sitting at a traffic light you feel in control of an irresistible force. At the price (\$52,245 for the convertible, \$44,245 for the coupe), the Vette is a bargain and a legit competitor for Porsche or Ferrari. The car flies—when it can fly. At slow speeds it rumbles quietly, reminding you that neck-snapping mayhem is a twitch away. Zero to 60 takes 4.2 seconds; top speed is 186 mph. How much do we love this vehicle? The Vette came close to being our car of the year. As it is, it's the surprise of the year.





• **MOST FUN ON WHEELS** Unlike the other cars in this group, the Mini Cooper S Convertible may be the one for which price is the object. You won't find more driving appeal for your \$24,950. It's a front-wheel driver with a power-operated convertible top—up or down in 15 seconds. The car tracks like a go-kart, one of the few similarities between it and the legendary Austin Minis that scooted through the 1960s and 1970s. This car is bigger and better made. It has room for four adults, especially if the two in back are little women. The Mini claims 168 hp, zero to 60 in seven seconds and a top speed of 134 mph. It felt at least that quick when we tore around Westchester County, New York in one. Car enthusiasts were delighted when BMW gave new life to the Mini while adding handling and safety features that were unknown in the 1960s, such as the optional reverse drive alarm that warns you if you're about to back into something. With the introduction of the convertible, BMW has created the most fun car of the year.



• **BEST PERFORMER FOR THE MONEY** We drove everything in sight to come up with the cars of the year, but the only time we were dogged by a policeman was when we drove the new Ford Mustang GT. He thought it was cool. For 2005, Ford delivers a gem. A 4.6-liter V8 will give you 300 hp and zero to 60 in 5.5 seconds. Top speed is 145 mph, and we almost got it there on an otherwise quiet highway north of L.A. The body is stiff, the suspension is first-rate, and the oversize ventilated disc brakes come in handy. The sweeping, uncluttered interior lives up to the standard of a European GT. The pedals are well placed for those of us who think that driving involves fancy footwork on three pedals by two feet; for everybody else, Ford offers a five-speed automatic. This GT can be had with traction control, 17-inch wheels and a 1,000-watt sound system—appropriately called the Shaker—for slightly less than \$30,000.



• **BEST SPORT COUPE** Porsche: the defining aspirational fact for generations of sports car fans. The 2005 911 Carrera S sits a hair taller, a smidgen shorter lengthwise and an inch and a half wider than last year's model. You can buy a base Carrera (\$69,300) with a 3.6-liter, six-cylinder engine, but the S version (\$79,100) takes the spot on our list. The engine, a 3.8-liter mini-volcano, puts out 355 horses and goes from zero to 60 in less than 4.8 seconds, with a top speed of 182 mph. Both models have Porsche Stability Management, so there's no chance of the tail snapping in front of you when you wish it had stayed behind. You sit deep inside this auto's elegant cockpit. Meaty Michelins will carry you through quick laps at the Nürburgring, never mind your favorite racy place. Enormous ceramic-composite brakes (optional) give you the freedom to err now and then. The 2005 911 Carrera S is a more refined version of a breed of lustworthy sports cars. Feel free to lust anew.



• **BEST SPORT WAGON** If your idea of a wagon is a Euro sedan pretender with space for the dog in back, then the Dodge Magnum RT all-wheel is the Antichrist. This machine is about street credibility, from the intimidator grille to the 340 hp Hemi V8. With a zero-to-60 time of 6.3 seconds and a top speed of 126 mph, the \$31,370 Magnum RT more than holds its own against a 5 Series Beemer. Mercedes engineers helped design the fully independent suspension and likely influenced the front-seat ergonomics, which are elegant and spare. The fittings are immaculate, and the interior is immense (vast rear-seat legroom). It drives like a European sport sedan but with an American shot of torque at low speeds, at which cars live and die on our roads. And let's not forget the 18-inch wheels and the 288-watt Boston Acoustics sound system. We'll grant that, roofwise, it's a tad claustrophobic for the backseat passengers. But so is an armored Bradley M2A3 Fighting Vehicle, and think how cool that would look on your block.



• **BEST SUV** With the new Land Rover LR3 and the Porsche Cayenne, the SUV category is thick with competition. After much head-scratching, we gave the Volkswagen Touareg V10 diesel the nod. Here we have a permanent four-wheel-drive, five-passenger auto slickly powered by a 10-cylinder twin turbo engine. The 4.5-liter, 310 hp diesel has none of the breed's usual clatter or stink. It's linked to a six-speed auto transmission with Tiptronic and can hit 60 mph in 7.5 seconds. It felt faster. It felt like it could do a wheelie. The Germans love the durability and efficiency of diesels, and now they've made a diesel hot rod. Driver options include ride-height settings (the car raises and lowers like a camel), suspension settings (sport, automatic and comfort) and high attack angles for traversing boulder fields. This car can climb 45-degree slopes—in style. The interior defines men's-club posh: leathery and well fitted. This unit will set you back \$57,800, but it's worth that much and more.



• **BEST LUXURY SEDAN** The Super V8 is Jaguar's answer to the big Mercedeses and BMWs: the near-limo-size ride ensconced in the finest garages. The Super—as in supercharger—is 205 inches long with a 124-inch wheelbase. Inside, Peruvian boxwood inlays and walnut panels comfort the eyes. Folding picnic tables make highway rest stops so much tidier. If we stop now, you won't hear about Connolly leather, a multimedia DVD system, electric sun blinds and power rear seats. We drove this beauty on a rutted slalom course in Napa Valley; the car hauls, handles and stops with alacrity. The aluminum-alloy body helps stiffness, stability and fuel economy (17/24 EPA). These \$90,000 cars go from zero to 60 in five seconds, and the supercharged 32-valve, 390 hp engine puts out 399 foot-pounds of torque. The power gets to the gears through a six-speed automatic with a manual-select option—for days when you take the kitty to your slalom course.



• **BEST TUNER CAR** Tuner cars are defined by having the right pieces. That's how the breed started; California kids took their old Hondas and shopped for parts that would make them mini-monsters. The \$34,199 Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution MR Edition has all the pieces right out of the box. Fast and furious, it comes from the dealer tuned for a run at the Monte Carlo Rally. High performance starts with a turbocharged two-liter, four-cylinder engine that produces 276 hp and 286 foot-pounds of torque (zero to 60 in less than five seconds). The six-speed transmission responds to quick, even reckless, inputs from the pedals. The Bilstein high-performance shocks keep the Evo dead flat in corners; the Vortex roof spoilers increase downforce and look tough. Large Brembo ventilated disc brakes and wide, sticky Yokohama tires add stop and grip to the performance package. We slammed the Evo around a racecourse near Baton Rouge in torrential rain. The car stuck like a leech.

PLAYBOY'S  
2005 CAR  
OF THE  
YEAR



• **CAR OF THE YEAR** Crafted for vehicular immortality, the new Ferrari 612 Scaglietti 2+2 is a chunk of museum-quality automotive sculpture. If \$254,150 seems expensive, keep in mind that Ferraris do not go down in value; they go up. Powered by a 5.85-liter V12 engine, the 612 brings forth 540 hp at 7,250 rpm. This is the world's fastest true four-seater, and we reveled in it as we shot up Route 9W, a road that twists upriver along the Jersey side of the Hudson. The big Ferrari overpowered 9W's tight turns, off-camber corners and severe switchbacks. We became addicted to four-second sprints from zero to 60. The 612's paddle shifters encourage crisp gear changes. The enormous brakes are virtually fadeproof. Most impressive of all is the steering: sharp, on-center and perfectly assisted. Nobody does it better. Inside is a surprising amount of room, even some luggage space. Every detail of the hand-sewn leather interior brings a smile. Standard equipment includes an exclusive Bose stereo, Bluetooth electronics and heated seats. Of course, there's nothing standard about the 612. Availability is a problem. But we can dream, can't we?







# Mom

# Descending

# A

# Staircase

Story by NEIL LABUTE

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I hardly remember the reason for coming up here now, I mean, in the first place. Isn't that weird? Sometimes things happen, the smallest little thing during a day or a lifetime, and everything else that preceded it—even big, major events—becomes so insignificant or minor in comparison that it just doesn't seem to matter. Or register, even. It doesn't even register with you, not really.

I came up to the attic—it's barely that, actually, more of a crawl space above the back bedroom, which my brother and I had shared all while growing up—to make a routine check, see if there was any water damage or mouse droppings, that type of thing. Find out if it needed to be sprayed or fumigated or whatever. I didn't expect to find anything. I probably should have, though, been prepared, I'm saying, because my mom was a bit of a pack rat all of her life, a serious collector of things—and I'm talking about crap here, not like antiques or fur coats or stuff like that. She used to have just mounds and mounds of magazines and pocketbooks (that's what they used to call paperbacks when I was growing up; they'd call them pocketbooks, which was always confusing because that was also another name for a woman's purse—English is a weird language, when you get right down to it), all kinds of shit that she collected, mostly in the bedroom and heaped in that little alleyway created by her side of the mattress and the wall of the room, which would eventually be carted out by my dad to the garage, where he would either dump it all in the trash (if he was pissed on that particular day) or put it in a box and shove it in the

closet so that she could sort through it later (if he was feeling benevolent). That's the way it worked in our house; it was a little like living on the coast of some tropical island. One day sunny and mild, the next day Hurricane Dad. When he was in one of his "moods"—which was usually only when he was awake—it was better just to put the plywood sheets up over the windows and evacuate. Mom put up with a lot in her day—her "day" having lasted some 63 years, until Thursday of last week when her heart gave out in the grocery store, near the (where else?) magazine rack. She died before they could get her to the emergency room, a copy of the *Enquirer* still clutched in one fist—and my wife and I are getting the house ready for sale. My brother, who now lives in Kansas doing God knows what for some software company, couldn't stay on after the funeral because he was saving vacation time for a family trip to Disney World and his company allows only three days off for episodes of grief—he actually called it that all while he was here, an "episode of grief," which finally made me pull him aside and say something during the little get-together we had after the funeral. People were starting to look at him funny, so what else could I do? Anyway, that's how we ended up here, Millie and I (that's my wife, Mildred, but I call her Millie), going through the house I grew up in and getting it ready to be put on the market.

Millie is in charge of the general sprucing up—she loves doing that, spring-cleaning or big projects like putting in a new flower bed—so I've found that it's better just to get out of the way and let her get things

She went from a dark corner of the attic to a dark corner of his mind

done. It's a pretty good excuse, anyway, for not having to pitch in and help out. I hate housework, lawn jobs, that sort of stuff. Always have. I'm a pretty good worker overall, but domestic chores are not my forte. Not at all. Because of that, and the fact that Millie has one of those take-charge personalities (she really does, even she would say so), I found it more useful to stake a claim on the perimeter of all this activity—call the real estate woman, place an ad in the paper for an estate sale, go through Mom's papers (including several bank accounts and a safety-deposit box) and assorted tasks like that. Basically, keep clear of the Windex. And that's how I find myself up in the attic above "the boys' room," lying on my stomach and searching around with a key-chain flashlight. I'm sure my dad would be doing this if he were here, but he's not. They got a divorce, my parents did, about 20 years ago—they thoughtfully stayed together all while we were growing up so that we could cower in fear and watch them engage in their daily shouting matches, but after I went off to college they decided the time had finally come, and my old man moved out, leaving Mom the house and all the worries that come with owning a property. And besides, he died in a car accident seven years ago last spring. Too bad for him; he should've been watching the road.

I've pretty much made my way to the end of the dwelling now by pulling myself along the length of two boards, laid out side by side, that run across the alternating pattern of rafters and insulation. An insect or two scurry away into the shadows, but the place seems pretty okay other than that. No watermarks on the wood, no pinpricks of daylight shining through above my head. I'm about to start down, crawling back the way I came, when (as I'm turning) my light plays across a shape tucked into one corner of the eaves. Off to my left. Curious, I turn the feeble blue beam of my Chet's Auto Supply light to one side and shine it across the mound. It turns out to be three boxes, all sporting the old U-Haul insignia across them, jammed into an area no bigger than a bread box (it's actually much bigger than that, but the bread box is the standard increment of measurement in our house) and sitting one on top of the other in a squat little stack. A thick layer of what might politely be called dust settled over the whole thing.

"Is everything okay?" rises up from below me like the cry of a phoenix as it claws its way out of the ashes. I drop my flashlight and cringe, totally caught off guard. Millie must be taking a break and has suddenly realized I'm not directly underfoot.

"I'm up here!" I shout back, knowing that this is vague and meaningless, but it should be enough to satisfy her. I employ a tone that means "I'm doing something useful," and that usually works. It seems in this case, at least, because I hear no more out of her. I can tell she's moved into one of the bathrooms now, as the furious squeak of sponge on porcelain reaches my ears, even up here. I'm telling you, she's hell on

wheels, Millie is, when she starts cleaning something.

"What're these?" I say, but barely loud enough for even myself to hear. I scuttle over to them and pull the top one toward me. A second or two later I have the flaps open and find a stack of old clothing staring up at me. I know, I know, clothing can't actually look at you, but I'm just saying that's what's in the box. Clothes. Our old scout uniforms—my brother's and mine—all carefully folded and placed in two rows, with a few little awards and ribbons arranged on top. It doesn't make me sad to see them—I mean, not really—but it's a definite surprise. My brother'll get a kick out of going through it all—see, he did the whole thing, Eagle Scout or whatever, so it was kind of a big deal. I smile at the memories that flood back as I pull the second box over toward me and snap open the lid. Books this time, which I had no idea my parents ever owned. I mean, we had maybe one set of encyclopedias when I was growing up, and that was about it. A Good News Bible that was kept in a drawer in the living room, where my dad could get at it to use when killing a spider, but we weren't exactly a literary family. At all. Well, my mom would read those cheap romances and stuff, which I already mentioned—the pocketbooks—but some kids I knew, families I had visited or had sleepovers with, had mountains of books. Walls and walls full of them, even separate rooms that they called dens or, this one friend of mine, a library. So this was a bit of a shock, to find a bunch of good-quality hardbacks tucked away at our place, even if they were technically hidden up in the attic. And these are nice ones, too, like Hemingway and Steinbeck and those guys, Fitzgerald. It's really hard to believe—my mom must've joined some club or something, Book-Of-The-Month or that type of deal. At least until my old man found out; these had probably been banished up here for her daring to defy him (or spending "good money" on something other than Pabst Blue Ribbon). Smiling, I snatch one off the top, Samuel Butler's *The Way of All Flesh*—which I've never even heard of—and flip it open to the title page. And there she is. Staring up at me through a piece of tissue paper, but I can tell that it's her, very clearly, having seen other pictures from around that time. Right about when they got married, a year or two after that. It's my mother, her hair still that vibrant red that it was in her youth, looking straight into the camera. What I have here are three photos—old Polaroids, actually—that have been placed inside this one novel and tucked away. Shut up for however many years. Now of course I remember my father and his stupid Polaroid Land camera—I've got about a hundred photos of me as a kid from the 1970s, which are all faded and curled up on the edges—but this is a new one to me. Three pristine color snaps of my mother, sitting on the stairs that are almost directly beneath me, completely and utterly naked. I mean, not a stitch on. Well, except for a pair of pumps. Wow. How can this be?

"You want lunch?" comes Millie's voice up through the opening back behind me. Questioning. "I'm getting kind of hungry."

"Ummm, well, I'm up here now, so I should probably..." I don't really know what to say next, but she saves me by jumping in and taking over, just as she always does.

"I'll run down to Wendy's or something, it's fine. What do you want?"

"Spicy Chicken's good. The meal, okay, but Biggie Size it? And a Diet." This cryptic fast-food language is instantly processed and accepted by my wife in the ensuing silence.

(continued on page 146)





*"I got her pants down last night, but I couldn't get her skis off."*

# THE YEA

2004 was more fun than a barrel of Viagra (If hilarity

**Super Bowl  
Sex Stunt**  
Plus, Other  
Stars Going  
Way Too Far



## HALFTIME AT THE HOOTER BOWL

(1) Censors sharpened their blue pencils and broke out the rule book in response to the Super Bowl halftime flash by Janet Jackson, with an assist from Justin Timberlake. Her so-called wardrobe malfunction set a record for replays on TiVo—and cost CBS a cool \$550,000 in FCC fines, about a buck for each complaint the agency received. Elsewhere, others were more amused: (2) Janet herself spoofed the incident by impersonating National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice on *Saturday Night Live*; (3) money-hungry toymakers immortalized the moment with Janet and Justin dolls; and (4) comedian Rob Schneider went metallic at the Hollywood premiere of *50 First Dates*.



# R I N S E X

lasts more than four hours, please consult a physician)

## F#\*CC YOU, TOO!

In the post-Super Bowl chill, Clear Channel dropped Howard Stern, but Vice President Dick Cheney got away with telling Vermont senator Pat Leahy to go fuck himself.



## BUSH GARDENS

Twenty-eight British university students brave windburn to set the world record for naked roller-coaster rides. Three months later the record was topped by two.



## RACK OF THE 50-FOOT WOMAN

Getting a feel for his job, this Swiss worker adjusts model Daniela Pestova's cleavage on a Geneva billboard.



## HOMO ELECTUS

Fending off the threat of a scandal involving a male aide, New Jersey governor Jim McGreevey surprised many, including his wife, by calling a news conference and declaring, "I am a gay American."



*I'm out of the closet!*

## LEFT TO RIGHT: BOBBY, BOOBIE, BOBBY

This British woman streaked at Wimbledon in a desperate plea for attention. It worked.



## THREE BLONDES WALKED INTO A BOOKSTORE AND...

...made a lot of money, as Paris Hilton's *Confessions of an Heiress*, Jenna Jameson's *How to Make Love Like a Porn Star* and Pamela Anderson's *Star*—featuring this lovely photo on the inside jacket—jumped off the shelves.



Jenna Jameson airs Hollywood's dirty laundry in new book



# THE YEAR IN SEX



## MEET THE KERRY TWINS

Alexandra Kerry was clearly supporting her pop's presidential bid when megawatt flashbulbs caused this May surprise at Cannes. After U.S. newspapers censored the photos, a flurry of Internet downloads ensued.



I'm out of a job!

WARDROBE MALFUNCTION

## BACKDOOR BLOGGER

Senate staffer Jessica Cutler was canned not because she had kinky sex with politico sugar daddies nor because she wrote about it in her blog but because of "inappropriate use of Senate office equipment."

## SEXUAL REVOLUTIONS

Japanese porn star Micky Yanai invented the "helicopter fuck," in which he rotates 360 degrees atop his partner. View the improbable video at [masamania.com](http://masamania.com).



## VICTORY LAP

Regular guy Jim Frankel, who won a chance to lick whipped cream off Jessica Simpson's cleavage, looks like the luckiest stiff of the year. Don't believe it—he's at Madame Tussauds in New York, and those melons are mere wax.



## IT'S THE SHOES, STUPID

Models Kimora Lee Simmons, Ruth Crilley and Sophie Dahl flog for cobblers Baby Phat and Patrick Cox, filling magazine readers with desire...to buy shoes.



pretty cheeky

# Miss Universe shoots the moon

Australian beauty loses her skirt butt keeps her cool



## BOOTY QUEEN

Miss Universe, Australia's Jennifer Hawkins, made a hasty exit, stage rear, after her skirt snagged on her shoe and fell to the floor during a suburban Sydney shopping-mall fashion show.

WARDROBE MALFUNCTION

## TWO-POINT SHOT

Prudish fans cried foul when Lauren Jackson, forward for the WNBA's Seattle Storm, posed nude in an Australian art photography book.



## SPORTS BUFFS

Skin was in at the Olympics: Much-ogled U.S. beach volleyballers Misty May and Kerri Walsh got down and dirty in a victory celebration; German long jumper Susan Tiedtke-Green, cover girl Amy Acuff and other athletes posed for PLAYBOY; and a bare-breasted fertility goddess performed a not remotely subtle snake dance to spice up the opening ceremonies. (Funny, NBC got no FCC fine.)



## HORN AGAIN

With stiffening competition from the new erectile-dysfunction drugs Levitra and Cialis, Viagra is stepping up its campaign and spicing up its image. Take this cocky bastard—a far cry from the earnest Bob Dole TV spots Pfizer ran in 1999.

Get back to mischief.



# THE YEAR IN SEX



I'm out of doors and I'm freezing!

## DANE IN VAIN

Nude models read poetry in the parks of Aalborg, Denmark to hype the latest show by controversial artist Marco Evaristti. Killjoy cops ended the display of naked pastry.



## HARVARD—NOT AS SQUARE AS WE REMEMBER IT

After official wrangles, Harvard students finally published their racy magazine *H Bomb*. It interests people, said one editor, "because they've never heard 'Harvard' and 'sex' in the same sentence."



I'm out of control!

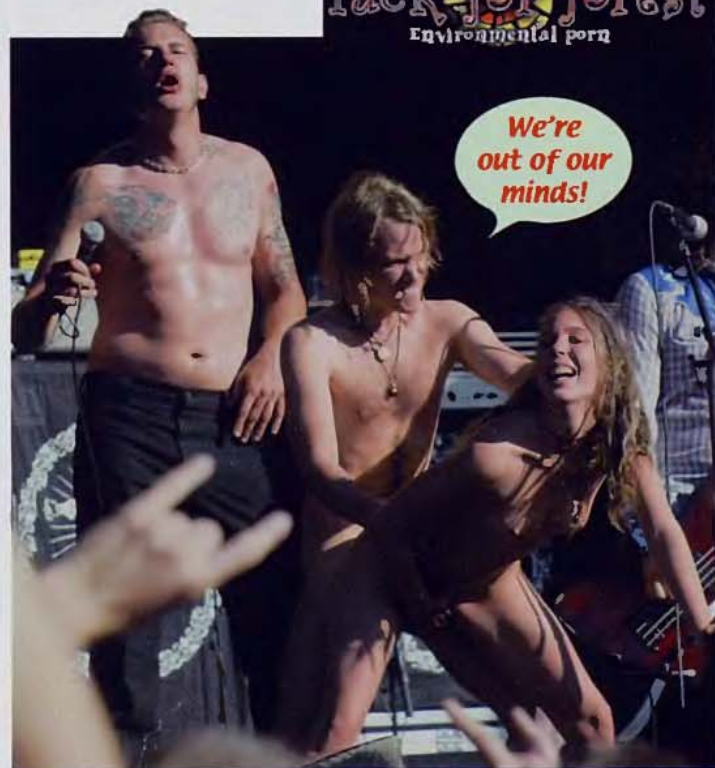
## FOR LOVE OR MONEY

When she wasn't clobbering fans and foes with microphone stands, flashlights and liquor bottles, rampaging rock chick Courtney Love still maintained a strong tabloid presence—the old flashin' way.

## WHAT'S GOOD FOR THE SPRUCE

At a music festival in Norway, Leona Johansson and Tommy Hol Ellingsen couple onstage beneath a FUCK FOR FOREST banner to tunes by (who else?) the Cumshots.

**Fuck for forest**  
Environmental porn



We're out of our minds!

## -Paris Hilton Sex Tape- COMING TO A STORE NEAR YOU

**P**ARIS HILTON'S sex video is back — and this time it's for sale. In a blockbuster deal that "wasn't cheap," Red Light District TV.

In June in R- and X-rated versions. Joseph says Paris' co-star, Rick Salomon, still owns the rights to the notorious tape. Joseph says, "This

## NEXT-TO-LAST TANGO IN PARIS

How do you top a best-selling explicit sex tape? If you're Paris Hilton, you make a sequel—or six. Word is there are about 12 hours of hot Hilton action yet to be viewed, including a scene in which she deploys the N bomb.



**Star**  
Paris Hilton  
I'm Not A TRAMP!

**What Shar Thinks**  
How the Mother of Kevin's Babies is Taking the News

**BRITNEY SPEARS TRIED TO STEAL MY HUSBAND**  
Whom rumors said really happened

**Star**  
Britney's Wild 55 Hour Marriage!

**NAVEL BATTLE**  
Despite objections from several contestants, Miss America hopefuls were issued skimpy Speedos (worn at right by the winner, Deidre Downs). Rolling in her grave: 1921 titlist Margaret Gorman, below.

*I'm out of the one-piece!*



### BRITNEY'S MARRY-GO-ROUND

First the pop tart frolicked with dancer Columbus Short, to the great unamusement of his mis-sus. Then she married childhood pal Jason Allen Alexander, briefly. Now she is (we're pretty sure) wed to dancer Kevin Federline, whose ex-girlfriend Shar Jackson bore his second kid in July. Yes, that little schoolgirl is grabbing life by the balls.



### SITUATIONS OUT OF HAND

In Berlin, model Yvonne Hoelzel slips out at a fashion show organized by the wife of Germany's president, while in Los Angeles the waifish Anna Nicole Smith loses it at G-Phoria: The Awards Show 4 Gamers.



### BUNS BASH BUSH

Protesters bummed out by GOP policies line up outside the Republican National Convention at Madison Square Garden in New York.



**WARDROBE MALFUNCTION**



### SCHOOLS FOR SCANDAL

Mary Kay Letourneau left jail looking to reunite with her schoolboy lover Vili Fualaau, and Tampa teacher Debra LaFave (on hog) was busted for having sex with a 14-year-old pupil in her SUV while his 15-year-old cousin drove.

# Mom (continued from page 138)

*The woman I call Mother had a body that would've made Bettie Page weep into her broth.*

"You want a Frosty?"

"Yeah, that sounds nice. Small."

"All right, see you in a minute." And then, "Is there anything up there?"

"Ahhhhh, no, not really. Just some... I'm checking for leaks and that sort of thing. I don't want some contract falling through because of a rainstorm or whatever, right?"

"I guess."

"I'll be down by the time you get back. Promise," I say, not really meaning it but knowing that it sometimes makes the difference—women love it when men set deadlines or express certainty. It's supposedly sexy or something. Don't ask me.

"Great. See you!" she calls out.

"Yeah, drive safe, okay? And don't forget that Barber is a one-way."

"I remember. God, what do you think I am, retarded?"

"Ummm, I prefer to think of you as 'special....'" I can hear her laughing from way up here, so that's good. Sometimes Millie takes my humor the wrong way.

"That's me, your 'special' girl. See you, sweetie!" The sound of the door closing a second or two later. I have to say, when that woman gets hungry, nothing stands in the way of her getting her next meal. No way.

"So, Dad, what is the story here?" I whisper, turning the pictures over, almost expecting an apology (or at least an explanation) to be penciled in on the back of each one. But nothing. Not one word. I flip the top one back over, leaning in with the light to study it. In two of the three, my mother—I guess if we're talking about her being all nude and everything you might as well know her name, which is Carolyn—she's leaning back against one stair, holding herself upright with her elbows. Both of these are shot from the waist up, so basically they show her breasts and face. Not close-ups, exactly, but what filmmakers might call medium shots. I guess you could almost say that they're artfully composed, what with the carpet from the stairs and the color of her hair complementing each other and the pale of her skin working as a kind of relief. Flaming scarlet lips that would be beautiful on anyone else but make my stomach flutter a bit as I catch myself thinking it. I don't know if I feel up to describing her bosom, but I'll give it a go—if it was a completely impartial

assessment I was making, of some lady in a magazine or with a friend from college or something, then I'd say, without hesitation, that they are great. Almost perfectly shaped—too perfect, really—as if they were drawn by that dude who made *Fritz the Cat* or whatever. Just really, really lovely. I mean, I don't think I'm saying anything new when I report that women's tits can so easily turn out to be mediocre, or worse even, once you actually get a look at them, so it's still surprising—even at my age—when I see a knockout pair. And I mean especially that, a pair. Often you'll find some that are exquisite, and then, on closer inspection, you'll notice a flaw or imperfection on one or its partner. A leaning to the side or a sort of drooping, a discoloration in the nipple. A birthmark or a mole, even, lots of things that can keep the two from being magnificent when studied together. But here in my hand, sported by my own mom some 40 years ago, is an almost flawless set of mams. Two gorgeous examples of womanly flesh and captured forever in a snapshot. I mean, these are knockout boobs that my mom has, and until this very moment in my life I had no idea that she was built like that. I can only ever remember her in a kind of shapeless floral housedress all while I was growing up, so this newly discovered fact is equal parts disturbing and titillating. Well, maybe it errs a touch on the disturbing side, but still.

As I said, the second photo is almost a carbon copy of the first, so I skip past it and move on to the third, which is the one that really takes the cake. Again, this is a low-quality print I'm looking at, but the woman springs out of the composition, so gorgeous is she at that moment in her life. It's a full-body shot, this one is—and, yes, now I know for certain that she didn't dye her hair—but it's her positioning that's so startling, and not just because she's my mother, either, but from what little I know about that era itself. The 1960s, I mean. I realize there were magazines you could buy back then, pornography and that sort of stuff, but everything I've ever seen or heard of from that period is pretty chaste—at least the first part of the decade, and these pictures are from probably no later than 1963, or 1964 at the latest. Most shots from those times are these "girl next door" types sitting all coy and covered on a

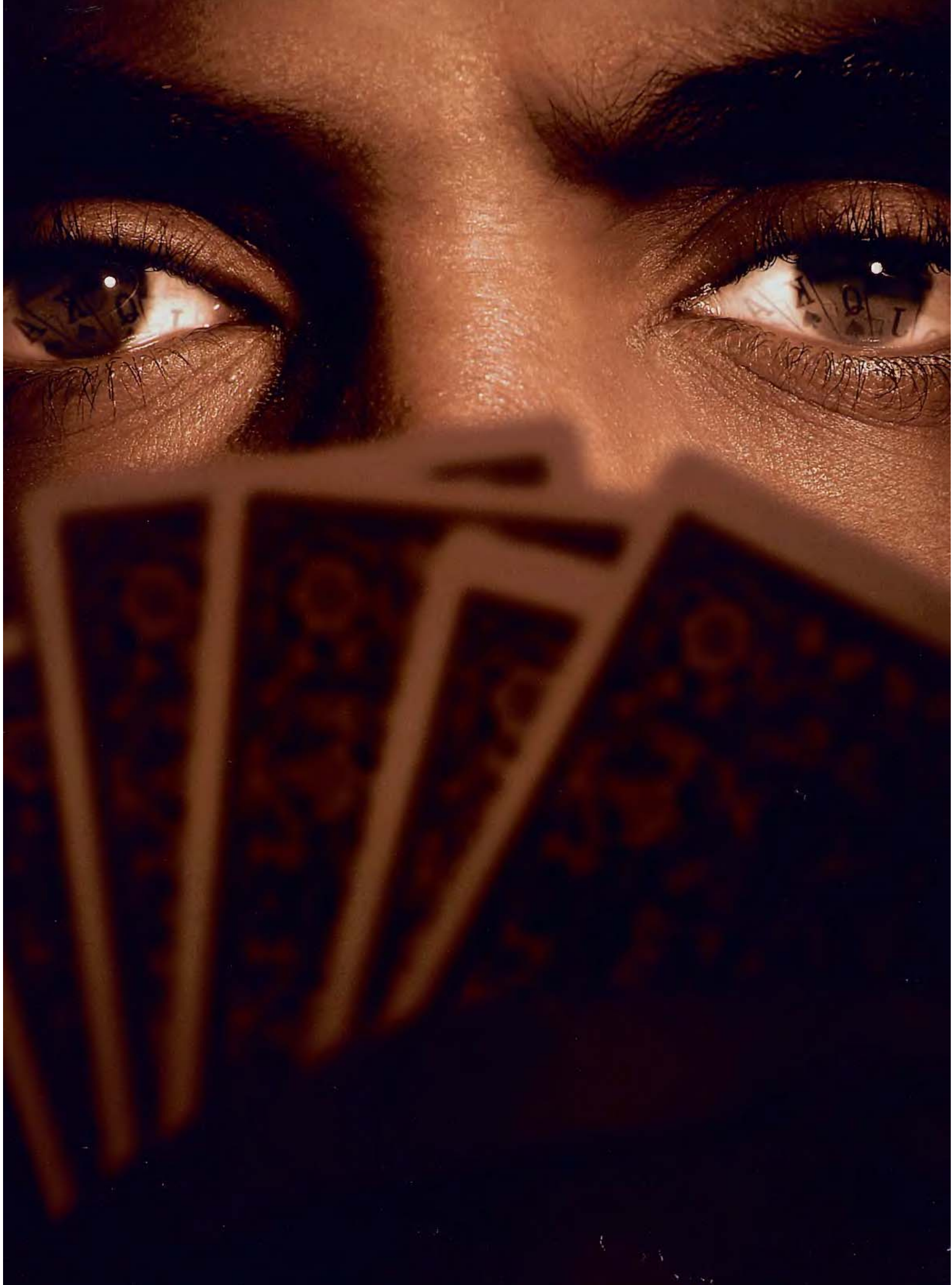
blanket, with their tops exposed but that's about it. And here's this woman who used to fix me my Cap'n Crunch every morning with her legs all spread and her fire-engine-red fingernails playing with one nipple, pinching at the tip. Lips puckered up. I really am taken aback by this now, the idea that my mother could've ever done this, even with the help of my father (although I'd bet good money on the fact that he had a lot to do with it; I just know that he did—he always seemed like that kind of man). Now, I realize that all parents have a life, a secret sort of life that exists before we ever get to know them; of course I understand that, but this is still pretty startling to find out about someone you both love desperately and take entirely for granted. The woman I call Mother had the makings of a pinup and a body that would've made Bettie Page weep into her broth. Life is just so damn silly, isn't it? I mean, when you really think about it.


The reason for all this naughtiness reveals itself when I finally put the photos aside and lift the piece of tissue paper they were wrapped in from inside the novel. Beneath it, folded into thirds, is a simple and direct response from the offices of PLAYBOY magazine in Chicago, Illinois—it's not signed by Hugh Hefner himself, unfortunately, or I'd probably sell the thing on eBay—that thanks my father for his submission, mentions how beautiful his wife is and goes on to say that, while she is certainly a worthwhile female specimen, they are sorry to inform him that they will not be pursuing her as a possible Centerfold at this time. What? And then suddenly it all makes sense; the entire enterprise makes itself clear to me as I'm lying there in the dark: Dad wanted to get Mom into PLAYBOY as a model. I mean, I've heard of this notion, that many men's magazines accept amateur photos and that type of thing, but I'm stunned by this new curve in what I already imagined to be a serpentine relationship between my two parents. How could he have done this? And how could *she*? It really is baffling. Even if they did love each other at one point—and I suppose they had to, I must begrudgingly admit, plus it's a medical fact that they had sex a few times, at least in the early days—this behavior is still so off the charts from what I know about them as a couple that I can feel myself drifting into a kind of shock. Just staring at the company logo at the top of the rejection notice, which is beginning to go slowly out of focus.

"I'm back! Honey?" comes roaring up from downstairs with such force that I nearly slip off the two-by-12s I'm lying  
*(concluded on page 189)*




*"It just wouldn't be Christmas if we didn't accidentally knock the tree over."*





# IS THIS MAN THE FUTURE OF POKER?



MEET DAVID WILLIAMS. HE'S A NERD WHO PLAYED MAGIC. HE'S STILL IN COLLEGE. AND HE JUST WON \$3.5 MILLION PLAYING TEXAS HOLD 'EM

BY PAT JORDAN

**B**rittany DeWald is in another snit. "I'm cold!" Nothing. Her boyfriend, David Williams, is sitting on the sofa playing online poker on his laptop for \$1,600 a pot. His friend Minh Huynh is sitting at a table behind him playing online poker on another computer in Williams's loft apartment, which is high-ceilinged, cold, dark and cavernous, with barren gray concrete walls and exposed pipes and air ducts. There is nothing on the walls—no prints, photographs or mirrors. The only furniture in the room is a black sofa, a matching love seat, a coffee table with a small photograph of a Chihuahua, a computer table with Williams's collection of *PLAYBOY* magazines stacked chronologically under it and a 60-inch flat-screen television showing the finals of the 2004 World Series of Poker on ESPN.

It is nine P.M. in Dallas, and the only light in the room comes from the TV and the eerie

cyber-blue computer glow reflecting on the faces of Williams and Huynh. Williams is 24 and lean, with a wispy goatee, a head of tight black curls and creamy, coffee-colored skin. He looks vaguely black, vaguely Middle Eastern. Huynh is 32 and from Vietnam. Very heavy, with a jowly face and thick-lensed eyeglasses, Huynh is a loquacious, funny, acerbic fat man. Williams is laconic, spare with his words and emotions. He looks like NBA star Tim Duncan, were Duncan to dress like a slacker-hipster in baggy T-shirts, jeans and sneakers. Like Duncan, Williams has the eyes-lowered, self-deprecating slouch of a supremely confident man. Williams and Huynh have been playing poker for more than four hours now.

"I'm cold," DeWald says.

"Yes!" says Williams. "A \$735 pot."

Huynh glances at the WSOP on TV. "That Eskimo Clark is an old-timer. Traveled around



# A FULL HOUSE

SITTING DOWN WITH SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST FEARED POKER PLAYERS



## DOYLE "TEXAS DOLLY" BRUNSON

His career goes back five decades. The 71-year-old Texan has become an icon in the modern era, winning the World Series of Poker twice, both times with a weak hand of 10-two. Total tournament winnings: \$3,155,441.



## PHIL HELLMUTH JR.

Hellmuth is to poker what John McEnroe was to tennis—a brilliant bad boy, a burning fuse. He has finished in the money 45 times at various WSOP competitions, and he won the main event in 1989 at the tender age of 24. Total tournament winnings: \$4,722,451.



## MEN "THE MASTER" NGUYEN

Nguyen's poker students call him Master. A refugee from Vietnam, the 50-year-old played his first game in 1984 and promptly lost \$1,600. Now he risks that much on a single ante. Total tournament winnings: \$3,518,860.



## PHIL IVEY

This 27-year-old from New Jersey is totally unpredictable. In 2002 he was red-hot, earning money in 23 major tournaments. Since then he's been to fewer final tables, but his earnings have more than doubled. Total tournament winnings: \$2,647,106.



## T.J. CLOUTIER

Considered by many to be the best player in the world, Cloutier is also perhaps the unluckiest. The 65-year-old Texas native has a history of "bad beats" in tournaments. Still, he's done okay for himself. Total tournament winnings: \$4,536,483.



## DANIEL NEGREANU

Most players cultivate a detached tough-guy persona at the table, but not this 30-year-old Canadian. With his mom nearby (she packs his lunch), he's the head of a Rat Pack of younger, hipper players. Total tournament winnings: \$4,259,532. —Basil Nestor

to underground clubs, got raided by the cops or hijacked and couldn't go to the cops. Poker is mainstream now." He goes back to his computer. "Jesus Christ!"

"Fuck!" says Williams. "A set of threes." He glances at the TV. "Scotty Nguyen can drink Michelob all night long."

"I'm cold," DeWald says. "Then put some clothes on," Huynh responds.

DeWald pouts. "This is a fucking man pit. There's too much estrogen in here."

"You mean testosterone," says Williams. "Whatever. It's a boring lifestyle."

DeWald, 20, flops down on the love seat beside me. A beautiful, curvaceous redhead with white skin and hazel eyes, she's wearing a low-cut, short camisole that exposes her plump breasts and a navel ring. Her tiny miniskirt barely covers her ass. She flips through one of Williams's PLAYBOYS. Williams reads the magazine from cover to cover each month, but he passes over the nude photographs because he doesn't think the models exist.

"Where are these girls?" he asks. "They don't go to the grocery store. They should be human, but I never see them."

"I plan to have a body like Pamela Anderson's," says DeWald.

"Great," says Williams. "Let the world know how shallow David Williams's girlfriend is."

"My mother had a boob job."

"She had six kids. It was time." Then, after another winning pot, he says, "I'm up \$2,793 now."

I ask DeWald if she plays poker. "I'm learning," she says. "The object is to win all the money. I play only very, very low limit."

"That's because you're so bad," says Williams.

"Asshole!" Then to me, "I don't

have the attention span for poker. Everyone in my family has ADD. I hate to lose. One game, I put all of my money in the pot and lost, and I cried."

"There's no crying in poker," says Huynh.



Brittany DeWald cheered on her boyfriend in Vegas.

"I was pissed. I'm a woman, and I'm emotional. One game, this guy took all his girlfriend's money and didn't give it back."

"Daniel Negreanu once bluffed his girlfriend out of a pot," says Huynh.

"It's common courtesy not to browbeat your girlfriend," says DeWald.

"It's common courtesy to the table not to soft-play your girlfriend," says Huynh.

Williams and Huynh glance at the WSOP on TV while their fingers move across their computer keys. They seem not to have to look at the computer screens, as if they're playing by osmosis.

ESPN is broadcasting 22 weeks of the 2004 WSOP (the previous year the network aired just seven episodes), which took place at Binion's Horseshoe Casino in Las Vegas. More than 2,500 players—1,700 more than in 2003—put down a \$10,000 entry fee for the chance to win the \$5 million first prize, the \$3.5 million second prize or the diminishing amounts for other top finishers. Most important to professional poker players, they also competed for the diamond-encrusted gold bracelet that proclaims the recipient the best poker player in the world.

Texas Hold 'Em, heavily featured at the WSOP, is one of the simplest yet most challenging of all poker games, which is why the WSOP title is the most prestigious. Players must have an uncanny instinct in reading their opponents' two down cards, a mathematical bent in figuring out the percentage of drawing a card they need, an innate ability to read an opponent's "tells"—his mannerisms when looking at his cards or preparing to bet—and the guts of a burglar in knowing when to try to bluff an opponent out of his superior hand by raising large amounts of money until he folds.

That is why the game has made TV stars out of a disparate group of men, and a few women, who have little in common except their poker skills. Those players fall easily into two groups: old-time



Fram left: Young David, age 8, with his mom, Shirley. David at last year's Borgata Open World Poker Tour event.





*"Melanie, I just had a night of sheer magic. I just wish  
I could remember who with."*

poker players who cut their teeth on illicit cash games (in which they bet their own money) and the newer breed of players, younger and more intelligent, who cut their teeth on online video games, then graduated to card games like Magic: The Gathering (a sort of Pokémon game for pre-adults) and finally to online poker before venturing into live cash games and then the WSOP.

"Williams and guys like Negreanu are the new breed," Huynh tells me. "Many of them started with Magic and then went to online poker. Williams is so smart. You can't beat him. When he was 16 I saw him push his last \$2,000 into a pot. You can't teach that."

Williams was 15 when he met Huynh at a Magic tournament. Williams describes Magic as an analytical card game with features of chess, bridge and poker. The artwork has a fantasy element—goblins and knights—but he says the game is nothing like Dungeons & Dragons. It's played mostly by teenagers and people in their early 20s. "Most of them are not very social," Williams says. "All they do is bitch about Magic."

Huynh says the David Williams he met "was smart and mature, and he wanted to learn from me." By the age of 16 Williams was already one of the best Magic players in the world. He traveled to the Netherlands, Aruba, Singapore and Paris for money tournaments and won as much as \$45,000 in a year. During his Magic days Williams made an assortment of friends around the world who remain his friends today: Huynh; Neil Reeves, now 26, from Arkansas; and Noah Boeken, now 23, from the Netherlands.

Williams's Magic friends "are so dorky," says DeWald. "They're nothing like David. They're kind of nerdy."

"Yeah," says Williams, "and they're all earning deep six figures playing poker."

By the time Williams turned 17, Magic was less of a challenge for him. His Magic friends on the Internet told him about the new big thing online. "I was intrigued by poker," says Williams. "Huynh helped me out and then got me into some illicit games. I didn't play any games that would hurt me."

"Williams went in with \$500 and didn't stop until he'd won \$5,000," says Huynh. "He figured the game out and in three months was better than I was."

Williams read every book he could find on poker, every issue of *Card Player* magazine from cover to cover and within a few years began to make a living at the game, which he'd play online and in illicit cash games in underground Dallas clubs. When Reeves moved there a year ago, Williams taught him the game, and the three

men would go to clubs to play poker for up to 30 hours straight.

"David has no fear," says Reeves, who describes himself as a fat, ugly white guy. "He looks at chips as chips, not money. He introduced me to underground poker games. They're like a spiderweb, and now I'm making more money than at anything else I could do, maybe \$82,000 to \$86,000 this year."

Williams's attraction to Reeves, and to all his Magic and poker friends, says Reeves, "is that we're all extremely smart and don't want to work nine to five. It's the most intelligent collection of scumbags I've ever met. It's an alternative lifestyle."

By the time Williams, who describes himself as smart and lazy, turned 21, he was playing poker for a living and making between \$50,000 and \$100,000 a year at it. He finally decided it was time to play in the biggest game of his life, the World Series of Poker. The day before he went to Vegas he won an online tournament, which paid him \$10,000

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*"We're all extremely smart and don't want to work nine to five. It's the most intelligent collection of scumbags I've ever met. It's an alternative lifestyle."*

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WSOP entry fee. "I had no expectations," he says. "I thought of it as a learning experience."

"There's a big difference between a cash player and a tournament player," says Huynh. "There's less pressure in a tournament, because you can lose only your qualifying fee. In cash games, I used to lose two months' salary in just one game. Vietnamese gamble out of all proportion to our salaries. We'll bet a third of our week's salary on a pot. Man, poker brings out the worst in people. After a bad loss, a miserable bastard will be an even more miserable bastard."

"I played nothing but cash games before the WSOP," Williams says. "In those, if you lose, you go into your pocket for more money. In a tournament, if you lose, you're out, so players are more cautious."

"Live poker games are more artful," says Huynh. "A lot of bluffs and skill. They're more fun than online games."

"But I can make five times more online," Williams insists.

"Yeah," says Huynh, "but online games aren't art, just math. I have notes on almost a thousand online players. I see a weak player in a game, and I jump in. I play four online games at a time, 250 hands an hour. You can play only 35 live hands an hour. I play online eight hours a day. It's like going to work. I make more than \$100,000 a year."

Reeves says he prefers live games because he can play the player, not the cards: "I look for tells. David is the best face-to-face player."

Williams says he got into a zone at the WSOP. "I was gaining talents like I was possessed," he says. "I could read a guy's body language. If he looked at his cards and tensed his shoulders, he had a good hand. It meant he was thinking. If he relaxed and looked around, he had nothing."

DeWald speaks up: "Poker is such a huge part of our life and relationship. David's on his laptop 18 hours a day. I get jealous. 'Don't you wanna sleep or eat?' I ask him. I try to sleep, but guys are hollering over a pot at three A.M. I wake up at nine, and guys are sleeping all over or still playing."

"She says I'm the lamest," says Williams. "I don't drink, do drugs, jog, work out, go to clubs, dance, nothing. I send her out to the grocery store. I play poker."

"We're opposites," says DeWald. "David chills and cools. I'm energetic. I love roller coasters."

"Why do something that makes you sick?" Williams asks.

"I wanna skydive next." I notice that DeWald has a pierced tongue with a silver barbell in it. I ask her about it. "It's just something to play with when I'm bored," she says.

"I told her it's time to take it out," says Williams. "You're an adult now. When adults have those things there's something wrong with them."

DeWald screams at him. "There's nothing wrong with me! Look at you—it took you six months to buy a sofa. We had nothing but a TV. You said you'd buy a car with your WSOP money, but you won't get one by Christmas."

Williams shrugs. "I don't like to spend money."

At 10 P.M. Williams starts making telephone calls, looking for an illicit cash game. When he finds one, Huynh, Williams and I get up to leave.

"I thought you were taking me out to dinner," DeWald says.

"Tomorrow night," he says. She storms out of the living room and goes upstairs to their bedroom.

Williams, Huynh and I drive north out of Dallas to a Steak 'n Shake for dinner, then on to the poker game.

*(continued on page 184)*

# PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE REVIEW

*Finally, an election that really means something*



Past elections show that every vote counts, which is why the candidates for the 2004 Playmate of the Year urge you to focus on this race. Go ahead—slowly reacquaint yourself with the curvaceous qualifications of the dozen beauties pictured. Evaluate their positions. Scrutinize their stands. Consider which of them is likely to be a flip-flopper and whether that's necessarily a bad thing. Remember, you'll be seeing more of whomever you like as PMOY, so choose wisely. Once you've decided, go to [playboy.com](http://playboy.com). Feel free to vote early and often.



VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE PLAYMATE AT [PLAYBOY.COM](http://PLAYBOY.COM).



*Miss May*  
**NICOLE WHITEHEAD**

"You wouldn't believe all the mile-high jokes I've heard since my issue came out," says Nicole, who completed her solo hours and is a licensed pilot. "I'm a flight instructor now. Have you ever taught a kid how to drive a car? Imagine being 5,000 feet up and going many times faster. It's fun to share the excitement with others, though." Still in Orlando, Florida, Nicole weathered a wicked hurricane season. "We were hiding in our closet for five hours during Charlie," she says. "During the next one I was the idiot outside with a video camera."

*Miss August*  
**PILAR LASTRA**

You can catch Pilar on-screen as a sexy maid in the comedy *Malibu Spring Break*. She's also penning a humor book called *The Complete Chick's Guide to Handling Assholes*. "A friend of mine wrote *The Complete A\*\*hole's Guide to Handling Chicks*," she says. "It was so over-the-top that I said, 'These guys are going down!'" Pilar would like to start her own charity, called Play. "Nobody should have to worry, at least for one day, about what ails them. Everybody deserves a chance to play."





*Miss October*  
**KIMBERLY HOLLAND**

Recent college graduate Kimberly has been making a lot of appearances for PLAYBOY on message boards and in person. "I'm really good with fans," she says. "I like to listen to what people think and hear their input.

I would never snub them, because they are the reason I'm here. After seeing me in several *Special Editions*, people say they consider me a chameleon because

I look different in every shot. If they vote for me for PMOY, they won't see the same boring pictures again. Chameleon Kim will surprise everyone!"

*Miss September*  
**SCARLETT KEEGAN**

We caught up with Scarlett in between her going to an audition and getting fitted for her Bunny outfit. "After my issue came out, I got lots of phone calls from people I hadn't heard from in a while," she says. "I go places now and people recognize me. It's kind of exciting." Playmate sisterhood is alive and well for Scarlett, who keeps in touch with Kimberly Holland. "I haven't met too many bad seeds," she says. "I'm happy for whoever wins, be it myself or anybody else, because it's a nice group of girls. Still, vote for Scarlett!"

*Miss February*  
**ALIYA WOLF**

Although raising her daughter is still her top priority, Aliya is always on the lookout for the perfect motorcycle. "I'm thinking about a Bourget because they're really hot-looking bikes, but they cost many thousands," she says. Winning PMOY would cover that expense and then some, but Aliya shies away from excessive attention. "It's flattering to have someone look at you and say, 'Wow, you're so beautiful,' but at the same time I'm kind of shy, and I blush," she says. "I have my family to thank for my unusual look, and I feel blessed."





*Miss April*  
**KRISTA KELLY**

Still modeling and taking acting courses in Toronto, Krista has been saving up to move to Los Angeles. "I want to live there," she says. "I'm crossing my fingers for some good auditions. I basically make everybody who crosses my path smile, so I'll stay for six months and try to find a nice American boy to marry." Krista would use her prize money to help her family and save some for the children she hopes to have one day. "I'm very determined and can adapt pretty well," she says. "My dreams are big enough."

*Miss March*  
**SANDRA HUBBY**

"I don't like staying still," says Sandra, noting that since becoming Miss March she has done promotions in New Orleans, Australia and Mexico, among other locales. "It's hard to figure out where I want to settle down. Becoming PMOY would be great because you get to travel everywhere and meet the fans. Guys mail me things to sign, and I always do so and send them back. It's just a small token of my appreciation, and it shows I'm thinking of them." Look for Sandra in the 2005 Playmate Calendar and video.





*Miss January*  
**COLLEEN SHANNON**

When not on tour, our favorite DJ has played the lead in the movie *The Passing*, even recording a song for its soundtrack, and was the focus of Spike TV's *The Club*, on which she appeared with producer Paul Oakenfold. "Paul can turn a pork chop into filet mignon," says Colleen, who also has a pending record deal. When we ask how it would feel to be both PMOY and the 50th Anniversary Playmate, Colleen gasps. "I would be astonished," she says. "I'd make PLAYBOY proud and treat everyone I met with kindness."

*Miss November*  
**CARA ZAVALETA**

The road still rules for Cara, who embarked on a signing tour of Have a Nice Day Cafés. ("I love signing autographs," she says, "whether on T-shirts or nice butts.") But travel isn't everything. "I bought a house in Ohio, and I make my shawls when I'm there. It's frigging time-consuming. Everybody's wearing these crazy knit things—all these grannies running around!" It's enough to make a girl hit the road. "I want to see pyramids. Then I'll hit up Argentina and buy a gigantic supply of yarn."

*Miss June*  
**HIROMI OSHIMA**

Hiromi is still modeling in Miami—look for her in upcoming *Playboy Special Editions*—and hopes to stay in the United States as long as she can. "I have no time off for vacations," says the busy Miss June. "I want to meet my parents during the holidays, maybe in Spain, Indonesia or Thailand." Hiromi just joined the Playboy X-Treme Team but doesn't know what sport she'll play. "I told them I have no confidence because it's so tough, but I want to give it a shot," she says, laughing. "I'm pretty athletic, but that doesn't mean I'll be good at it."





*Miss December*  
**TIFFANY FALLON**

In January Tiffany joins the cast of Spike TV's sketch comedy series *The Lance Krall Show*, on which she plays everything from a sex-starved office worker to an alluring alien. "I love being an ambassador for PLAYBOY," she says. "I think I'm just a normal girl who is accessible, approachable and friendly. I wrote some of the soldiers in Iraq and have a pen-pal system going on. I like it because it's old-fashioned and a way to become one with your fans. It not only makes them feel special, it makes me feel special."

*Miss July*  
**STEPHANIE GLASSON**

"I do like bald guys!" says Stephanie, amending her Playmate Data Sheet. "I actually never had anything against them—I just wrote that in my turnoffs about one specific person. If I could have any man in this world, it would be Maynard, the lead singer of Tool. See?" Case closed. "If I won PMOY, I would buy my mom a new car. She didn't want me to pose, but I said, 'Mom, there are only 12 of them a year—12.' Now that she has seen my issue, she is so proud."

See more of 2004's Playmates  
at [cyber.playboy.com](http://cyber.playboy.com).



# Vollmann (continued from page 108)

*A sign on the fence warned of danger, but a convenient hole invited us to enter, and in we went.*

any such place). Her task was to "pack the finished things," she said. It had been two months since she'd started there; she wanted to stay.

"Would it be good work for all your life?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Why do some people work in maquiladoras and some become campesinos? Which do you prefer?"

She gave me the classic Mexicali answer: "The maquiladora is more tranquil."

Tranquility was what they prized in Mexicali. I have been there many times, and year after year that was the word of praise and aspiration I most often heard there, though I rarely heard it in Tijuana.

On another dirt street in Pedregal, a man who lacked teeth conveyed an impression of immense happiness; his own cinder-block house cube cost 150,000 pesos, which he was now paying off in trifling installments. He worked the night shift in a maquiladora; during the day he worked on his house.

His job consisted of placing computer cabinets into a paint-sprayer machine—black paint obviously, for the man was black around his fingernails, black in his nose; sometimes he even coughed black, he said. He had worked at the maquiladora for two months and thought it a very good job. He had no fear that he would ever get sick.

## SONY OWNS EVERYTHING

For all I knew, he really did have a good job. If I could only see that he did, I would gladly give his maquiladora a testimonial. If I could only get authorization!

Well, if the maquiladoras had had their way, I would never have seen the inside of a single one. Oh, yes, I tried Kimberly-Clark of Mexico; Maquiladora Waste Recovery of Mexico (eternally busy recovering waste, evidently); Kraft Foods of Mexico (no answer); Puntomex International, whose first and third listed numbers were wrong and whose second number was never answered; Ace Industries, which also never answered; and Amcor of Mexico, always busy. Fortunately, there was still Foam Fabricators to call, even though it didn't answer at either number; as for Fashion Clothing, its functionary referred us to the pleasure of Señor William Chow, who coincidentally proved unavailable.

If I were a racist I'd shout, "Those lazy Mexicans!" If I were a bureaucrat I'd conclude I needed to upgrade my contact information. If I were a leftist troublemaker I'd say, "It's a conspiracy!" Well, who am I? Why do I tend to conflate these blind alleys and refusals with the sharp-nosed peering of security guards?

On a hot and polluted day, Terrie and I were driving in Tijuana, seeking a certain industrial park where Metales y Derivados was supposed to be. (Summation of the NAFTA report, February 11, 2002: "The level of lead contaminants found on the site is 551 times greater than that recommended by the EPA...for the restoration of contaminated residences. At a one-mile distance from the plant, the level of lead contamination could still be more than 55 times higher than the highest level based on EPA norms. The Metales y Derivados site is located just 600 meters from Colonia Chilpancingo, home to more than 10,000 residents.")

After passing an archway wall in the dirt, with dirt inside it, we turned up into Colonia El Lago, continuing upward in the direction of Matamoros. At the summit, like fortresses lording it over that smog-grayed valley of gray walls, were American fast-food restaurants, not to mention the long, wide, ugly roofs of manufacturing plants, the heat and dust, the white shining of walls and the dull gray shimmering of roofs—oh, down there it was gray more than white. But at the summit stood the white, white maquiladoras! Sony in particular was radiant. I remember my late President Reagan used to speak fondly of America as a "city upon a hill"; this must have been exactly what it looked like. How landscaped and grand it was! Never mind the family clinic—there was green grass! I swear to you I was thinking of the happy, pretty girl who worked at Korema, not of the man with the black cough, when two young women wearing company badges emerged from the company gate and set foot on that beautifully paved street. I murmured to dear Terrie, who as usual put them instantly at ease, and with smiles they agreed to be photographed. But just as I raised the camera to my eye, a security guard rushed out to proclaim that taking photographs was prohibited everywhere, even across the street in that littered vacant lot, because, in his words, "Sony owned everything." Exasperated,

I apologized to the two ladies, who proceeded pensively on their way, but Cerberus wasn't finished with me. He demanded my identification, which, again, I strangely refused to give him. In retrospect I suppose he was only being kind; he didn't want to expose me to any uneasy doubts about the truth of that verity *Here there's life*.

## THE HOLE

Up in the New Tijuana Industrial Park, which didn't actually appear so new anymore (sparks, heaps of metal, a stink, pallets next to peeling painted sheds), red buses waited outside a maquiladora. A man advised me to go to the delegation where maquiladoras are registered. But official channels are rarely one's best connection to bad news, which may sometimes be a synonym for truth. So let's take a spin up and down that central strip of factories along Bellas Artes; let's ask at Frials Frigoríficos; oh, and here's a satellite Tyco plant, this one flying the American flag.

And then, right on the mesa's edge, the ruin of Metales y Derivados unmistakably stood; as we got closer there was a salty, rancid smell. A sign on the fence warned of danger, but a convenient hole invited us to enter, and in we went. Our eyes began to sting. Mr. D. had said he felt sick the day he strolled about this monument to human selfishness, which in its own way felt as eerie as an Indian cliff dwelling, or even more so, since it was poisonous—not that I'd ever believe any stories about anyone getting contaminated. The sharp flapping of black tarps in the wind was the only sound.

We gazed at those corroded drums under the tarps, and after a long time Terrie said, "My mouth tastes as if I've been sucking on a penny."

"I'm sorry you haven't reproduced," I told her. "And I'm glad I already have."

Under the heaving tarps, squarish skeletons of lead looked nightmarish, but nightmares can't hurt you. I admired the view of the canyon below, which crawled with houses and shanties. Sunflowers grew near the mountains of old batteries.

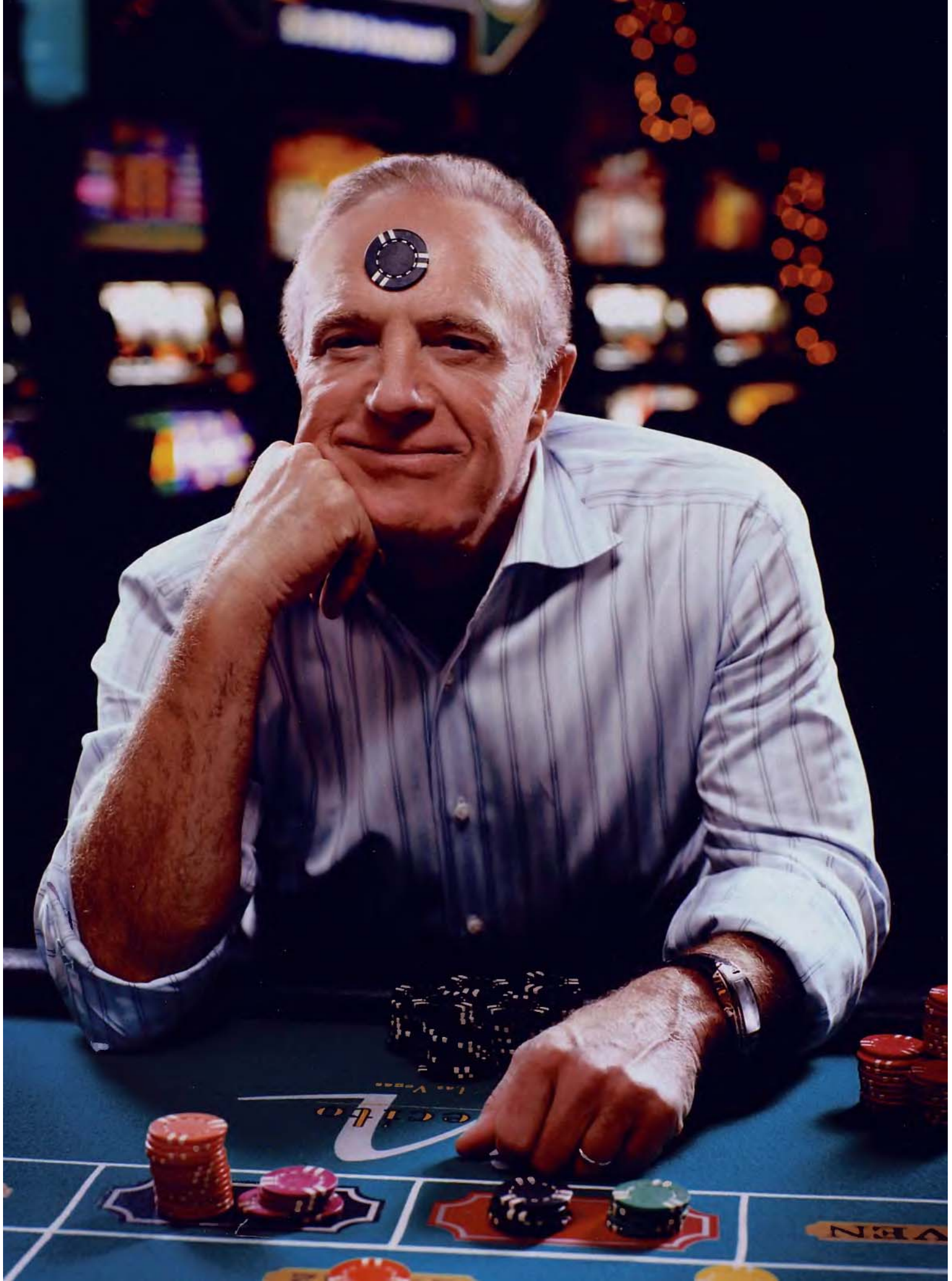
Inside the great shed, which felt like the focal point just as the restored gas chamber feels like the focal point of Auschwitz (and isn't this simile overwrought, even unfair? But I have visited Auschwitz, and I remember the heavy darkness of the gas chamber, much heavier than here, to be sure, but that memory visited me unbidden as I stood there feeling sick in several ways, wondering how many children down there in Chilpancingo were enjoying the benefits of lead poisoning. Metales y Derivados felt like a wicked, dangerous

*(continued on page 178)*

# Resolutions



JUAN IVAREZ • JORGE G



## James Caan

## 20Q

## The Las Vegas star talks tough about drugs, the Mafia, dubious movie choices and schlocky TV

1

PLAYBOY: People know you for playing explosive types such as Sonny in *The Godfather* and Will Ferrell's nasty dad in *Elf*. But on your TV series, *Las Vegas*, you play a casino security chief who drops pearls of wisdom to the show's younger characters. What advice about Hollywood or the larger world do you give your co-stars offscreen?

CAAN: The fact that I'm playing a guy who gives advice tells you how far-out the show is. *Las Vegas* is not *The West Wing* or *The Practice*. It's just meant to be fun, the kind of show you can watch and go to the refrigerator during. I'm not knocking it—it's great—but sometimes we cross the line a bit in terms of its integrity. I would like some of the shows to be more intense, more involved with the underbelly, scams and grit. I might say to the guys I respect on the show, "Look, this is stupid. Nobody would do this," but then they come back with, "You know what? The people like it." The main pearl of wisdom I give these young kids is that you shouldn't make your career your whole life. No matter what heights you achieve, even if you're Brad Pitt, the slide is coming, sure as death and taxes. So if you put everything into that one basket—acting—you'll wind up hurting yourself, either with drugs or any other self-destructive thing you can think of.

2

PLAYBOY: You've had your own well-publicized struggles with drugs. Would you say some of those were attempts to hurt yourself?

CAAN: They were very self-destructive. My sister passed away in 1981, and she was my best friend, kind of the glue that held my family together and really the only thing I was afraid of in my life. If I didn't sleep, I'd actually put on makeup so she wouldn't say, "Where were you all last night, you bastard?" When I lost

her I was at the height of my career. I just quit trying. I think I missed most of the 1980s, really. I think I had a good time, but I don't remember. I never really liked cocaine, but I was a real purist because I never did anything but coke. It was coke and it was girls. I'd like to think the girls wanted to be with me because I was so good-looking, but that's horseshit. It was because I had coke in my pocket.

3

PLAYBOY: What finally made you turn things around?

CAAN: One morning you wake up and realize there's no party, there's no girls—and yet you're still doing it. And if you're not doing it, you're looking for it. I got tired of being tired. I went to meeting after meeting, although I'm not a drinker. I know I can't do coke. I know I can't take this or that pill. I inadvertently hurt people emotionally. My last wife, I hurt her so badly. You have to make those amends. Professionally, when I get paid, I show up. Sometimes I don't feel like it, but I realized that unless you have passion for something, just don't do it. My least favorite answer is "I don't care." If I say, "You want to make love?" and the answer is "I don't care," I'm like, "Hey, then go masturbate."

4

PLAYBOY: Do you worry about your actor son, Scott, or any of your four other kids making some of the same mistakes—or some of their own?

CAAN: You always think your kids aren't smart enough to know what's going on, but Scott knew. For him it was, "Cocaine, see you later." People think I'm on cocaine when I'm not because I'm a hyper person. You can only imagine how I was when I was going, like, 180 miles an hour. It sucked. I don't miss it at all. It was part of the whole

self-destructive thing. All I can do with my kids is tell them my story. You'd think that as life goes along I'd make fewer mistakes than my dad, Scott would make fewer mistakes than I did, and eventually we'll raise a perfect Caan. I don't think that's likely. I keep making the same mistakes.

5

PLAYBOY: Have you ever been competitive with Scott?

CAAN: Not when it comes to acting. Scott's a tough guy, but he's sweet. You don't really have to push him, and you're sorry if you get to that point. I made him competitive. When he was a kid and we played Ping-Pong, basketball or whatever, if he knew I was dogging it he'd get pissed. So if he won a game or if he played extra good, he had a sense of pride, which is important. The poor guy—I was his baseball coach for six years, and he was such a good ballplayer I thought I'd be watching him from front-row seats at Yankee Stadium. But then he became a goddamn actor [laughs].

6

PLAYBOY: Throughout the 1970s you turned down movies that worked out pretty well for other actors, including *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Kramer vs. Kramer*, *MASH* and *Apocalypse Now*. Were those self-destructive decisions on your part?

CAAN: No, but talking about it is like looking up a dead horse's ass. What do you learn? I recently did a magazine story, and it quoted me as saying, "I was supposed to do *Kramer vs. Kramer*, and I said, 'This is middle-class bourgeois horseshit. Who's going to go to that?'" I was talking about how stupid my opinion was, like, "Oh yeah, I'm a real genius. I thought *Kramer* was middle-class bourgeois horseshit." Bob Altman wanted me for *MASH*, and I wound up doing a

piece of crap instead—*Rabbit, Run*. Milos Forman came to me three or four times with *Cuckoo's Nest*, and my opinion, which was wrong, was that it wasn't visual enough. I wouldn't have been as good as Jack Nicholson, who was absolutely brilliant, as was Dustin Hoffman, who's a good friend, in *Kramer vs. Kramer*.

7

PLAYBOY: The rumor was that you almost played Michael Corleone in *The Godfather*, the role that put Al Pacino on the map. How would your life be different today if you had?

CAAN: I don't think it would have been different at all, except I probably would have had a lot more money. I was close to Francis Ford Coppola well before *The Godfather*, from when I did a movie with him in the late 1960s, *The Rain People*. At the time of *The Godfather* he was the best writer, the best director. He knew everything about cinematography. He knew

actors. When Robert Evans, the head of Paramount then, told me they wanted Costa-Gavras to direct, I said, "Francis is the guy, because he's a Mediterranean Italian, not a New York Italian," and I think that's basically what made that picture so successful. You accepted everything those guys did because it was for the sake of the family. Of course, the geniuses who now say, "Oh, I put that picture together," are lying. They were the same people who told Francis, "If you mention Brando's name again, you're fired," and who said about Pacino, "We don't ever want to see that kid." So they spent \$420,000 on screen tests, but Francis had it all thought out and had the cast he wanted: Duvall, Brando, Pacino—who nobody knew—and me as Sonny. He wanted Sonny to be an Americanized version, a hothead, a guy who didn't have that same kind of blood coursing through his veins, whereas Al was the typical Sicilian-looking, dark-haired, dark-skinned guy. Even when they came to me

about playing Michael I knew that wasn't what Francis wanted, so I didn't want it.

8

PLAYBOY: Most people know you for your big movies—*The Godfather*, *Misery*—but you've done great work in films that few have seen, such as the 1981 Michael Mann thriller *Thief* and, more recently, *Dogville*. How do you come to terms with that?

CAAN: It's funny, because Scott called me this morning and said, "Dad, I'm not going to be an actor anymore. I'm going to direct or something." When I asked why, he said, "I've been watching *Thief* for three days. It's mind-blowing. It should be the bible for any actor who wants to try something outside himself." There can't be a greater gift than that, getting praise from my son. *Thief* was done when Mann was great, before he went off on his own goddamn tangent. What I really cherish is when friends and fellow actors look up to me and ask for my advice. I wouldn't trade that for anything. I've worked with some pretty amazing younger actors—Benicio Del Toro and guys like that—so when they look up to me, that's just a wonderful feeling.

9

PLAYBOY: Shortly after you started making movies, in the 1960s, you co-starred in the Western *El Dorado* with movie giants John Wayne and Robert Mitchum. How did they treat you?

CAAN: Mitchum was just a great guy, a fucking great character and a very underrated actor. He could have done anything. Wayne was a good guy too—tough but like a kid when you got to know him. I definitely didn't ask him for any acting advice. I don't think John Wayne would do well in Hollywood today, although he was a great personality. I guess if he were a young man today he'd be in that action-hero class. I got more from watching Brando during *The Godfather* than I would have gotten from anybody spouting advice. He was the guy, the guru of the acting world, without a doubt. Anybody who says different is full of shit. Richard Harris, God bless him, used to criticize Brando, but when I asked, "Then why the fuck do you spend your life imitating him?" he couldn't say anything.

10

PLAYBOY: You'd been married three times before, but your current marriage has lasted nine years, which is a record for you. Does keeping it zipped come any easier to you now?

CAAN: Fidelity has become easy for me because I had the other side for quite a while. I had a great time. I was never a pig about it. I never slept with anybody I worked with. Wait, that's not true. I did—but with all my 75 pictures, I had to think about it, didn't I? Hopefully, I treated all the girls I was with respectfully. It's



"Hey, guys, this'll kill you—have you heard the one about the piano player, the lawyer and the sanity clause?"

very different now. Sure, I take a little Viagra now every day but just so I don't piss on my shoes [laughs]. Actually, I tried Viagra once, of course. Unfortunately, only the maid was home, and I didn't need it for her [laughs again]. The point is, if there's somebody else I really want to sleep with right now, she'd better be a better and nicer-looking person than my wife. And if she is, then I need a divorce.

11

PLAYBOY: Was there any woman you really wanted but couldn't have?

CAAN: Sophia Loren. I met her when she was 60 or something. It was beyond any dream and probably one of the greatest compliments of my life when she was asked about her favorite actors and she mentioned me. When I saw her, oh, had she grown older gracefully. She's just beautiful. You can see that passion in her.

12

PLAYBOY: Some of your fantastic-looking female co-stars on *Las Vegas*—Nikki Cox and Vanessa Marcil, among others—have been quoted in interviews saying you're a sexy guy. How does that feel for you at the age of 65?

CAAN: They're just being nice. Now, Josh Duhamel, who also stars on the show, is hot. The girls are all really sweet, talented, nice and beautiful, and I love every one of them. I'd much rather wake up next to them than next to Brando. Listen, if I were young enough, none of them would stand a chance. But I'd have to take all of them or none. I'm afraid that's the deal.

13

PLAYBOY: You play a surveillance ace on your show. Have you ever been put on the other side and been the subject of surveillance in real life?

CAAN: I thought I was under surveillance. There was all this stuff in the papers about my Mob connections, which was all nonsense, all pumped up. The truth is, I grew up in a neighborhood where some of the guys I knew and that my mother had coffee with are now reputedly bosses. That shouldn't be a plural, because there's just this one guy, who's a dear friend of mine. I certainly don't condone crime. I hate it. I know them only from the standpoint that if someone in my family were to get sick, they would be the first ones I'd call. They've never asked me for any favors. From that, though, came this whole fantasy thing about me—and on top of it, I played Sonny. You know what? Sometimes it's fun. People leave me alone. I've never needed a bodyguard in my life.

14

PLAYBOY: You never worry about dangers to you or your family?

CAAN: My wife is a little neurotic about that. We were in Park City, Utah for a while. We lived on 4.6 acres in a place where nobody has a gate. Nobody even has a key to their fucking front door, I swear to God. My wife changed all the locks when we moved in, then added a top lock, then spent another \$5,000 on the thing that sounds an alarm if you touch a window. I said, "Listen, in 1895 there was maybe a toaster stolen from this community and that's been it, so what the hell are you doing?" Since we've moved back to Los Angeles I have a large weapon in lieu of an alarm system. I'm not going to get specific except to say what's important: It's very large, and it will kill you. Now sure, a pencil can kill, depending on how close you are when you use it. This thing, you don't have to get so close.

15

PLAYBOY: As depicted in *Las Vegas*, Americans are now being watched in airports, banks, hotels and convenience stores. When does it become too much?

CAAN: If you're not doing anything wrong, why do you have to start yelling about the First Amendment? What the fuck are they going to see? The only people who should be worried are the ones trying to get away with something. The ACLU will fucking drive you nuts. In Vegas there are something like 3,000 cameras. Obviously they can't go in bathrooms and they can't go in your bedroom, but they're not looking at girls' boobs or up their dresses or at people kissing. They're looking for cheats and guys who are dangerous to the public. The way we live our lives right now, everybody's running around a little fucking nervous, so personally I don't mind that holdup at the airport, especially when my family is traveling. In the old days I probably would have had a beef with this because I might have had a little stuff in my pocket or something. Now the big thing I might do is sneak a cigarette, but it's not as if I try to smoke on the plane.

16

PLAYBOY: How big of a Vegas guy were you before doing the TV show?

CAAN: When I was young I had a friend who was a part owner of Caesars, so I got to know all the guys—gamblers, casino owners, pit bosses. People who think they're good gamblers are so full of crap. I'm sure almost everybody who goes to Vegas says, "I'm taking \$2,000 with me, \$5,000, whatever, and if I lose it, so what? I had a good time." They lose it, then spend another \$5,000 or \$10,000 trying to get even. The cold-blooded gambler does the opposite. When he's losing he steps away and cuts down. When he's winning he sends it in because, after all, it's the casino's money.

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Maybe one half of one percent of people are really cold-blooded gamblers. Normal people can't do that.

17

PLAYBOY: When *Las Vegas* was about to debut, *CSI* star William Petersen called it *CSI* in a hotel.

CAAN: Who the hell's William Petersen? I'm sorry, but I don't even watch my own show. I watch Fox News—not because I'm a conservative, which, oh all right, I might be. I watch it because it's so stimulating. They're so over-the-top. It's theater. Bill O'Reilly is mad. My wife gets angry when I watch ESPN because she doesn't like to hear the squeak of sneakers on the basketball court when she's trying to go to sleep. She's like, "Why do they yell so loud all the fucking time on ESPN?" Hey, I don't know. They're loud announcers.

18

PLAYBOY: Are you still a jock?

CAAN: I've had 11 shoulder operations from non-Jewish activities like riding tournaments, rodeos, coaching football—which I had no business doing. My doctor and I are playing golf tomor-

row, and we're friends, but this fucking guy, every time I see him I go, "Wait, I just came to say hi," but it's too late and he's doing another surgery on me. A while ago I looked at my birth certificate and started playing golf. What else can I do? I ride horses. I got my kids into riding horses, too. My son Scott is starting to ride. I got my eight-year-old a horse. It must be a Caan tradition or something.

19

PLAYBOY: Are you religious?

CAAN: They pulled me out of a lake when I was five. I was unconscious at the time, and I clearly remember all that stuff flashing before me, a great light. I think the closest I've ever come to seeing God was when Scott was born. I love all my kids, but there's just something about seeing your first boy being born.

20

PLAYBOY: Your hero Brando was a Method actor. Are you?

CAAN: Right before I do a scene, I look up to heaven and say, "Come on, give me a break." That's my method.



## PRIVATE RYAN

(continued from page 88)

been elected Lord Mayor of Dublin, Ireland, "Only in America."

More relevant to my present need was that Senator Kilbreath had, at the age of 38, been in the first wave of combat gliders to land behind enemy lines in Normandy on D-day. And now, at 98, he had a dream: to build himself a library in his hometown of Patchagoulahatchie, Mississippi, a pharaoh-style monument to his life achievements. And libraries, like pyramids, take money.

"Senator," I said, "the government of France would like to honor you for your historic role in liberating their country in 1944."

"Whut?"

An aide repeated what I had said to him, shouting into his ear.

The old boy's eyes brightened. "Fine," he said. "That's real fine. What's the young lady's name?"

The senator's mental abilities appeared to have deteriorated since our last visit. I had known the aide, Roscoe Bogwell, for many years, so we could speak candidly, even in front of the senator.

"What are you running here," I said to Roscoe, "*Weekend at Bernie's*?" The man should be in a nursing home."

"He's determined to make it to 100 before stepping down," Roscoe said, not bothering to whisper. "At this point it's all about setting records. And his library."

"Can he travel?"

"What ya have in mind?"

I explained.

Roscoe rubbed his chin. "What kind of contribution to the library we talking about?"

"Commensurate with the senator's contributions to history."

"Look here, Rick. How long we known each other? Let thy speech be plain and pleasing to the ear." Roscoe's a part-time minister.

I wrote down a figure on a piece of paper. You never know, in Washington, who might be listening in.

Roscoe smiled. "Looks like we're going to France."

"Frances?" said the senator. "Theah was a Frances wukked in the majority leader's office. *Fine-looking girl.*"

"Thank you for your time, Senator," I said. "You're looking very well, sir."

"Figger like an *hourglass.*"

I had to hand it to the senator—98 and still the most active groper of females in the United States Senate. An inspiration, really.

A few days later it was announced that Senator Kilbreath would be leading a Codel—Washingtonese for congressional delegation—to Normandy on a "fact-finding mission to investigate the feasibility of relocating American military



"Wow! I bet you'd be a knockout in a bikini."

remains." Roscoe's press release noted that Senator Kilbreath was looking forward to making "one last trip" to the spot where he had landed in his glider in the early hours of June 6, 1944.

The story got good play in the U.S. Senate and the French media. The French ambassador called to say he was pleased. We discussed plans for the senator's reception in France. Rick Renard does not pat himself on the back before the job is done, but I hung up feeling I had earned my retainer.

LaMoyné greeted me back at the office with the unwelcome news that the city council of Lafayette, Indiana was about to vote on whether to change the city's name to Franks, after the American general who so brilliantly waged Operation Iraqi Freedom. So I had to deal with that.

The midnight oil burned bright at Renard Strategic Communications. We called every member of the city council and pointed out that General Tommy Franks was of French lineage, so they'd only be honoring a different French military man. I didn't know for a fact that General Franks was French, but his name sounded French enough to give the burghers of Lafayette pause. That, along with a costly newspaper public service announcement campaign celebrating the indispensable contributions of the Marquis de Lafayette to the American revolutionary cause, led to the narrow defeat of the initiative. But it was clear that there could be no more playing defense. The vote on whether to approve the purchase of \$65 billion of French aircraft by U.S. commercial carriers was approaching. It was time once again to storm the beaches of Normandy.

The French embassy in D.C. had given me a liaison person, an extremely attractive young Parisian woman named Cynthia, who worked for something called the Bureau des Informations Étrangères, which I understood to be the Foreign Press Office.

I had a hard time concentrating on business during our first meeting. Cynthia had what Senator Kilbreath would call an hourglass figger, Audrey Hepburn-gamine hair, pearl earrings and eyes like blue stained glass, and she smelled like lavender in fresh rain. I was certainly looking forward to liaising with her, though I try as a rule not to get emotionally involved with the client.

"How are we coming with the old ladies?" I asked Cynthia. The plan was for the senator's motorcade route to the cemetery to be lined with local Frenchwomen who had been young women when the brave U.S. soldiers waded ashore on D-day.

"How will we explain why they have all these little American flags for the waving?" Cynthia asked. "The press is going to point this out, you know."

"Okay, scrap the little flags. Let's have them show up with an old U.S. military

flag and wave that at him. Better yet, present it to him as a gift. A bloodstained one would be even better. Doesn't have to be real blood."

"Anyway," she said, "we are having a difficulty finding women."

"You mean to say you can't find women who were liberated by Americans to turn out and show some gratitude?"

"It's been a long time," she shrugged. The French have perfected the art of the shrug. It's their national gesture.

"You mean, they have better things to do than wave at one of the men who saved them from the Nazis?"

"Why do Americans insist that the French must grovel in gratitude for performing an act of geopolitical self-interest over a 'af century ago?"

"Next you'll be telling me Jerry Lewis is a genius and that no plane flew into the Pentagon on 9/11. Let's get with *le programme*. You hired me, remember?"

Cynthia rolled her eyes. "I'll do what I can."

"Tell them some movie star is coming. Tom Hanks."

"To be honest, I don't think that would make them excited."

"Then tell them Jerry Lewis is coming."

The Codel departed Andrews Air Force Base a few nights later. I was a little concerned when I saw Senator Kilbreath walk up to the microphone carrying what looked like a speech text. I shot Roscoe a concerned look. He signaled "Relax." Sure enough, the senator's statement from the podium was a model of clarity and brevity. He said he was humbled to be returning to France on such an important mission and would do his utmost, as indeed he had on that dark night so long ago when freedom was threatened. I was very moved. The man was a walking poster boy for U.S.-French friendship.

"What did you do to him?" I said to Roscoe. "Last time I saw him he was drooling."

Roscoe winked at me. "Better livin' through chemistry. Vitamin B complex." "Vitamin B?"

"Plus some other stuff. You know, Ritalin."

"Speed, you mean. Jesus, Roscoe."

"He'll be fine, don't you worry."

I flew over the next day. Cynthia met me at Charles de Gaulle.

"There is trouble," she said. "Perhaps."

"The old ladies?"

"No, a protest. Police say they have informations that there may be an action planned."

"Protest? Protest of what?"

Cynthia shrugged and exhaled smoke.

"Who can say?"

"Could you not be existential just for a

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minute? This isn't *Waiting for Godot*."

"An anti-American protest. You're not so popular here."

"Well, excuse us for saving you from the Germans. Next time we'll leave you to fight them off with baguettes."

"I'm not taking the side of the protesters. Don't be so sensitive. You Americans, every five minutes you need reassurance." She leaned over and gave me a long kiss, right on the lips. I must say, I was stunned.

"There," she said. "Thank you for saving us in 1944. Okay? Happy now?"

"Well," I cleared my throat, "it's a start."

"Anyway," she said, automatically checking her lipstick in the rearview mirror—and there was something beautiful in the way she did it—"the police opinionate there is a group that may make a difficulty. But don't worry. Our police are very clever." She smiled. "Not like yours."

I phoned Roscoe from the lobby of the Ritz. The senator was staying there instead of at the embassy so as to be accessible to the French, as it were.

"How's our boy?" I asked.

"The time changes are hard on him, but he's fine. He's pumped."

"You mean you gave him an injection. He's going to drop dead on me, Roscoe."

"That man is going to bury us both. He's going over his speech right now and chasing the room-service maids. He just loves those French girls. Say, you hear anything about a protest? One of the embassy people mentioned something."

"I wouldn't worry. French police are tough. Not like ours."

"What the hell are they protesting, anyway? Fact we saved their sorry asses?"

LaMoyné reached me on my cell to say he'd just learned that AAAM, the Association of American Airplane Manufacturers, was rolling out a series of anti-French TV ads. It was targeting the districts of the congressmen and senators on the Transportation committees that would be voting whether to approve the purchase of the French aircraft.

"How bad is it?" I asked.

"You remember when it came out in the news a couple years ago that Air Gaul bugs the seats in first and business class? So French businessmen would have an edge in negotiations over their foreign counterparts? Plus whatever other juicy *morceaux* they might pick up, and God only knows the things that get talked about in those seats on the way to gay Paree. That's the first spot. It goes downhill from there."

Before flying over to France, I had prepared for such a contingency.

"All right," I said, "move to Condition Orange." Renard Strategic Communications, like the Department of Homeland Security, has a system of color-coded alerts. We had a campaign of 30-second TV spots ready to roll. One showed the empty cockpit of a modern U.S.-built jetliner. Headlines scrolled down the TV screen:

DRUG USE FOUND RAMPANT AT AIRPLANE PLANT.

FAULTY STABILIZER TERMED CAUSE OF FATAL CRASH.

AIR IN ECONOMY-CLASS CABIN IS CALLED 'TOXIC' BY FAA.

Then you heard the mechanical voice of the cockpit warning system saying, "Pull up! Pull up! Pull up!" The clear implication was that to fly on an American-built plane was to risk death a thousand times over. I like to think I'm as patriotic as the next person, but *c'est la guerre*.

That night there was a dinner for the Codel at Taillevent. It's one of the great restaurants of the world, and Cynthia and I had arranged a little surprise for Senator Kilbreath. Halfway through dessert—which consisted of a cake in the shape of his old Army unit's insignia—one of the other diners, an elderly French sort, approached the senator's table, burst into tears and started telling him how one night when he was a kid growing up in—what do you know?—Normandy, he heard this crash and looked out his window, and there was an American glider plane full of GIs. It might have been the senator's.

The senator was so visibly moved, and the two old men hugged, and if it had been a movie, the whole place would have started singing "The Star-Spangled Banner." It was a tremendously heartwarming moment, really. Even the French people present were touched, and the French don't touch easily.

Afterward Cynthia and I had a drink at the Ritz.

"Good work on Glider Man," I said.

Cynthia stared into her Perrier.

"Tell me something, Rick. Are you self-loathing yourself as much as I am self-loathing myself?"

"We made an old man happy," I said. "Is that a crime?"

"I need a bath. I feel dirty."

It's not every day you get a lecture on cynicism from a French person. Cynthia went off in a huff of malaise, leaving me to contemplate over my Pernod my place in the moral pecking order. If it were a movie, someone with a beret would have started playing an accordion.

Instead, an attractive young woman sat down on the stool next to me. I gave her the old Renard MRI scan. It crossed my mind that she might be a professional. The bars of expensive hotels are not exactly off-limits to the ladies of the night. But there was something in her manner that said, "I'm not a hooker," and before long we were talking pleasantly. Her name was Hélène, and she'd spent time in the States.

"You know Woods 'Ole?"

"Woods Hole, the oceanographic institution? By reputation, yes, of course," I said as suavely as I could, furiously trying to remember something about the place. Whales, surely.

It turned out that she'd spent a year there studying not whales but kelp. A year struck me as a long time to study kelp, but I'll be the first to admit that science is not exactly Rick Renard's forte. As far back as high school I was concentrating on getting someone elected to the student council or doping the visiting team's Gatorade. I'd always been a facilitator, but back then you



would not have found me dwelling, much less marveling, over the molecular complexities of, say, kelp. But there was something about this woman that made me want to dwell and, should the opportunity present itself, marvel over her complexities.

She seemed interested in whatever had brought me to France. Leaving out my specific role, I said I was here to help with the visit of the U.S. senators to Normandy. She brightened and said how embarrassed she was over France's recent behavior vis-à-vis the Iraq situation and how ashamed she was of her country for letting America once again go it alone. Maybe kelp makes you go pro-American. It was certainly refreshing to hear a French person expressing such unqualified *joie* over America.

We kept on ordering drinks, neither of us, apparently, wanting to say good night. One thing led to another, and though Rick Renard does not kiss and tell, I will say that Hélène and I ended up in my suite upstairs, talking late into the night—later than I had planned, since I had an awful lot to do. She was fascinated by the details of the senator's trip to Normandy and wanted to know all about it. I don't remember how much, exactly, I told her.

She was gone by the time I'd woken up. In the next room my laptop was open. I saw that she'd left me a message on the desktop: "*À bientôt, chéri. X Hélène.*"

I lingered fondly over the screen, Hélène's delicate perfume wafting in the air. This romantic reverie was replaced by a fierce need for a fistful of Advil. Starting a long day with an *eau-de-vie* hangover is not ideal.

The motorcade formed outside the Ritz for the three-hour drive to Normandy. The plan was to stop in Bayeux for lunch at the Lion d'Or, which had been Eisenhower's favorite restaurant, then on to the military cemetery at Colleville-sur-Mer, where the senator and the Codel would be surprised by the grateful old ladies lining the road. Another heartwarming day in France, solidifying the historic bond between our two peoples. This would be followed by a helicopter tour. The senator would retrace the path his glider took on D-day. Through Army records, we'd been able to find the exact spot where he'd landed, in the middle of a beet field. All very historic and moving.

I was in the second car behind the senator's, with Cynthia and one of the French security officers, an erect, alert-looking fellow named Jean-Jacques.

"How's the self-loathing today?" I asked, settling in beside Cynthia.

She gave me a sullen look and handed me the menu for the luncheon at the Lion d'Or. The thought of food, even exquisite French food, made me reel. Cynthia, being French, lit a cigarette.

"You don't look so good," she said,

without any noticeable pity. "Late night?" "I'm going to doze for a bit. Wake me up if we hit any protesters."

The lunch was a great success. The mayor of Bayeux, which depended heavily on tourism from us ugly Americans, gave a heartwarming toast about how the best of friends can occasionally disagree with each other, et cetera, et cetera, and presented all the members of the Codel with keys to the city. Even the Florida congresswoman who'd sponsored the legislation in the first place seemed to be having a nice time. Cynthia was making sure that at every meal she was seated next to some debonair Frenchman who could charm the paint off the Eiffel Tower and who would whisper to her that most French people hated the present French government and had secretly rooted for the Americans. Everything was going very well.

After the lunch we motorcaded to the cemetery. Cynthia's brigade of grateful old ladies was there, on cue, waving an American flag that looked like it might have been flown on an amphibious landing craft on the Great Day. The senator ordered the car to pull over, and the ladies swarmed him. Really, as PR goes, it was a slam dunk.

We did the tour with the director of the military museum, and by the time we'd left it was a done deal that Private Ryan was staying put with his band of brothers at the cemetery overlooking the bluff of Utah Beach.

It was on the short ride to the helicopter pad that I noticed the clipboard on Jean-Jacques's lap. There was a piece of paper on top that looked distinctly like a wanted poster. It had a photo of a woman who looked very much like the one I had spent the night with. The hair was different, and she looked sort of angry. But it was definitely Hélène, my *belle Hélène*. Oh hell.

"Excusez," this being my one word of French. "Who is?"

Cynthia translated. "That's the leader of the group we have been concerned about."

"May I see?" Jean-Jacques was reluctant to show me.

"Look," I said, "we're all working for the same team here. Who. Is. This. Woman?"

They murmured some more. Cynthia took a deep breath and said, "You remember the *Rainbow Warrior*?"

"The Greenpeace vessel you blew up in New Zealand."

They stared.

"Let me rephrase. The Greenpeace vessel it was *alleged* that French security services blew up in order to prevent them from protesting French nuclear testing in the South Pacific? Some people died?"

"She is the sister of one of the crew," said Cynthia. "Ever since, she is making a vendetta against the government. If they can make it difficult for France to sell airplanes, they would like to do that."



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My *eau-de-vie* hangover reasserted itself. Cynthia was giving me what novelists would call the penetrating stare.

"Now you *really* don't look so good," she said. Jean-Jacques too seemed to be intrigued by my rapid loss of color.

I thought of the message H  l  ne had left for me on my laptop—the same laptop that contained all the files pertaining to the Normandy visit, including a map showing the location of where the senator's glider had landed.

"Change of plan," I said. "We have to get to the glider field. Right now. *Tout de suite.*"

"What's the matter?" she said.

"Explain later."

Cynthia and Jean-Jacques spoke French at each other, and Jean-Jacques shook his head in that French way that translates as "No way."

"He says we must stay with the motorcade. He's assigned to the senator. He must remain in his sight."

I raised Roscoe on my cell. "Roscoe, abort the chopper ride. Repeat, abort the chopper ride. Something ugly might be about to happen."

"What you talking about?"

"I've got a bad feeling. Leave it at that."

"Rick, he's been talking about this ever since we got here. I can't just tell him you wanna call it off just 'cause you got some bad feeling."

"Stop the car," I said to Cynthia.

"Why?"

"I have to throw up." Practically true.

"*Arr  tez la voiture!*" she commanded. The driver pulled over. I jumped out and hunched over by the side of the road. The driver opened the door and got out

by way of being solicitous. I felt bad about what followed, but desperate times call for desperate measures. I shoved the poor man to the side, jumped into the driver's seat and hit the pedal.

Cynthia and Jean-Jacques started remonstrating, understandably. I put up the smoked-glass partition and locked the doors, sealing them in. Jean-Jacques began rapping on the glass with what I suspect was the butt of his pistol. I was hoping Cynthia would discourage him from shooting me. The Bureau des Informations   trang  res surely didn't want the headline POLICE SHOOT U.S. PR MAN AT NORMANDY.

I'd spent so much time on the planning that I had a pretty good idea how to find the glider field, about five kilometers from where we were. I passed the senator's motorcade at a death-defying clip. The walkie-talkie on the seat next to me began squawking furiously in French. Then I saw in the side rearview mirror the flashing blue-and-white lights.

By the time I reached the beet field, I had three French police cars on my tail. I pulled over and jumped out of the car and made for the hedge—no easy climb, let me tell you, for a Washington PR man well into his 40s. Jean-Jacques and Cynthia burst out of the back, shouting and yelling, and the police cars were pulling up with a screech of tires and gendarmes shouting, "*Monsieur! Arr  tez!*"

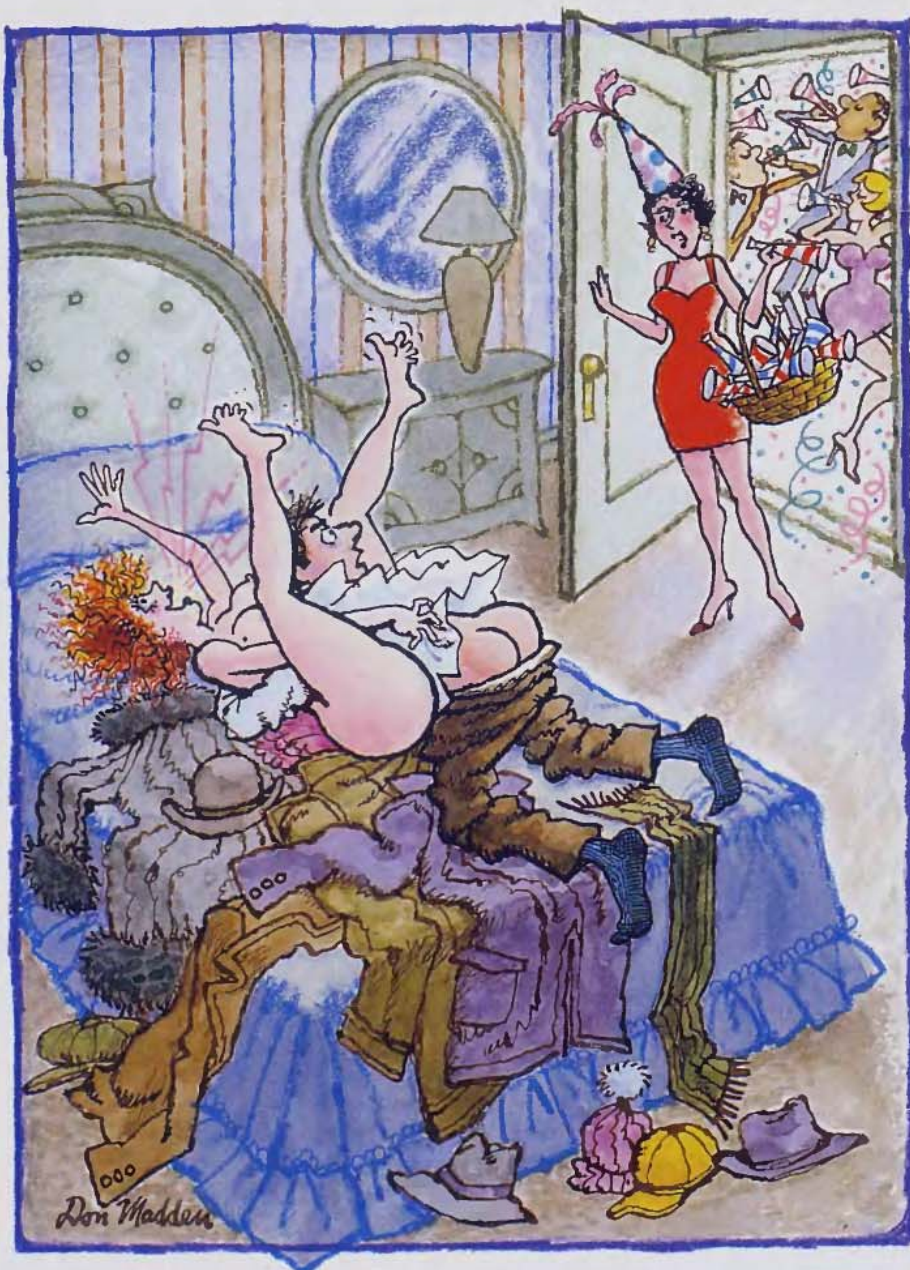
I got all scratched and bloodied getting to the top of that damned hedge. (It can't have been much fun invading this area.) From the top of it I had a clear view of the field, and what I saw made me sweat. There, painted in whitewash on the field in thick letters, it said YANKEE GO HOME.

I could hear the *whop-whop-whop* of the senator's chopper approaching in the distance.

I shouted down to Cynthia. Jean-Jacques stopped pointing his pistol at me and barked into his walkie-talkie.

The chopper kept coming. My heart was going like a piston. Finally the chopper veered sharply away and headed off.

I couldn't bring myself to admit all the details to Cynthia, though I'm certain she figured it out for herself. I did eventually tell Roscoe, who let out a low moan and said that if you wanted to make an enemy out of Karl Kilbreath, the surest way would be to call him a Yankee. She really thought it all through, H  l  ne. At any rate, the bill was defeated in committee, and Private Ryan remained in France, where he belongs. As for H  l  ne, she sends me e-mails from time to time, addressed to "Ch  ri." She wants to get together next time I'm in Paris, and though I'm still furious with her, I have to say, I wouldn't mind. I've always been a bit of an environmentalist, deep down.



"Oh, I see you already have a noisemaker, Mr. Wilcox."



# HOWARD HUGHES

(continued from page 74)

He had money, women, control, connections, even a kind of manly courage that one could only envy. As Hepburn put it, "He could do anything he wanted."

Hughes wanted to build the biggest airplane in the world, and he did, though it was so absurdly large he could barely get it off the ground. He decided he wanted to advance the career of an inexperienced, buxom young actress named Jane Russell, and he did—by casting her in a film titled *The Outlaw*, displaying her assets by featuring her cleavage on the movie's poster and promoting the film incessantly, even though censors and critics reviled it. Indeed, this became the dominant theme of the lifelong movie Hughes had been constructing for himself and the one that seemed to strike a public nerve: He had absolute freedom.

The proof of just how thrilling an idea this was would come after Hughes, always of a fragile temperament, suffered a nervous breakdown in 1944 and another in 1958. The first forced Hughes into partial seclusion; no confirmed photograph of him taken after 1952 exists. The second forced him fully into a hermitage from which he never emerged. Still, however erratic and unpredictable he had become, Hughes continued to pull strings from his secret lair, which only reinforced the sense of power that had made him so fabled and fascinating to the public. He bought and sold companies. He impulsively moved to Las Vegas, commandeering the penthouse at the Desert Inn, and when the owner tried to evict Hughes after he'd overstayed his welcome, he parried by buying the hotel and launching a spending spree in Nevada that created a casino empire. He offered a \$1 million payoff to President Lyndon Johnson to stop nuclear testing in Nevada and then secretly contributed \$100,000 each to Richard Nixon's and Vice President Hubert Humphrey's 1968 presidential campaigns to win their support for a ban. He colluded with the Mafia. He even contracted with the CIA to provide a ship that would retrieve a sunken Russian submarine.

The difference between the new Hughes and the old one was that any kind of propriety or reason no longer limited him. If he had been "the sucker with the money" in his Hollywood days, he was now the madman with the money, or at least that was the image promulgated in the media. Accounts that leaked out had him addled by codeine, hidden behind thick drapes, sitting stark naked on a white Barcalounger watching old movies again and again and again. Or sitting on the toilet for a day at a time. Or demanding that everything he touched be handled with

# WHERE & HOW TO BUY

Below is a list of retailers and manufacturers you can contact for information on where to find this month's merchandise. To buy the apparel and equipment shown on pages 38, 45-48, 90-97 and 198-199, check the listings below to find the stores nearest you.



## GAMES

Page 38: Atari, atari.com. Gameloft, gameloft.com. Jamdat, jamdat.com. Microsoft, halo2.com. Nintendo, nintendo.com. O~3 Entertainment, o3entertainment.com. Summus, summus.com. THQ Wireless, thqwiresless.com. Vivendi Universal Games, vugames.com.

## MANTRACK

Pages 45-48: Big Sky, bigskyresort.com. Bowers & Wilkins, bwspeakers.com. Carl F. Bucherer, carl-f-bucherer.com. Crested Butte, crestedbutteresort.com. Four Seasons, fourseasons.com/whistler. Gibson, gibsoncustom.com. Heavenly, skiheavenly.com. Italbrass Moody Aquarium Washbasin, homecluck.com. JVC, jvc.com. Stockli, stockli.com. Whiteface, whiteface.com.

## THE HIGH LIFE

Pages 90-97: Alexander Julian Private Reserve, available at Gary's in Newport Beach, California and Mario's in Portland, Oregon. Arnold Brant, arnoldbrant.com. Aubade, available at Allure in Hawaii and Dani in New

York City. Binetti, available at Cantaloup in New York City. Fratelli Rossetti, rossetti.it. Gai Mattiolo, 212-219-2215. Gianluca Isaia, 888-996-7555. House of Diehl, houseofdiehl.com. Jan Leslie, available at Bergdorf Goodman. John Lobb, 212-888-9797. Johnston & Murphy, torinoinc.com. Just Cavalli, 323-658-8645. La Petite Coquette, thelittleflirt.com. Lubiam 1911, available at Kirby's in Tampa, Florida and Levy's in Nashville, Tennessee. Marc Ecco Collection, marceccollection.com. Mezlan, available at Nordstrom. Moschino, available at select Neiman Marcus locations. Nina Ricci, ninaricci.fr. Richmond X Uomo, available at Apollo and Geranium in New York City. Robert Talbott, roberttalbott.com. Simone Perele, simone-perele.com. Stuart Weitzman, 310-860-9600. Temple St. Clair, 800-590-7985. Turnbull & Asser, 212-752-5700. Valentino, available at Valentino boutiques nationwide. Versace, versace.com. Vestimenta, vestimenta.com.

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tissues because he was a germophobe. Or issuing elaborate rules for opening a can of fruit that included scrubbing the can thoroughly with soap and a stiff brush. Or commanding that all his urine be saved in bottles. Or simply wasting away to 100 pounds while his nails grew to talons and his hair fell to his shoulders. Even his once-vaunted romantic life was now shrouded in bizarre mystery. He had married actress Jean Peters in 1957, some believe as a way to prevent his company's executives from having him committed, but he and Peters lived together only sporadically, and it is unclear whether they had sex. Actress Terry Moore claimed Hughes had married her in a secret ceremony at sea, but that was also uncertain. What was incontrovertible: By the late 1950s Hughes had morphed from Donald Trump into Michael Jackson.

Though it is impossible to determine just how crazy Hughes was, if his intention had been to keep his saga going and his name in the papers, he could not have done a better job. In many respects he was even more compelling out of the public eye than in it, one of the benefits of scarcity. Yet even as a nutty recluse he

seemed to tend to his image. When a Las Vegas newspaper referred to him as a millionaire, Hughes took umbrage, firing off a note to one of his aides that "it is a bad time for us to put out publicity referring to me as a mere millionaire." Hughes insisted he be called a billionaire. Similarly, when writer Clifford Irving claimed to have interviewed Hughes for an autobiography that was about to be published, Hughes held a telephone press conference to refute Irving's claim. If anyone was going to control Howard Hughes's image, that person was going to be Howard Hughes.

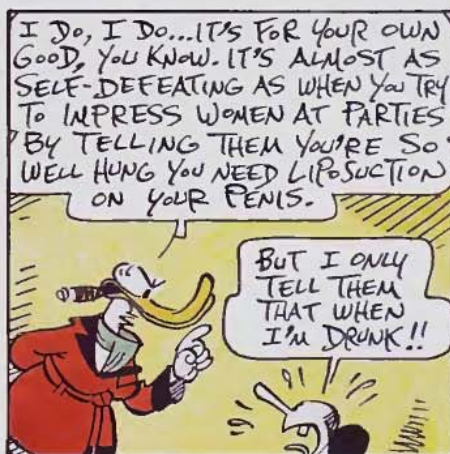
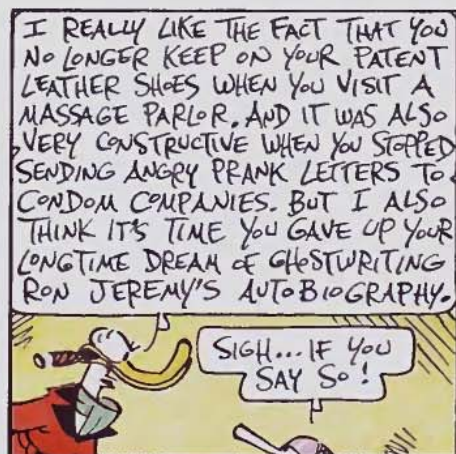
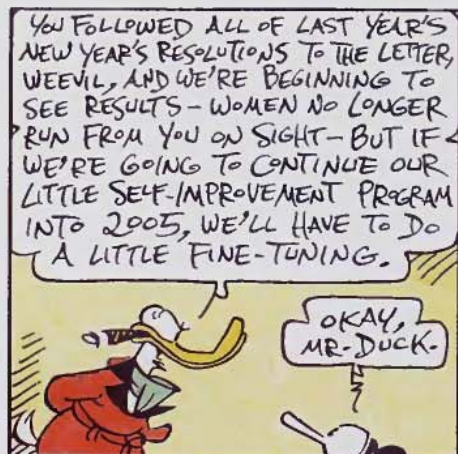
To some, no doubt, Hughes's demise was a parable of the limitations of wealth and power. Though he had his fortune and a large retinue, he nevertheless died of neglect on an airplane en route from Acapulco to a Houston hospital, with neither friends nor family in attendance because there were no friends and because Hughes had had almost nothing to do with what remained of his family. The death, however, would lead to yet another scene in the Hughes movie when various claimants fought over his fortune, among them a Utah gas station owner named Melvin Dummar, who said he had once given Hughes a

lift in the desert and had come into possession of a will leaving him one sixteenth of Hughes's estate, apparently to repay the kindness.

Hughes certainly would have appreciated the frenzy. He was, after all, a master entertainer—even, it seems, after death. He always put on a good show. But he was also a master psychologist who knew what the show meant. Early on Hughes realized that people wanted to feel the rush of empowerment that he lived within and that they would identify with a man who could do anything, particularly if he was self-effacing and ostensibly modest rather than high-handed about it. What Hughes provided was a connection to something every American aspired to have: the ability to impose one's will on the world, whatever that will demanded. This made Hughes's claim on America that of an Everyman who seemed to have everything, which is why, even now, his story of omnipotence is so resonant. In Hughes, who traversed so many spheres and who effected his will in so many ways, the country got a glimpse of its own loony might.



# Dirty Duck<sup>®</sup> by Bobby London



# TOBY KEITH

(continued from page 68)

bitch about. The little guy who writes the songs is the one who gets hurt—the starving artist trying to hit that one golden home run, and he finally hits it and makes 30 percent less than he would have made in the past.

**PLAYBOY:** But you could also point to young artists who rely on downloading as a way to get exposure for their music.

**KEITH:** Sure. It depends on where in their career you ask somebody. If you ask somebody who's got a lot to be downloaded, like me, you'd probably get an answer like "It's wrong, it's stealing." If you were to ask a rock group out of, say, Sacramento, trying to be discovered by getting their song downloaded on the Internet, they wouldn't care. But I guarantee you, the second they hit it big and their lifestyle changes and they start living off that income, they'll probably change their minds.

**PLAYBOY:** Do you think the Internet has changed the business significantly?

**KEITH:** It is changing, big-time. I don't know how long the CD is going to be around, how long music stores are going to be the way to get your music. The bad part about it is that we all want to sell albums. But if it gets down to where it's all sold on the Internet, people will buy just the songs they want, and the rest of the music will never get heard. It'll go back to a singles market, like it was in the days of 45s.

**PLAYBOY:** Are you worried about the effect of the changes?

**KEITH:** I'm fine. You can't be all you can be forever. And I have a great career right now. If it all went away tomorrow, it'd be okay. I wouldn't have any more money or any more songs on the radio, but at the same time I could have retired years ago. I do it because it's fun. I do it because this is what I do best.

**PLAYBOY:** Early in your career, did you have a financial goal you wanted to reach?

**KEITH:** Yeah. I remember in 1992 or 1993 saying to my first accountant, "Man, if I could ever get to \$5 million, I'd be hard to find." And he said, "No, if you get there, you'll want more than that." And he's right.

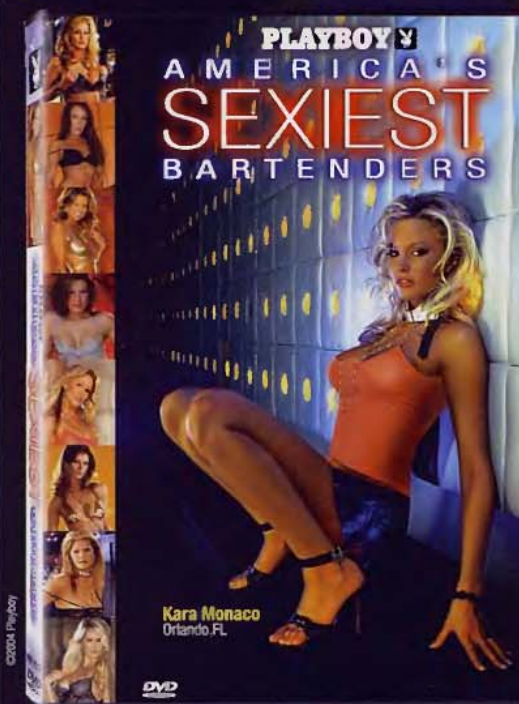
**PLAYBOY:** What sorts of goals do you have remaining?

**KEITH:** I don't have any. I've achieved every goal I've ever set. My only goal now is just to endure. I take a tremendous amount of pride in doing everything my way now. Everything's on my terms. Even if my next album flops—if we don't debut at number one and we sell only a bucketful of records—it's what I wanted to do, and I'll live with that. I'm never gonna conform to some machine and say, "Y'all tell me what to do next."



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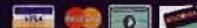
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**AT NEWSSTANDS NOW**

## Vollmann

(continued from page 164)

place, I can tell you), several huge, rusty drumlike apparatuses were trained like cannons at the barrio below. What were they, those red-cruised hulks? They had wheel gears on them. I stared at them with my burning eyes; I smelled the sour-metal smell. And those square pits in the concrete floor, those pipes going down, down into the reddish earth, what did they signify?

Across the street, well within range of that rotten-metal smell, two men sat eating their lunch. I asked if I could photograph them, and they said I could but they'd get in trouble if they failed to don their protective gear first. So they laid down their sandwiches, dressed up like astronauts and stood behind the sign that read PELIGROSO, meaning dangerous. Meanwhile a black rat silently rushed past another drum. They were supposed to be cleaning this place up for the Rimsa company, in a contract with the Mexican gov-

ernment. Later I met their foreman, who identified himself only as Jaime and who said, "The first thing our government did was try to work with the owners. But it was going to cost so much that the owners left for the U.S."

"How will Rimsa clean it up?"

"We're bringing big dump trucks. They'll take it to the U.S."

"How do you feel about this place?"

"For me it's a criminal act. Mexico opened its door to American people, and the only interest is to make money."

How many times have I heard this indictment? The year before we bombed Kosovo, an old Serbian woman shouted at me, "You Americans have no souls! You're only about money. But in heaven we'll all be equal." And now the same accusation rose up against us from smog and grimy white sprawl on grubby gray-green Mexican hills.

The sickness of capitalism, the American sickness, is what Marx labels "the cash nexus." My own theory, which is not particularly Marxist, is that each place has its

own sickness. Mexicans and Serbs are no healthier than we. If the cold American mercantile sickness seeds the Mexican borderland with such maquiladoras as Metales y Derivados, what's the Mexican sickness that allows them to flourish? I'd say it's this: In Mexico, people cut corners and do what's easiest even when it's not what's best. That man in Pedregal ignored the admonition of his own black cough.

SEÑOR A.

Getting inside the maquiladoras was not as easy as I had thought. Looking back on it, we tried and tried, all the way from Insurgentes up to the concrete-cube-clad hills of Matamoros. I think what Jose Lopez said to me in Pancho's bar in Mexicali was true: They really were afraid. Those two young women at Optica Sola, all the people in Tijuana who spoke to us through closed doors—which reminded Terrie of her Mormon mission in Spain. In Mexico I have been lied to about subterranean Chinese tunnels, and I have been occasionally cheated and misdirected over the years, but never have I felt so walled off by silence as I did when researching the maquiladoras. Without the button camera, it would have been almost hopeless. Thank God I had Terrie to enlist both social grace and feminine charm on my side.

It was high time for another private detective. I had looked him up in the Tijuana yellow pages, and Terrie had called him, so I already knew how much he would cost.

This bored, rumped-looking man was another of those individuals whose sensational stories lose much luster once the deposit has been paid, but the only way to ascertain that is to pay the deposit. Among other things, he assured me of the following: There's a lot of trafficking going on by boat near Ensenada, trafficking in Chinese. One Chinese is worth about \$10,000. It's rumored that some of the Chinese are transported in metal containers. It's very dangerous. People who live on the coast of Ensenada will say they see line after line of Chinese on the beach. Needless to say, government officials never find anything. So far, Señor A. was probably telling the literal truth, but the next thing he said was, "I know there is a maquiladora here with connections to the sale of Chinese. Someone has already paid the \$10,000. They work it off. Four or five years ago, it took seven or eight years to work it off, maybe through prostitution. But most of them go to the U.S. What I think is that there are maquiladoras with a connection; they bring a Chinese over long enough to train Mexican workers, then he moves."

When I heard this I thought to myself, Señor A. is my man! And I could already see myself lurking outside some maquiladora's gates at midnight while my button camera flawlessly recorded the unloading of another truckload of Chinese slaves. Well, well. Where would we be without our illusions?



"Oh, he talks, but only about getting on *'American Idol.'*"

"I have fat, skinny, tall, short employees," he boasted, and I was in awe. I thought, Wait until Chuck hears how wisely I've chosen!

#### PERLA'S FIRST RECONNAISSANCE

Actually, Señor A. proved to be worth his weight in pesos, thanks to the pearl he extracted from his treasure-house of fat, skinny, tall and short operatives—and she literally was a pearl, except when she signed a different name on my receipt.

Bubbly, chunky, her hair dyed orange-red, Perla was a woman of a certain age. She cheerfully sacrificed one of her buttons for the sake of that camera. Then we practiced in Señor A.'s office. I was making pretty good button-camera videos by then, so I felt hopeful again; oh, yes, I was certainly confident. And Perla was, as Mr. W. had advised that my operative be, well-endowed. All the same, after various experiments we finally chose to place the digital video receiver and power pack against the small of her back. Terrie would lift up Perla's shirt and power her on and off, while I would do my part by averting my eyes and Señor A. would gaze boredly into space from behind his desk, which displayed the following items: a huge owl, a Statue of Liberty, a golf ball, a plastic globe and a long lens. I remember there was another office next to his sanctum; the door was always slightly ajar, and on my various visits to Señor A. I would sometimes hear the faint creaking of a swivel chair. Who was this individual? Nobody ever mentioned him in Señor A.'s office, so I confined myself to making postmortem speculations about him with Terrie. How much did he know or see of Perla's wiring up? Perhaps I should have hired Señor A. to find out.

For what it is worth, Perla was the first Mexican I ever met who said outright, "The maquiladoras are bad."

When she was ready I told her I would make her a PLAYBOY Centerfold. She giggled, and Señor A. assured me, "I've had clients even more disgusting than you."

At any rate, Perla, who was very outspoken and whom I came to admire and trust, told me that 10 or 12 years ago the employees of Matsushita were "all 18- to 25-year-olds in miniskirts." She knew one girl who had worked there and used to visit her, so she'd seen for herself. She knew someone who was fired on her 25th birthday, maybe or maybe not for that reason. Matsushita, which made electronic components for its Japanese parent company, accordingly seemed like an excellent investigation target.

So Terrie wired Perla up one last time, and we set out for Matsushita determined to ascertain the existence or nonexistence of a workforce in white tennis shoes and miniskirts, 18 to 25, not fat.

Following Perla's directions (over our two working days she seemed to know the whereabouts of every maquiladora on

earth), we wound up the hill, then back down past Robinson and Robinson, into the valley of dirt and factory cubes. The first time Perla went into Matsushita (while Terrie and I waited outside another white stucco wall with fenced inserts—she was rereading *A Moveable Feast*, and I was worrying about what to do if Perla got into trouble), the dear old button camera didn't record a thing. We went to a fast-food restaurant, and I bought giant sodas for the members of my spy team while they retired to the ladies' room to rewire Perla and make more practice videos. In the end they decided to have her carry the digital video receiver in her little purse, prestidigitating the wire into the wire of her cell phone, and this device raised our industrial espionage to an entirely new level. Back to Matsushita she went, returning almost immediately, cheerily swinging her arm, her hair blowing in the breeze, so the next morning early, when maquiladoras hired, we wired her up again and sped off to Matsushita, parking not quite in front, since we were discreet individuals, and then for one hour, 11 minutes and 46 seconds Terrie reread more of *A Moveable Feast* while I entertained myself with the spymaster's stress of wondering whether Perla's batteries would run out. For variety's sake I sometimes gazed at an installation of barred windows within a courtyard of cheerful green shrubs whose fortifications consisted of barred gate segments in tracks that slid apart or together by electronic command; the climax came near the end of the hour, when a corrugated-cardboard truck entered. This barred gate kept me from learning dreary secrets. Were they secrets only of sickness and death? Or were they secrets that might have made me illicitly rich—trade secrets, I mean? Answering that was what button cameras were for.

Now here came Perla with a big smile on her face; Matsushita had hired her. She'd make 870 pesos a week!

In the covert video, we watched the wide street sway with a womanly stride and white storage tanks get closer and closer, then veer away; it is wonderful how briskly Perla walks! Her videos are blurrier than mine because a strand of white thread from her clothing got stuck on the lens beneath the false button and nobody noticed. The long, white wall of the maquiladora on her left, cars on her right, all swaying back and forth, more gracefully, in my male opinion, than my own videos do, and presently white wall gives way to black-barred metal fence not unlike the border wall but lower and cleaner; after five minutes and seven seconds the security booth swims into view. Perla obligingly gives a view through the fence from a number of angles. Then the bored belly and upraised hand of the security guard fill part of that magical rectangular world.

Halfway through minute six we see a silhouette run its hands across its head by the fence bars, and then the security guard



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picks up the phone. Perla paces, providing us with one view after the next of the security guard. He gestures to us with kindly paternalism, flipping his head from side to side and moving his lips. He does not seem to be a bad man. What if the only reason my experiences with maquiladora guards had been so unpleasant was the simple fact of my own existence?

And now, shortly before minute 10, Perla penetrates Matsushita—Kyushu Matsushita maquiladora, I mean, whose representative, Antonio Trevino, had previously informed Terrie in no encouraging tone that no visit could occur until we'd called Fred in San Diego—and a courtyard swims toward us, slightly off level, with a lovely blackish-green fan shape of a tree to the right. Then that flicks away as we trudge down an arid concrete space with a wall on our left. One of this wall's numbered doors is open, and we abruptly flick inside, with long white incandescent tubes almost horizontal above us and human beings passing with great business. The right-hand wall contains glossy dark rectangular windows that reflect the incandescent lights; on the left are whitish open rooms. Perla turns left. We see a row of what might be pool tables; slowing her step, Perla nears them; they are ordinary long tables with metal chairs along them.

Brave Perla ventures into another empty room, and from the quick, choppy quality I can tell she is not supposed to be here. Then she returns to the hall of windows, one of which she approaches until her silhouetted reflection is pierced

by the horizontal spears of many reflected light tubes. What lies within this window's world?

At minute 12, second 55, we see the holy of holies: the production floor. Perla's silhouette looms over everything like the Virgin of Guadalupe. Far below her shoulders, human silhouettes move in and out of receding rows of mechanical bays, everything dwindling infinitely like the perspective in two opposed mirrors. A woman nears and gazes at us, but we cannot see much about her except that she is a woman. Then suddenly a pointing, brawny fist intersects the frame: Perla is being sent about her business! Dutifully, the camera goes down the hall, into another room where no cameras are supposed to be, past a double row of clean metal lockers, then out to the main corridor again. Here's another window; once more the production line fills the world. More figures flash by us. Perla's silhouette raises its phony résumé folder in simulated bewilderment. The button camera swerves back into the room of many tables. We are now making significant inroads into minute 15. Perla's spectacles magnify themselves into hugeness as they arc past us. Then another young woman, pretty and slender, passes us and offers us her back, two tables down. It is time to fill out job applications.

Fifteen seconds before the commencement of minute 22, the other woman turns around, rises and brings her application to Perla's table, evidently requesting help; her face is silhouetted, but she is even more evidently well-

proportioned than Perla. More people pass in and out. A plump woman whose badge flaps on her chest comes to fill up our world, extending a hand and a paper. This is the first inside employee we have seen clearly, and she does not in the least fit our indictment's profile.

At 26:37 Perla offers us a view of her application, which I suppose might be capable of some kind of digital enhancement so we could actually see what it says. Ten minutes later it has been completed (the slender woman is still struggling), and the button camera rears up to lead us back down the hall of glossy black windows. At 36:47 two pretty, slender young women in blue smocks, presumably employees, pass by; to me, they do seem to fit the profile. Perla enters another room where more young women and one man are sitting at tables, filling out papers. At 52:16 three young women in blue smocks rush by us in the hall of windows. A freeze-frame reveals one to be decidedly fat; the middle girl, blurred although she is, would not seem to be conventionally pretty. More peeks through the tinted windows show more blurred figures. Then at 53:27 two closed double doors sport red-and-yellow warning signs, but Perla wisely leaves those alone (an alarm might have sounded) and provides us with an interior view of an immaculate, even rather plush, ladies' room. I feel pleased with Matsushita. The camera ascends stairs, passes down an empty corridor to more of the double doors with red-and-yellow warning signs, gives us a long view of a notice board, swivels furtively to reveal workers in an open doorway (we can't make out their shapes distinctly), swivels past a well-stacked girl in worker blue and then brings us back into one more window-framed view of the production line, which looks as clean and modern as any science-fiction spaceship.

At 57:47 we see two of these workers more clearly than before. It remains difficult to say whether they are men or women, but from the way they stand lounging and chatting they are probably men (whom we will see more identifiably a little later). In the background a pale-clad female figure is definitely not wearing a miniskirt. Then the camera swivels back down the hall, where another applicant approaches us with a folder in her hand. She is beautiful, but the problem is that all Mexican women are beautiful.

At 1:03:05 Perla scores her great coup, breezing her way directly into the production area. A big-breasted, dark-faced female figure approaches us beneath the row of white light tubes. On our right the mysterious production bays now resemble nothing so much as banks of Las Vegas slot machines. At 1:03:15 we glimpse a line of blue-clad female workers, who are, in the words of two women I later asked, not obese but normal. None of them wears a miniskirt. A plump-bottomed woman walks away from us. Then the camera



*"I know you are all wondering if the halftime activities this year will include exposed breasts, and believe me if I thought there was any possibility of that, we'd cut this session short and go watch!"*

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pans to another line of women; they again seem not obese but normal. The closest of the women at 1:03:35 might be stocky; some are wearing miniskirts.

Perla shut down her wire and reported: "It's totally changed, even the way they treat the people, the age, the pregnancy test. There are people in there who are pretty big. They even have music playing in the halls. But also there are several different Matsushitas."

As for me, I was happy. As far as we could tell in a one-hour video, Matsushita seemed fine. And the button camera had finally proved itself.

## THE PRICE OF A MASK

We waited for the flat-voiced girl with glasses to come. She worked at Fluidmaster now, from 6:30 in the morning to 3:20 in the afternoon; she had only two 15-minute breaks. The flat-voiced girl with glasses was named Lourdes. Before I met her I'd already met her chest X-rays and her case file. There was something ugly about her personality, I thought. Terrie didn't think so; Terrie thought her brave, and she was, but her bravery came from some bitter, brutalized place. I felt disliked and suspected by her. I sometimes have the same feeling when I interview a rape victim.

We were sitting in the car in La Jolla Industrial Park. Terrie and Perla were wiring Lourdes for another button camera, which was going to fail, and when Lourdes came out of Fluidmaster the security guard seemed to be searching her body, at which point I was almost ready to vomit from anxiety. My rule in these adventures is to take full responsibility for the people working for me, and I was wondering how I was going to get Lourdes out of this, and what would happen to me, when she waved cheerfully to the security guard and strolled back to the car. That is what I mean when I say she was brave.

I asked what had happened to her at Formosa, her previous maquiladora, and she said wearily, "I got pneumonia and also tuberculosis. I assembled radio speakers."

"Why did you get sick?"

"It may have been the glue," she said, which had toxic chemicals in it.

"How do you know it was from the glue?"

"Because it was what everyone was breathing in all the time."

"And what did the glue smell like?"

"I'm not sure how to say it, but it was strong and ugly. It burned the throat."

"How many years did you work at Formosa?"

"Two years, eight months."

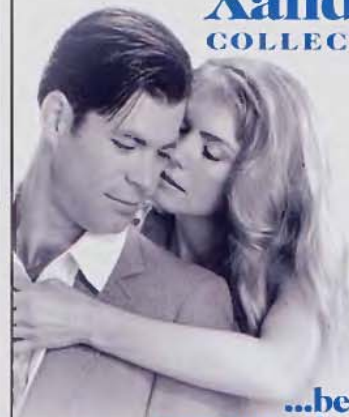
"When you brought in the X-rays, what did they say?"

"They didn't care. They sent me some insurance."

"And how are you feeling now?"

"Okay. I had a treatment. Pills and a spray."

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"Are the maquiladoras good or bad for Mexico?"

"Well," said Lourdes, "more or less, the thing is—we have to work."

"So they're good?"

"More or less," she said, in what I believe to have been quiet fury.

"Can you tell me what happened after the doctor x-rayed you?"

"I went back to work after getting better and got sick all over again."

In the coarse yellow-brown envelopes of the Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social lay those two X-rays, dated October 2002, that Perla claimed showed pneumonia and that I photographed. I have not yet had a doctor look at my negative, and even if pneumonia can be proven I see no further proof that the glue at Formosa either caused or exacerbated Lourdes's pneumonia. But here is one thing that somebody at Formosa ought to get barbecued in hell for, if what Perla and Lourdes both told me happened next did happen: When Lourdes recovered and returned she asked Formosa to give her a mask, and Formosa refused.

"And how is it now, working at Fluid-master?"

"It's really good. I do a lot of work with my hands. I sit at a table. It's comfortable. I sit and pack. What we make is the floating thing inside the toilet."

"NOW IT'S DONE ALMOST ALWAYS"

What about the bloody tampon? Was that nothing but a myth? None of the people I interviewed in 2004 had ever heard of it in their workplace. The dapper reporter believed that "the maquiladoras were harder in the 1990s. That's what they told me." Señor A. was

sure they were no better now.

Once again I found Señor A. very plausible. "The maquiladoras started the fashion of testing the blood and urine samples of women," he said. "Now it's done in Tijuana's industries almost always. But this is when you join, not every month."

German was a very dark, somber, weary man who was sitting in Señor A.'s waiting room when we arrived. "Two years ago I worked in a battery factory," he said. "I was supposed to get off at four every day, and I usually didn't get off until seven."

"Was this factory affiliated with Metales y Derivados?"

"I'm not positive, but I know the company had a lot to do with liquids. The batteries were for wheelchairs."

"Where was this?"

"In an industrial area called Pacifico."

Slamming together the fingers of his big hands, he said, "I would work extra hours and not get paid. Also they don't wash all of the equipment. And they don't wash the clothes. They were very strict about making us wear goggles because we worked with sulfuric acid, but they weren't clean. I'm kind of embarrassed to say it, but I got married and I had to be sure that before I had sex with my wife I washed so that I didn't get the acid on her."

"Did you get sick?"

"They gave us pills for dizziness, and we often got dizzy."

"Was your wife for or against the decision to quit?"

He stretched his shirt and sniffed at himself. "I think she did want me to quit because it was affecting me, and the smell of acid was so strong I had to keep my

clothes in a separate room. I used to break out on my arms and neck. And it affected my sleeping patterns. I slept only three or four hours."

I gazed into his dark, reddish-brown, broad and hopeless face, which was heavy with shadows and a mustache, and he said, "I've seen a lot of things, especially women shaped like this—he made the motion men make to indicate flaring breasts and hips—who keep getting more raises, and the bosses keep saying to them, 'We'll go out together.' I've been working in factories for 19 years. I don't really want to work in factories again. Maybe in a vegetable market."

"Are the maquiladoras good or bad for Mexico?"

"I live right now thanks to the factories. People say they provide jobs, but they generate a lot of contamination, a lot of trash. Now the factories just throw the trash down the street, even tires. I've had good luck with my jobs, but I've also had friends who after their six-month contract can't keep their work."

#### WHAT IS THE SECRET?

What is the secret? There may be no secret—no horrid one, anyway. I credit myself with being an empathetic and experienced interviewer; therefore, much of what I believe to be true may actually be true. While the stories of German, Lourdes and the young woman who used to work at Matsushita can by no means be twisted into glowing encomiums to the maquiladoras, the tale of the bloody tampons and Señor A.'s thriller-chiller about Chinese slaves can't be substantiated, either.

The plain truth is that most of the workers I met, not least the man with the black cough, expressed satisfaction with the factories in which they were employed. No, they were not particularly enthusiastic—who is?—and yes, they did often seem to be strangely unwilling to talk, which I interpreted, based on my prior experience in this region, as being predicated on distrust or fear, depending on the individual.

The maquiladoras are ripe for their own Cesar Chavez, whom many Mexicans have never heard of. Of course, if the concessions the new Chavistas could squeeze out of them were to become too costly, the maquiladoras would doubtless pull up stakes to move their operations to China, leaving behind poisonous holes in the ground.

That is one reason no revolution is imminent. The other is this: I mostly reject the Marxist notion of false consciousness. I believe that workers can think for themselves, and if they don't claim to be exploited, they probably aren't. At Mexhox on Insurgentes: SOLICITA PERSONAL, work to start immediately; chances are some new arrival from the south will be thrilled. SE SOLICITA PERSONAL at AMAG; SE SOLICITA PERSONAL



"Can you make a sound like a reindeer?"

FEMININA in Los Pinos Industrial Park—and the tall, white towers of a landscape more than boring and less than ghastly bewildered me. At three in the afternoon a stream of women poured out of Los Pinos; they assembled medical instruments, they said. They were smiling and giggling; they liked the work, they said.

A man was waiting for his wife to get off work at Philips plant number two. He stood on a shady part of the concrete sidewalk. When she came, young and pretty in her business clothes, they embraced, then walked hand in hand across Insurgentes and up the steep hillside toward their *colonia*.

I do think the maquiladoras sometimes show a shocking disregard for people's health. The subtle effects of chemical exposure over time and the generally low level of education among maquiladora laborers conspire as accomplices in the endangerment of human beings for the sake of a few extra pesos.

The maquiladoras are a necessary evil and perhaps not even as evil as I believe. But if their windows were less dark, if their gates were guarded less unilaterally, if button cameras became unnecessary as a means of verification, they would definitely be better places.

#### THEY STEAL YOUR WAGES

The maquiladora where Magdalena Ayala Marquez had worked, Flor de Baja, made avocados into guacamole, which was shipped worldwide. Magdalena was a "big knife." She had to cut 27 avocados a minute for nine hours a day, Monday through Friday, from 6:30 in the morning until four P.M. (Compensation: 95 pesos a day. Breaks: one per day, at 10:30, for half an hour. One could go to the bathroom and drink water anytime.) She said that during the three months her employment lasted, her wrists became injured. She also said some people got arthritis and frostbite from working with ice in the cold room.

Said Magdalena, "They were putting invented people on the time sheets, so the real ones had to work harder. There

were a hundred people working at Flor de Baja and 200 time sheets."

"Did any of the Americans know about this?"

She shrugged. "I don't know. I don't think so."

"So who is responsible for the bad conditions, the Americans or the Mexican middle management?"

"The local people are to blame, the people in the office. I've heard of thousands of dollars going into people's offices. They steal your wages, all your bonuses. But if you say something, you're going to get fired and blackballed."

"Well, it sounds like a very effective way to get rich."

"The people who do that get so much

blackball you." (Señor A. independently told me that "in Tijuana, when an employee sues her maquiladora for her rights, her name is put on a list and circulated so she can't find work.")

"Have you been blackballed?"

"No, because the last time I was working for some other plant I made an agreement. I got a certain amount of money. It was less than I was entitled to, but I had the condition that I wouldn't be blackballed."

She was now working at another maquiladora, from 10 at night until six in the morning. "The schedule is the only thing I don't like," she said. "I make air-conditioning ducts at AMP Industrial Mexicana, which is owned by Americans. The wages are about the same."

Suddenly she said, "You can't demand your rights. They demand a lot of work from you. They'll just step on you and fire you. You can't form a union or they'll fire you quick. I know organizers who are blackballed to the point where they have to do construction work just to survive, although they have degrees. One man applied for a job just at the assembly line so they wouldn't investigate him, but the second day he came they found out he'd been a union organizer and they fired him."

"You know for a fact that they fired him for being a union organizer, or you just heard that was the reason?"

"I just heard...."

Why not end here, with one more instance of disputed fact? We'll each believe what we wish. This almost perfectly incomplete portrait of the maquiladoras ends, as every honest investigation should, in midair. It is ever so difficult to begin to comprehend maquiladoras as they are, with their chemicals, fences and secrets. As for the future, well, from Tijuana I remember a tiny square of mostly unbuilt freeway, high in the air, a souvenir of a broken bridge, and at the very end of it, lording it over empty space, a huge handmade cross with scraps of white plastic bag fluttering in the brown wind.

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money out of the maquiladora they have the money to open their own business. I think also the American businessmen have to be blamed since they shouldn't leave this kind of business in others' hands knowing what goes on here. They should at least have someone keep an eye on it."

"In your opinion, was Flor de Baja among the best, the worst or in the middle?"

"It was a good maquiladora. It received several certificates. It was one of the best for productivity, but for the way the workers were treated it was one of the worst."

"Right now, which one is the worst?"

"They're all the same. They demand a lot of work, and if they fire you they don't give you what you're entitled to. When you demand your rights they



## VIDAL

(continued from page 126)

gentry [sic], *Inventing a Nation* is consistently hostile to Hamilton, the great modernizer of the period, while apologetic about Jefferson.... In his first draft of a resolution eventually adopted by the Kentucky state legislature in 1799 Jefferson argued that states had the power to nullify—refuse to execute—federal policies they viewed as unconstitutional." He indicates that I am in agreement on this principle. Certainly, in the instance of the Alien and Sedition Acts favored by the Federalist president Adams and his Federalist Congress, it would have been a very good thing if Jefferson could have devised an escape hatch from what one contemporary rattlebrain has called, by no means inaccurately, the Frozen Republic. In any event, presently Jefferson's failed attempt of 1799 will soon be confronted by a war of the people at

large against our imperial masters, when they decree, despite riots in the street, the restoration of the military draft. Have a good day, Alex.

Incidentally, I have no roots in the Virginia gentry. This is one of a number of grotesque inventions concocted by neocons to prove that I am some sort of Confederate sympathizer. Actually, the Gores entered political history during the Reconstruction, when we helped organize the Party of the People throughout the South. And so I largely remain to this day a Jeffersonian populist, currently governed by a commercial cabal devoted to spending trillions of dollars (of declining value) to increase a debt Hamilton himself would disown, in order to fuel a garrison state at war not only with much of the world but, more somberly, with We the People of the United States, now being erased financially by Hamiltonian "progressives."



## POKER

(continued from page 152)

Williams tells us about his WSOP experiences. He says he entered the WSOP because he's a perfectionist with a strong desire to be the best at anything he does. At the age of six he had to beat his mother at video games. In grammar school he had to have perfect grades. When he once got a 95, he confronted his teacher about his five missing points. "I always wanted to beat the game," he says, "find the secret no one else knew."

Because he was a WSOP unknown, Williams felt little pressure. At first he played cautiously, but on his second day he was up only \$2,000. Disgusted with himself, he started playing faster and looser. In one game he pushed in all his chips when he had two jacks, not knowing that his opponent had two aces. He got his third jack on the flop and won, he says, "because you have to be lucky to win. And lucky to dodge the other guy's luck. You have to be focused and emotionless. You can't let a bad beat affect your mind. That's always been my nature. Brittany says I never cry or get angry. I don't, because I accept reality. Getting mad doesn't change it, so why expend the energy? Maybe that's bad for personal relationships, but it's good for poker. That's how I reconcile my perfectionism with fate. I call it the law of probability. Nothing's guaranteed. To be a great player you have to accept that."

Williams moved steadily through the field for a week until he finally found himself, on the day before the finals, in 10th position. That night's game would stop only when nine players were left for the final table the next day. Williams desperately wanted to be at that final table. If he made it, he would be the youngest player ever and the first black player (his mother is African American, his father from Iran) at a final table; most poker players are white, Asian or Middle Eastern men. But Williams had the lowest stack of chips of any of the 10 players at his table, which put him at a distinct disadvantage. So he played cautiously, dropping out of hand after hand to protect his short stack.

"I'm sitting there like a pussy," he says. "Scared, hoping I can make the final table. But even if I made it, with no chips I'd be the first one out. I wasn't playing tough. Finally I said to myself, 'Be a man. If it's meant to be, it's meant to be.'" So when he drew an ace and a queen (his opponent had two 10s), Williams put all his chips into the pot. When the subsequent three cards, called the flop, didn't improve his hand, he began to pack his things. His new friend Marcel Luske, now 51 and one of the best poker players in Europe, put his arm around Williams and said, "Relax. The next card will be an ace."

"I don't believe in voodoo," says



"I'm staying right here. An old guy visiting millions of kids late at night?...How many lawsuits would that lead to?"

Williams, "but the next card was an ace, and I moved to the final table with enough chips to protect myself. It was amazing how Marcel in his heart wanted me to win. He loves to teach, and I love to learn. It was a real moment for me."

Williams describes the WSOP finals as the best poker played by the most boring players. "There was no chatter," he says. "It was too tense for that. That's the appeal of poker. It's like reality TV. You can drop in on it at any moment and find drama—highs and lows that are captured in a moment."

At the final table one player after another went bust until only Williams and a Connecticut lawyer named Greg "Fossilman" Raymer remained. They played a few hands, one or the other dropping out quickly to conserve his chips. Then Williams decided again to play it fast and loose. He pushed in \$300,000 in chips while holding only an ace and a four. His opponent had a pair of eights. "I didn't think he had a pair," says Williams, "because he didn't look at it too long. A pair of eights, you got to stop and think."

The flop was two-four-five, so now Williams had two fours to Raymer's pair of eights. Raymer immediately raised \$1.6 million. Williams called instantly. "I'm a quick thinker," he says. "I went with my gut. People say I should have slowed down."

The turn came up a two, which gave Raymer two pairs, his pocket eights and the community-card twos. Williams also had two pairs, fours and twos. Before the river Raymer bet \$2.5 million, and Williams called him. The river came up another two, which gave both men a full house, but Raymer's was higher because of his eights. Raymer pushed in all his chips, and Williams, certain Raymer didn't have a pair of down cards, pushed in all of his. When they turned over their cards, Raymer was the new champion. Williams, who was \$3.5 million richer, had still finished second, which tormented him. "Nothing hurts like busting out of your first big one," he says. "I think about that final hand every day. So close to being the champion. Winning was so much more important to me than

the money. If first paid \$3.5 million and second \$5 million, I still would have liked to win. I don't know if I'll ever get it out of my head."

Williams was so disheartened by his second-place finish that he ordered take-out food and ate it in his room. But the next day his new fame hit him. A lot of young actors, including Tobey Maguire and Ben Affleck, are poker aficionados. Williams met Maguire, who began to call him Number Two. (Williams solidified this nickname four months after the WSOP when he finished second in a World Poker Tour event in Atlantic City, winning \$600,000.)

"I said, 'Who are you?'" Williams says. "He said, 'Tobey Maguire.' I said, 'What

\$250,000 in a poker game he actually won. Between hands he made proposition bets of thousands on the color of the next card. "Guys pointed out players who won millions in poker and are now broke because they had a leak," Williams continues. "Most leaks are gambling. Poker players are challenge seekers. It's not enough to beat someone in poker. They have to beat the unbeatable next. Craps. Roulette. Anything."

One poker player bet \$500,000 that he could drink 23 beers in 23 hours. Another bet \$10,000 that Howard Lederer, a confirmed vegetarian, couldn't eat a hamburger. He did, and the bettor was annoyed that Lederer didn't throw up. Another player bet an oppo-

nent \$30,000 that he couldn't live in Des Moines for 30 days. Another bet his opponent \$10,000 that he couldn't float in the ocean for 20 hours.

Once he returned to Dallas, Williams made only one purchase, a \$25,000 Rolex wristwatch. He gave his mother \$50,000 and paid off her bills. He also promised he'd pay off her \$125,000 mortgage. Shirley Williams, 49, has been a Delta flight attendant for 26 years. "My mother's a great woman," says Williams, "but she never saved for retirement. Now I can do it for her if I don't blow it. If she doesn't want to work, I'll support her. If she ever needs anything, she can have it. But Mom's not good with money. She

lives paycheck to paycheck. I didn't think it was good to give her \$500,000 and turn her loose. I got her a \$1,000 line of credit for online poker, and it's already gone."

When Williams was back home in Dallas, he went to see a financial advisor. He sat in a conference room around an oval mahogany table and discussed his finances, how to minimize taxes and how to invest his millions with a man named Kent, who was dressed in a suit and tie. Williams wore his usual slacker's outfit—oversize T-shirt, ripped baggy jeans, sneakers. He told Kent, "I want to do the right thing with my money, something productive like owning a company so I won't ever have to work nine to five for

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do you do?' He said, 'I'm an actor.' I said, 'Really. What movies have you been in?' He said, 'Spider-Man.' I said, 'Oh.'"

Weeks later Maguire beat him in a cash game. "I could see sadness in his eyes that he beat me," says Williams.

Veteran players began to offer Williams a seat in their million-dollar cash games, but he'd decline. He had already gone to dinner with enough veteran players who told him about players' "leaks"—a poker player's vice that leaks money. It could be drugs, booze, women or other forms of gambling. Phil Ivey, the young black player who favors NBA jerseys, is "the greatest player in the game," says Williams. But he has a leak. He likes to gamble. He once lost

anyone. I'd like to invest so that by the age of 30 I have \$10 million, but I know my goals conflict with my conservative nature. There's a trade-off between risk and reward. I don't like to gamble." Then he produced all the meticulously kept records—his expenses, poker losses, etc.—he has maintained over the years, ever since he decided to live off his poker earnings.

"Living off poker is not dependable," Williams points out. "It's the only job where you can come home with less money than you started with. You can't make \$10,000 one night, spend it on a \$6,000 TV and the next month be struggling for cash."

At the end of his financial meeting, Williams learned he could pay off his mother's mortgage without paying an extra gift tax. He also learned that if he declared himself a professional gambler to the IRS he could deduct his losses and expenses. "So it's settled," Kent said. "You're a professional gambler." He laughed and added, "Now all your family will be coming out of the woodwork."

"I have only my mother," Williams said. "I never knew my father."

We pull off the highway north of Dallas at 11 P.M. and drive east past a flat, barren stretch of land until we come to a strip mall and a Steak n Shake. We order hamburgers and shakes from a thin, pale waiter.

While we're eating our burgers, Williams says, "After the WSOP I was invited to play in a tournament in L.A.

I was the first player out. Just as I got up, one of the guys from the WSOP came by and asked if I was just starting. I told him no, I'd already been eliminated before most of the players had even registered." Williams shakes his head. "After the WSOP, guys told me you lose your confidence. You're afraid to play again because you don't want to be embarrassed. They told me to expect a dry spell."

His cell phone rings, and he answers it. He listens for a moment, then says into the phone, "If you're gonna pay that kind of money to have your car detailed, make sure you look the car over before you pay the guy and he leaves." He listens again, then adds, "I love you, Mom" and hangs up.

"Her car is always filthy," he says to me. "Like anything I do, I'm cautious. I take my time, look into it." He smiles, something he rarely does, and says, "My mother and I have more of a brother-sister relationship."

After we finish dinner, Williams makes an attempt to pay the bill. I tell him the magazine will pay for it. Even before he won \$3.5 million at the WSOP, Williams often paid the bill for his friends, much to DeWald's dismay. "Why do you always have to pay?" she'd ask. "It's in my nature," he'd respond. But after the WSOP, Williams found that his friends, including Reeves, were insulted when he tried to pay their dinner bill.

"I'm a man," Reeves told him. "I can pay my own check. Just because you won some money, you're not paying for

my meals for the rest of my life. I'm your friend."

Williams shrugs. "I picked my friends right. On their character. We make sure we help each other out."

Williams surrounds himself with men who are older than he is, yet he seems older than his years. He has a gravitas and a sadness about him. Williams likes the company of men and only tolerates the company of women. That's part of his attraction to poker.

"It's a guy thing," says Huynh. "I love my wife and two kids, but I've left them to play poker with the guys for 72 hours straight." When Huynh plays poker, he's no longer just a fat guy. He's a player. He has personality and a kind of power. When Williams plays poker, he's no longer "the lamest" or "lazy." He's sharp, focused, a man to be respected and reckoned with. Poker defines these men. It brings out their repressed personalities, which they keep hidden during those few hours a day when they are not playing poker.

We drive east at midnight past desolate countryside. We go down a side street and come to an industrial strip mall that should be deserted, but more than 20 cars are in the parking lot.

Williams goes up to one of the mall doors and knocks. Someone opens the door, Williams tells him who he is, the door opens, and we step inside. The front room looks like a shabby office space for an auto body shop or a tile company, except on the wall is a little sign that reads, WE ARE A POKER DEALER'S SCHOOL. SOMETIMES WE PLAY POKER AFTER CLASS. On another wall is a copy of a check made out to the Dallas Police Department.

The owner of the club greets Williams and Huynh and tells them a game awaits in the back room. Williams and Huynh go down a corridor while I ask the club owner about the check on the wall. He smiles and says, "Every little bit helps." I ask him if the neighbors get suspicious with so many cars in his lot at midnight. "They haven't so far," he says.

Williams and Huynh stand around a poker table crowded with about 10 men, all of whom are in their 20s or 30s. They all look like Williams—slackers with baseball caps on backward, baggy T-shirts, jeans—except they are all white. They look up at him and smile. "Come on, David!" They make room for Williams and Huynh at the table, and someone says, "So tell me, David, how many new friends you got? Broke friends, I mean." Everyone laughs while Williams and Huynh buy chips.

It's obvious that the players genuinely like Williams because, as he puts it, "I'm one of their own in their eyes. They're proud of me. I give them hope. If I can do it, they can do it. And here I am, playing right alongside them."

Williams, no longer lame, comes alive



"I'm taking you off talk radio."

while playing Texas Hold 'Em in a dingy strip mall club with his friends, laughing, joking, cursing a bad hand. I stand behind Williams and watch a few hands before he moves a chair close to him and invites me to sit. Every time he gets his down cards, he curls them back at the edges, cupping his hands around them so that only he can see them. Then he slides them toward me and curls them back so I can see them. Despite his curious remove, Williams is unfailingly polite and helpful to me, as he is to everyone. "He's reliable," says Huynh, "and he always returns his calls." When Williams makes an appointment to meet me and he's five minutes late, he apologizes profusely. When he has his financial meeting, he makes a point of having me sit in, even though he's discussing his most intimate finances. As long as I'm in Dallas to see him, he says, "I'm available to you whenever you want me."

Williams looks at his down cards, two eights, and pushes a big stack of chips into the pot. His opponent has two jacks but is scared off by Williams's assertive play. He folds his better hand. Williams hugs his chips toward him. He stacks them lovingly, fingers them, almost caressing them like small loved ones. It's as if he has a romance with his chips, the way most players do, needing the tactile sensation of them for reassurance. The more chips they have, the more they can feel between their fingers, the more confident they become.

Williams has the beginnings of a straight, five-six-seven-eight. He pushes in \$300 in chips. Only the man beside him, a 25-year-old wearing a red baseball cap, is still in the hand. He has a pair of queens. He stares at Williams, trying to read him and determine if he's bluffing. Williams goes cold, blank, devoid of expression. He lets his opponent stare at him for long moments, until finally his opponent folds his hand—the winning hand had he stayed in the game. Williams pulls in his beloved chips.

We drive back to Dallas at six in the morning. Williams has won \$600 and is

as exhilarated as if he'd just won the WSOP. It's not the money but the six hours with friends that makes him animated. Huynh was a big loser, but he doesn't care. He'll just go online tonight and win it all back. The money is almost irrelevant to Huynh and Williams. It's just a means to keep score. The action is what motivates them. They're using their brains, skill and, most of all, character in a game that proves their manhood—if to no one but themselves.

I ask Williams about the player with two queens whom he bluffed out of a pot. "I could tell by his body language that he didn't like it when I bet his queens," he says. "I could see his fear. He's a weak player."

as responsible as she should be with her money. Williams has no concept of women except as people who need to be protected from themselves. When he saw his mother at the WSOP talking too long to a man, he went over to her and demanded, "Who was that?"

At breakfast I ask Shirley if David is like his father. "I don't know," she says. "I only knew him for a few months. David always resented that he had no father. He thought his father left him. I explained to him that his father didn't know I was pregnant. When he was a child he always said, 'I wish I had a daddy.' One day I said, 'Okay, I'll put you up for adoption,' and he cried, 'No, no, Mommy, I want to be with you.' That was mean of me, I know."

When Williams was a child and his mother would leave to fly with Delta for two or three days at a time, he would stay with his grandparents. When his mother returned, she would be home for four days at a time, which Williams thought was "cool." They'd play Scrabble and video games, bickering over them like two kids. "I always loved games," says Shirley. "I played Atari when David was in my stomach." Shirley got her love of games from her father, a dominoes player. "Nobody could ever beat him," says Williams.

"David was forced to grow up early," says his mother. "When he was 12 he got bored with his grandparents

when I'd be gone, so he stayed at home alone. The first time, I cried." Williams would wake up by himself, get dressed, make his breakfast and then catch the school bus. When he'd come home he'd do his homework. "I never had a party or got into trouble," he says. "I couldn't let my mother down. She put her trust in me. I would only have made it harder on her." When his mother was home, she hosted card games at the house. Williams would fix the drinks and serve the food. It was at about this time that Shirley asked her son if he wanted her to try to find his father: "He said no."

In school Williams was so much smarter than his peers that he finished his work early, got bored and began to

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The following morning I meet Shirley Williams and her daughter, Tina, David's half sister, for breakfast at Denny's. Shirley arrives heavily made-up and wearing a pair of short shorts and high heels that show off her fine brown legs. She is one of those women pushing 50 who still think of themselves as younger; in Shirley's case, she does look much younger than her age. She's still very pretty, with skin much darker than her son's. Although Williams says he has a brother-sister relationship with his mother, it's more complex than that. Williams is protective of his mother, much like an older brother. He's always complaining about her "acting like a kid" and being "too emotional" and not

cause trouble. Shirley says she had him tested and found out how smart he was. "So I enrolled him in a magnet school for gifted children," she says.

The school was in a bad neighborhood, says Shirley, "yet David got along with both types of kids."

"Socially, I hung with the cool kids, a few deadbeats, but I had a dark side," says Williams. "I was a closet nerd. I'd go home and watch the Science Channel, but I could never tell my friends about the properties of chemicals. I adapted, like a chameleon. It was a mixed neighborhood, but my friends didn't think of me as black. I was just David. I didn't fit into any stereotypes. Some kids said, 'You don't act black.' I hated that term, the gold-chain stereotypes. I told them they were ignorant. You can't act a race."

Williams got his first job at the age of 14 to help out his mother. When he was 15 he doctored his birth certificate so he could work at Wendy's. Then he began

playing Magic for cash prizes, entering tournaments around the world and becoming part of the nerdlike subculture Magic attracts. (One year, he was disqualified from a tournament for cheating, which he adamantly denies doing. Williams was accused of having a marked or bent card in his hand. He was automatically disqualified despite his claim that the marked card was a meaningless one, akin to a deuce in a poker hand of three kings.) When, at the age of 17, he turned his attention to poker, Shirley never worried about him in those games because, she says, "He was always respectful. Always, 'Yes, ma'am' and 'I love you, Ma.' And he was always so calm."

Williams finished his last two years of high school at the University of North Texas. When he graduated he was considered a college junior and had a 1,550 SAT score. He chose Princeton because an article in *U.S. News & World Report* claimed it was the number one school in

the country. But Williams hated Princeton—the cold weather, his more privileged classmates and the fact that he had to work in the cafeteria serving them. He was so depressed and lonely that he was admitted to the infirmary before Shirley finally told him to come home. He returned to Dallas and eventually entered Southern Methodist University, where he has a year to go to get his economics degree. Williams has a 4.0 grade point average at SMU, but his overall college GPA is 3.9 because of his marks at Princeton. "That point nine really gets me," he says. "No matter what I do I'll never be able to get it back. I'm obsessive about my grades. I guess I'm stuck in the anal stage."

I ask Shirley about the money her son gave her. "I knew David would help me out financially if he won the WSOP," she says. "But that's my son's money. I want to keep working. He's only 24. Maybe I don't know how much money that is. It's got to last him a lifetime."

After breakfast Shirley and Tina take out their makeup cases. Then mother and daughter stare into their mirrors and apply fresh makeup before they drive to Williams's apartment for the afternoon. Before they leave I ask Tina, who is pretty like her mother, if she and David are close. "Not too close," she says. "He's not home very much. But my girlfriends think he's cute." David has said of Tina, "She was born when I was eight. I struggled for attention because I'd been the only kid. I'm not always there for her now, but I ask about her grades."

It is late afternoon in Williams's apartment. He's curled up on the love seat, sleeping in his clothes. His mother is watching a soap opera on TV. Williams stirs, wakes and sits up. He looks at his mother and says, "Quality entertainment, huh?"

"David, why don't you give me more money for my online account?" she says.

"Because you'll burn it up." He puts his computer on his lap and turns it on, and within minutes he's playing poker.

After Shirley and Tina leave, I ask him where DeWald is. "She's mad at me. She went to her mother's." Then, his eyes still fixed on his computer screen, his fingers playing over the keys, he adds, "Maybe I was meant to live alone." Williams is a curious case. Despite his obvious affection and concern for his mother, and even for DeWald, he talks about them without emotion. His words are affectionate, but nothing in his demeanor corresponds to them. The only time he reveals emotion is when he talks about his beloved Chihuahua, which died recently. "I was holding him and dropped him onto the floor," Williams says hesitantly. "He hit his head and died. I didn't get another dog because it



*"Each year you complain that I don't follow through on my New Year's resolution. Well, this year my resolution was to bang our neighbor. Aren't you proud of me?"*

would be unfair to him. It's like if your wife dies. It's hard to remarry."

Williams met DeWald when she was 17. "She was goofy and hyper," he says, "but I never thought about it. We're opposites. She's emotional, illogical and whiny. I'm her out for everything, like I'm her father."

A few days ago DeWald came home late after a night out and damaged her cell phone. She called Williams, who was in Vegas, and told him her cell phone didn't work and that she wanted a new one. He told her he couldn't do anything about it until the following Monday. "But what if I get a flat tire and someone tries to kill me?" she said. "People got flat tires before cell phones and weren't killed," Williams responded.

When Williams went to the WSOP, he didn't want DeWald to go with him, because he felt he couldn't give her the attention she would need. But she showed up and stood behind him, saying, "Come on, baby, give me a smile." Williams told her to be quiet; this was his moment. "I was on the verge of winning \$3.5 million," he says. She stormed off, crying, and Williams had to go look for her. "I'm trying to get her some counseling," he says. Reeves, for one, doesn't think she needs it. "She's basically a child," he says. "David doesn't respect her. He's always complaining about her. I told him to get rid of her or shut up."

"David's pretty honorable," says Huynh. "He'll never break up with Brittany unless it becomes intolerable. Something's holding him back. He never had a father figure, you know. Maybe he doesn't know women."

Williams's fingers are playing his computer keys as if he were a concert pianist. I ask him if he ever played sports. "I wasn't raised to play sports," he says without looking up. "Maybe I wouldn't have been a nerd and would have been into basketball if I'd had a male influence." Still, Williams has never had any desire to find his father. "I wouldn't acknowledge him if he showed up," he says.

He pauses a moment after winning a pot and adds, "Things are what they are. I don't have any insecurities. I accept things. I don't mean this as a knock on my mother or grandparents, but there's no person I look up to. I am who I am."

Just then DeWald comes through the door. She moves silently through the apartment without acknowledgement from Williams. With a rare, faint smile he says, "I can't wait for the WSOP next year. It's so fun. Like poker summer camp." His fingers play over the keys. "A set of jacks," he mutters to himself. Then, without looking up from his laptop, he says, "Baby, wanna go out to dinner tonight?"

DeWald looks at him. "What about my cell phone?"

## Mom

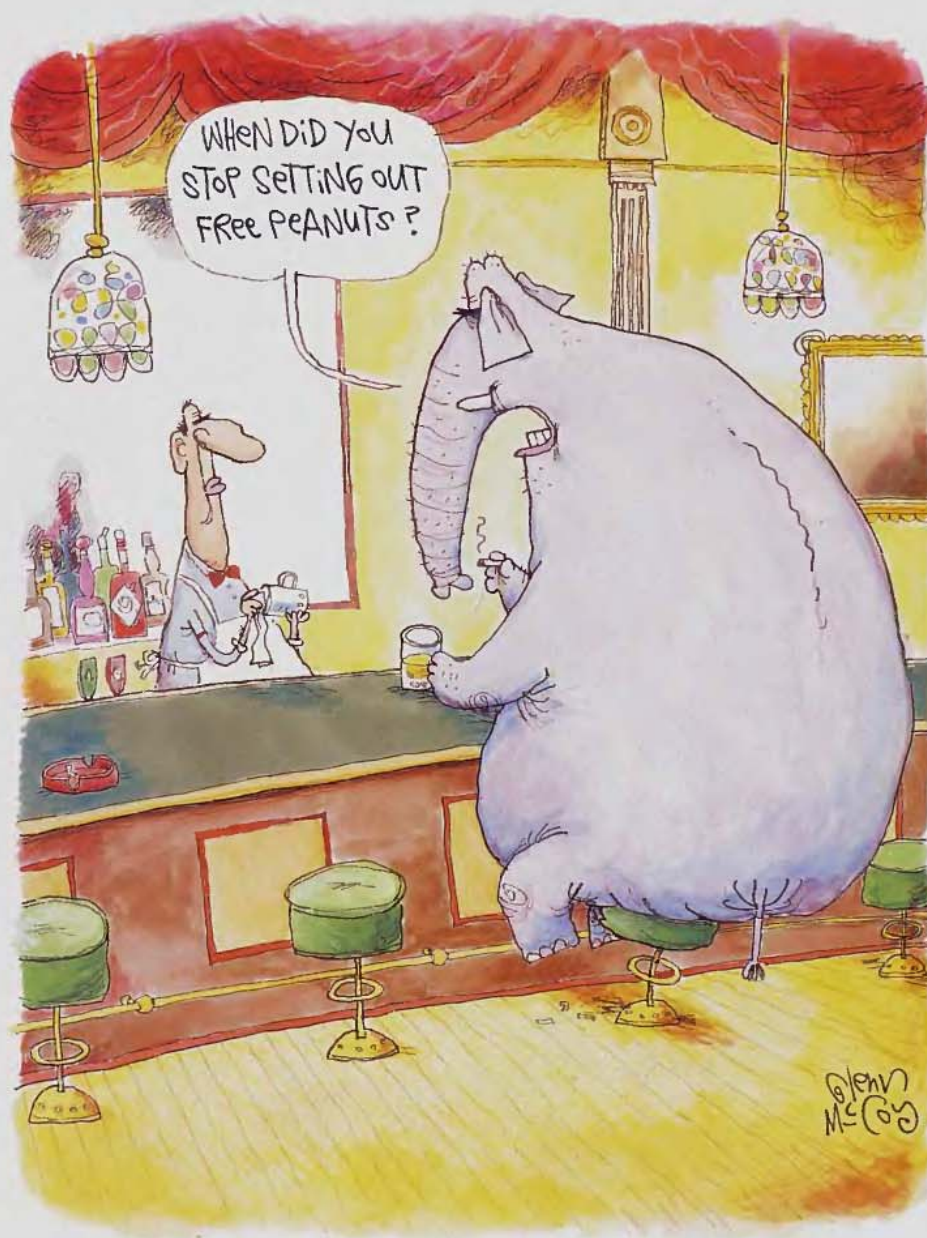
(continued from page 146)

on. I sit up quickly and bang my head on the hard edge of a slanting truss. Shit.

"Coming!" I scream and fold the letter quickly into a little square, which I jam into that tiny coin pocket in the front of my jeans as I roll to one side. I steal one more glance at the wide shot of my mom, the third photograph—she seems to be calling out to me with her eyes, begging me to break with convention, the restrictive bonds of polite society, and spend a bit of quality time with her in the sack—then slip all three photos down inside my underwear. Don't ask me why, I'm not sure, but I hide them there and start crawling backward toward the lighted opening. I suppose I'm worried that I'll brush up against Millie during lunch and she'll feel something in my pocket, and I'm just not strong enough for that right now, I'm really not, this big explanation

thing, so I figure I'll keep them in my undies and sort through this whole mess some other time. Back home in Seattle. Or maybe even on the plane after she falls asleep (Millie is usually out cold before we even take off). Later.

As I'm inching back toward the top rung of the ladder, feeling for it with each foot as I go, a thought flashes through my head—a sudden awareness, as clear and pristine as if it were a vision sent down from on high—that I will (no doubt) never tell anyone about this discovery: the boxes, the photos, the note. None of it. Not Millie, not my brother. No one. I am also completely certain that I will spend a great deal of time alone with these Polaroids in the near future, sharing a hushed closeness with them unlike anything I ever enjoyed with my mother when she was alive and merely a phone call away.



# threesome (continued from page 100)

*Then I do the absolute stupidest thing I could ever do: I have a threesome with John and his ex-girlfriend.*

house for a long holiday weekend. I demand she not show up until Saturday, and to put the European in her place I book her a bus ticket. That's right, Three-some Girl, you're riding the bus!

Without her around, John and I feel like a conventional, functional couple. At least we can masquerade as one. We spend the day at the beach, go swimming, sleep in a hammock and even make love just one-on-one, which almost feels tame now, like going to second base.

The next morning we pick up the European at the bus stop. She seems pissed off about the long ride, which makes me happy. We go to a local grocery store, where—shit!—I duck a business acquaintance in the seafood section, ordering three lobsters.

And it's weird, because we've never actually seen the European in daylight. We have absolutely no idea what to talk to her about. I suggest a game of Scrabble, knowing full well that English is her second language. Then we bring her to a dinner party at a friend's estate. Big mistake. It's a snobby crowd, John's the only man there with two women, and

I'm convinced a few people have figured out what's up.

"So how do you all know each other?" asks a leering guy in a seersucker blazer. I notice his girlfriend kicking him under the table.

When we get home the European doesn't even want to have sex. I'm relieved. In the morning John tells me in a delicate voice, "She feels like she's ruining our relationship and is upsetting you." No shit! I can handle threesomes, cheating, even watching my boyfriend sleep with other women, but I can't take the European. Back on the bus, toots!

But it's not the end of our threesomes. I just decide that our sexual partnerships must be quick and professional. No more e-mails, birthday presents and pseudo-relationships. No more daylight visits. No more weird conflicts. And then I do the absolute stupidest thing I could ever do: I have a threesome with John and his ex-girlfriend, whom he's managed to talk into joining us. Twice.

The first time is a micro-disaster; the ex stalks out of the room when John's on top of me as if she's experiencing a Vietnam flashback. The next time we try, it gets worse. Though I hook up with the ex—and I admit it's extremely hot, kind of like Godzilla vs. Mothra—John sleeps with her and not me. Bad move. The next morning I flip out on John and burst into tears.

As I weep, I know that out there, girls are getting mad at their boyfriends for not listening to them or not getting them Madonna tickets or forgetting their shoe size, and here I am, screaming at my boyfriend, a guy I adore, for not fucking me right after he fucked his ex-girlfriend.

Yet we keep on planning trysts. John and I have become the threesome Sid and Nancy. We're moving beyond threesomes. We sleep with a couple we know—a good old-fashioned *Ice Storm*-style wife swap. It's surprisingly fun and easy. We plan an orgy for John's birthday party. I know, I know: How do you plan an orgy? It's not like a game of Trivial Pursuit. We try to grow one organically—hotel suite, lots of booze, friends who are curious enough to make it happen.

And voilà! It actually works. John hooks up with a college friend of mine, though I step in and stop him from fucking her. But I've invited the woman from the couple we swapped with (hubby's traveling on business), and she's eager, as is an old guy friend I always wanted to sleep with. The wife, my friend, John and I roll into a foursome.

But for the first time I've ever seen, John can't get hard. I decide it's a sign—a tipping point, like the morning Joe Kennedy got a stock tip from his shoeshine guy and decided the stock market was going to crash. This is going to end, I think—and badly.

The next morning John sits in the hotel and opens his presents. It's starkly sad to see him rip up wrapping paper, the room stinking of sex, cigarettes and strangers. John feels like a stranger too. I know we'll never truly be intimate and alone. We can't go back to what we were. Worst of all, I know it's equally my fault.

We last just a couple more weeks. John, predictably, moves on to a sultry "mattress," a model-actress—collagen-pumped-up arm candy who looks perfect with him on the red carpet. We still talk, though, and when he tells me he likes her because she's "traditional," my cheeks burn. She's making him faithful, he says, making me jealous and bitter for months.

Maybe men really don't want the fantasy in the flesh; maybe in the end they prefer a conventional relationship. Maybe fantasies have a way of interfering with, even confusing, reality. But I'd do most of it again—and I wouldn't say threesomes are toxic. Just remember this: Get out while it's still fun.



*"I need something less sexy. He got off before I got on."*



# PLAYMATE NEWS



In the futuristic flick *The Gene Generation*, Colleen plays a DJ with a sci-fi twist. "My character is robotic, with no lower body," she says.

## SPIN CITY

Dubbed the World's Sexiest DJ, Colleen Shannon has been spinning more than heads since being named our 50th Anniversary Playmate. What began as a hobby—with a borrowed turntable and a few hundred albums—has turned into a thriving career for Colleen, who has performed alongside renowned spinners including Funkmaster Flex. For the past several months Colleen has been touring the country, pumping up dance floors in New York, Chicago and Miami and hobnobbing with fellow musicians (that's her pictured with Herbie Hancock and Dweezil Zappa). Call



Herbie, Coll and Dweez.

it typecasting, but she has even landed roles as a DJ in the films *Chasing Ghosts* and *The Gene Generation*. "I'm proud to be a Playmate," Colleen says. "I want to show people that posing in *PLAYBOY* is an effective way to achieve your dreams." Colleen's other realized aspirations include posing in an ad campaign for the Guess jeans spin-off Punkture and teaming with Jaime Pressly and Paris Hilton in ads for the edgy clothing line Material Junky. "I'm a risk taker," Colleen says. "I don't want to be one of those girls who disappear without making their mark."

## 50 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

Google **Bettie Page** today and you'll find nearly 100,000 hits, but five decades ago the woman who would come to be known as the greatest pin-up of all time was just our Miss January 1955. Here's how it went down: Bunny Yeager had taken nude photos of Bettie, hoping to sell them to a calendar company. When Yeager heard about Hef's new men's magazine, she sent over the photos. For the low price of \$100 (!), Hef bought the shot you see here. Bettie became a Playmate, and a pin-up queen was born. "Her first appearance in *PLAYBOY* is a milestone in the history of the magazine," Hef says. But Bettie didn't even know her picture was appearing. "A friend called and told me I was the Centerfold," Bettie told us later. "I liked the picture. Everybody did."



## MAGIC RED-CARPET RIDE



With celebrity obsession at an all-time high, Playmates have become coveted attractions whenever a red carpet is rolled out and paparazzi are herded behind a rope line. From left: Heather Kozar at the American Music Awards postparty; Nikki Ziering at G-Phoria: The Awards Show 4 Gamers, in L.A.; Shauna Sand at Bliss nightclub in Hollywood; Tino Jordan sashaying down Pelle Pelle's Celebrity Catwalk for Charity; and Lauren Michelle Hill working it at L.A.'s Glomourcon.

## HOT SHOT



STACY SANCHES & JENNIFER WALCOTT

### THREE THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT STEPHANIE GLASSON

1. Her first job? As a checkout clerk at Wal-Mart, a gig that lasted five years.
2. She became interested in real estate when she helped a friend find a condo. She wanted a profession in which she wouldn't be confined to a desk. "I need my freedom," she says. "I'm a people person and I love to talk."
3. At the beach you'll find her sunbathing but not surfing—she's terrified of the ocean. "I won't dip more than my feet into the water," she says. "I'll get on a boat but only if it has a bathroom."



## POP QUESTIONS: DAHM TRIPLETS

**Q:** The three of you appear on the reality show *Renovate My Family*. How's it going?

**A:** We're having a great time. We give new lives to families in need. It's especially fun to see the families' reactions.

**Q:** Are you really on the construction crew, or is that just for show?

**A:** We're really part of it! They don't show all the things we do—everything from laying sod to installing drywall. We can do what most men can do. Really, we're just three of the guys.



## MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

By Michael Madsen

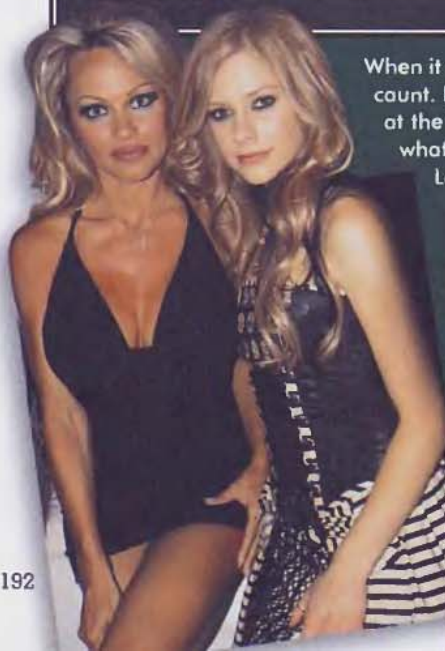
My absolute favorite *PLAYBOY* Centerfold is Marilyn Monroe, the first woman to appear on the magazine's

cover. She was also the first Centerfold, in December 1953. Marilyn personifies everything that *PLAYBOY* is about—glamour, glitz, sensuality, mystique. She and the magazine helped influence our whole culture.



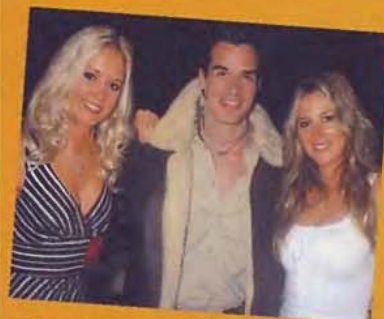
## POP GO THE GIRLS

When it comes to awards shows, it's the after parties that count. Pam Anderson and Anna Nicole Smith presented at the World Music Awards, but we'd rather show you what happened next. While Pammy bonded with Avril Lavigne, Anna shared confessions with Usher.



## PLAYMATE GOSSIP

Stephanie Adams has been named Best Lesbian Sex Symbol in the *Village Voice*'s annual "Best of New York" feature. "It's hard to turn a page in a queer rag without seeing the willowy model peeking out in a bikini, or nothing at all," the *Voice* writes.... Victoria Fuller and her husband, Jonathan Baker, are a formidable duo, Team Hollywood, on *The Amazing Race 6*.... Best wishes to the betrothed Shanna Moakler



Stacy, Antonia and Cara in L.A.

and Blink-182's Travis Barker, as well as to Barbara Moore and Lorenzo Lamas. Hey, MTV, how about reality shows starring them?... Stacy Fuson and Cara Wakelin (above) hung with Antonio Sabato Jr. in L.A.... Victoria Silvstedt (below) persuaded the paparazzi to mug with

Victoria: Great Connes!



her in Cannes.... PETA activist Pam Anderson wrote a letter to KFC-sponsored Dale Earnhardt Jr. regarding the fast-food chain. "When one takes a multimillion-dollar endorsement, one must take responsibility for the company's practices. We're asking you to use your considerable influence with KFC to improve its animal-welfare standards," she wrote.

cyberclub

See your favorite Playmate's pictorial in the Cyber Club at [cyber.playboy.com](http://cyber.playboy.com)

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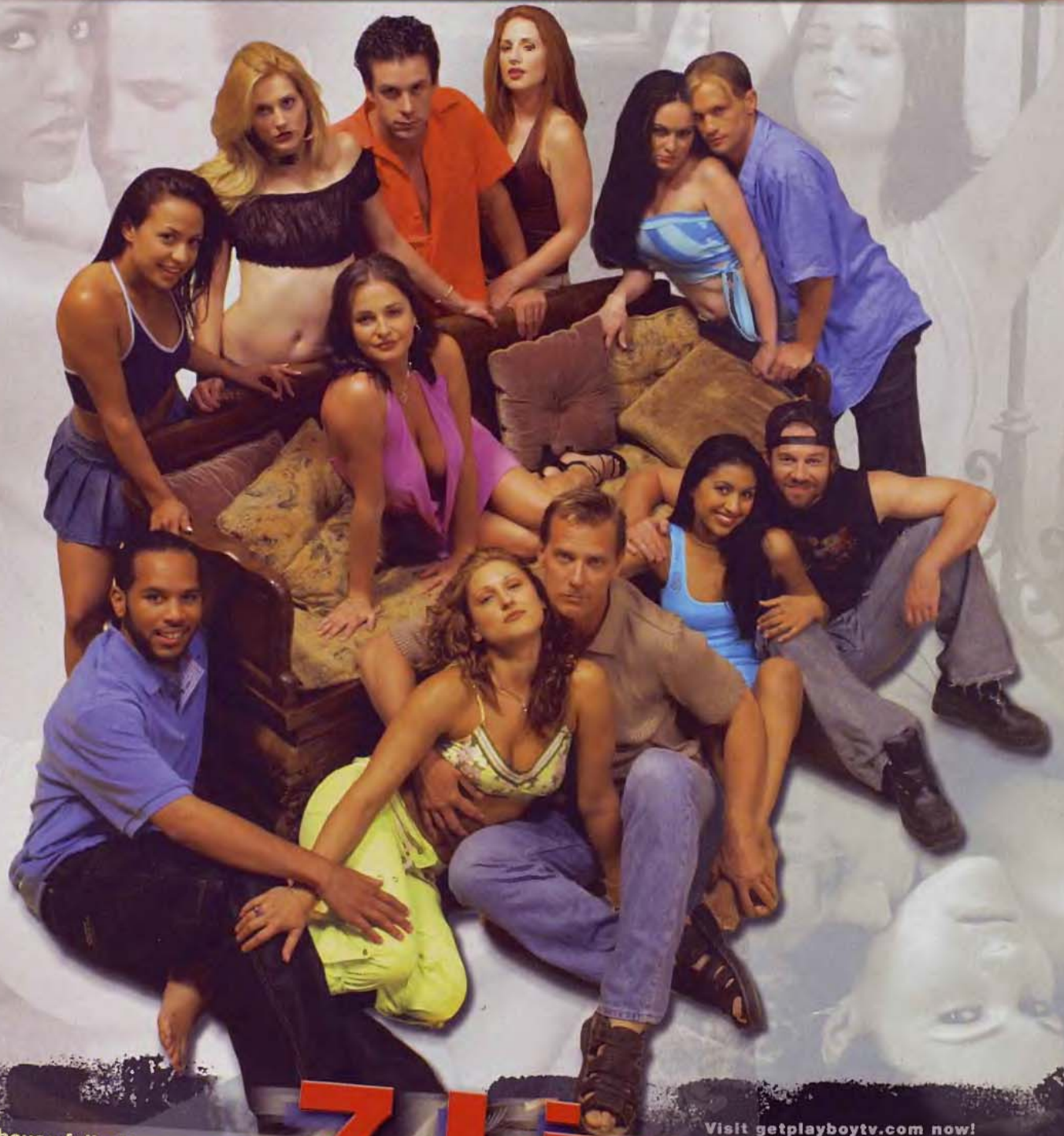
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# Playboy On The Scene

WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHERE IT'S HAPPENING AND WHO'S MAKING IT HAPPEN



## Space Case

**In a world where gravity reigns, Peter Diamandis wants you to take a load off**



**J**ust jump up, reach out with your arms, and fly," says Peter Diamandis. "That's how Superman does it." Such words normally earn the speaker a psych consult, but when Diamandis says them he is floating five feet off the ground, which lends him a bit of credibility. Dedicated to space exploration, the 43-year-old "astropreneur" has launched two future-forward ventures: Zero Gravity Corporation, which offers high-altitude flights in converted 727s that let passengers experience weightlessness, and the X Prize Foundation, a \$10 million competition to jump-start the development of manned commercial spacecraft. One job requires him to coast in midair with ecstatic antigravity joyriders; the other lets him underwrite history. "When I was nine and watching NASA's Apollo program unfold on TV, I knew this was what I had to do with my life," he says. Neither the X Prize nor the Zero Gravity project was a cakewalk, but after 10 challenging years he is now booking Zero-G flights (\$2,950 for a 60- to 90-minute trip) and has presented the X Prize to the developers of *SpaceShipOne*, which soared 71 miles above the Mojave this past October. When faced with skeptics, Diamandis recalls advice he received from Arthur C. Clarke, author of *2001: A Space Odyssey*: "Truly revolutionary ideas go through three phases. First, critics say your idea is crazy; it will never work. Next, it might work, but why bother? When it finally happens, they say, 'I told him he could do it all along.'" —Xeni Jardin 195

# Grapevine

## The Importance of Being Heiress

It's been a whirlwind century for PARIS HILTON, who, in a career path open only to select hotel royalty, went from sex-tape star to TV nincompoop to best-selling author. Here, she gives good tease, heeding the Zen-like advice of her book, *Confessions of an Heiress*: "If you give too much away, no one needs to know anything else."



## Shirting the Issue

CHRISTINA AGUILERA wasn't alive yet in 1972 when *Deep Throat*, the hit porn film starring Linda Lovelace, came out, but that didn't stop the dirty girl from paying homage to it in Hollywood. It's refreshing to see that the bottled genie is a student of the classics.



## To Hell With Stripes!

We're plaid to introduce STAR NOELLE, who has a lot more going for her than flawless abs and an uncanny resemblance to Alicia Silverstone. When it comes to turning a napkin into a tartan fashion statement, the lingerie model is anything but clueless.

## You Got Served

Love means nothing in tennis, but what you wear—or don't—on the court means everything. Wimbledon champ MARIA SHARAPOVA seems to have melded Anna Kournikova with the Williams sisters: She's a fashionista who actually wins.



ACTION IMAGES/WIREIMAGE.COM

## Cheesecake Walk

Nothing compares with Italian Fashion Week—except maybe New York Fashion Week, London Fashion Week or Ulan Bator Fashion Week. Here in Italy, a *bellissima* catwalker sports Simone and Tornaforte with incomparable accessories.



PIRELLA GÖTTSCHE LOWE/WIREIMAGE.COM

## Carrying Her Own Weight

BRITNEY SPEARS gives a lift to her personal Brit Pack while poring over racks of clothing on Melrose Avenue in L.A. As Mrs. Federline sings in "Touch of My Hand," a ditty about self-pleasure: "I love myself/It's not a sin/I can't control what's happenin'."



SPLASHNEWS (2)

# Potpourri

## BLUE HEAVEN

You don't even need to dab on Bulgari's BLV Pour Homme eau de toilette (\$70, bulgari.com)—just looking at the bottle makes you feel as though you've emerged from a dip in the Mediterranean and are now kicking back on a sundeck, sipping an icy cocktail. With its sweet ginger and tobacco flower notes, it's a vacation in a bottle. Splash on the sunny fragrance when the winter doldrums hit.



## KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE BALL

It's third-and-goal, late in the game. Tom Brady drops back, looks left and—*smash!*—you've dropped your Leica Trinovid 10x25 binoculars (\$550, leicacamera.com) in the puddle of beer under your stadium seat. No worries—these lightweight beauties are rubber armored, so their precision optics (this pair magnifies up to 10 times, with an amazing field of vision) can survive a beating. You grab the binoculars, give them a quick dry-off and zero in on the field—just in time to see Brady smile. Touchdown!



## I HARDLY KNOW HER!

There's nothing more satisfying than sitting down with close friends and robbing them blind. To that noble end, everyone should own the tools to host a poker game. The Playboy Poker Kit (\$15, bn.com) has all you need in a single sleek box, including two decks of Playboy cards, 180 Rabbit Head chips (90 white, 45 red, 45 blue) and the *Playboy Guide to Playing Poker at Home*, by Basil Nestor. It contains numerous shrewd strategies for chumping your buddies and, yes, a special section on strip poker.



## MOVING PICTURE

By using a laptop-style drive to squeeze its entire workings behind an efficient seven-inch screen, RCA's lyrically named DRC618N DVD player (\$350, rca.com) is able to abandon the clamshell design used for most portable DVD players. Instead of a fold-up screen, this compact, easy-to-hold tablet includes an adjustable kickstand for tabletop viewing. But it's most at home (and most easily viewed) strapped to the back of a car or airplane headrest, and its three-and-a-half-hour rechargeable battery life is long enough to get you through most Sergio Leone movies, many flights, chunks of jury duty and the next ballet your lady friend drags you to.

## WILD CARDS

San Francisco-based Michael Vash worked as an illustrator at Disney on films such as *Aladdin* and *Beauty and the Beast*. Now he creates greeting cards that would make Mickey scurry back to his hole in a hurry. Eggs that fuck chickens (which came first?), dope-smoking rabbis, fighting cocks (yes, that kind)—nothing is off-limits. Check out [vashdesigns.com](http://vashdesigns.com) for his entire line and to find out where to buy.



## THE QUIET ONE

Though computers are often incorporated into home-theater setups, nothing mars a cinematic moment like a noisy cooling fan. Thanks to a fanless design, the media center PCs of Hush Technologies are nearly noise-free. Its latest, the Hush MCE (\$2,650 to \$4,300, [hushtechnologies.net](http://hushtechnologies.net)), lets you pause and rewind live TV, record to its hard drive, catalog music and photos, stream video from the Net and more.



## SHADY CHARACTERS

Kaenon Polarized is an upstart maker of sunglasses whose specs are getting a lot of attention. Members of the U.S. Olympic sailing team wore Kaenons in Athens. Don't sail? With stylish frames and a choice of five levels of light reduction in the polarized lenses, they'll work just fine on the slopes, at the beach or when you have a hangover. Styles pictured are, from top, Jack (in tobacco with a copper 12 lens, \$230), UPD (in blue with a gray 12 lens, \$140) and Rhino (in tobacco with a copper 12 lens, \$170). Go to [kaenon.com](http://kaenon.com) for more info.



## LINGUA FRANCA

It's inevitable: One day you'll be trapped in a thatched-roof airport bar with a fistful of local currency and no way to communicate your immediate, dire need for whiskey. Avoid that fate with a Lingo Touch-Screen Talking Translator (\$200, [lingotravel.com](http://lingotravel.com)), a device that lets you input words or select phrases and translates them into any of eight languages at the touch of a button. It can even translate from one non-English language to another—perfect for giving detailed instructions to any given pair of stewardesses.

## BOND FIRE

Equally suited to firing up a cigar or lighting a fuse, the limited-edition S.T. Dupont 007 Line 2 lighter looks as if it might have come from Q's laboratory. The roll bar that you flick to spark the flame—appropriately shaped like a bullet—doubles as an international time zone tool that calibrates the time in London, Dubai, Rome and other key cities. And the serrations on the case are reminiscent of the slide-and-grip patterns on Bond's Walther PPK semiautomatic. The lighter comes in brushed palladium (\$1,007) and, as shown here, a gunmetal-black matte (\$1,135). More info at [st-dupont.com](http://st-dupont.com).



# Next Month



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**REAL-LIFE DESPERATE HOUSEWIVES**—THE SUMMER AFTER HIS FRESHMAN YEAR OF COLLEGE, LUKE REALIZED THAT EVERY WOMAN IN HIS TOWN HAD A VAGINA. HE ALSO NOTICED THAT WHILE THE TOWN'S MEN GATHERED LIKE SHEEP ON THE TRAIN PLATFORM TO CATCH THE 7:15 INTO THE CITY, THE WOMEN—TEACHERS, AEROBICS INSTRUCTORS, MOMS—WERE LEFT ALONE AND NEEDY. BY **RICH COHEN**

**TERI POLO**—WHILE THE WORLD WAS CRACKING UP OVER BEN STILLER'S BEFUDDLED ANTICS IN *MEET THE PARENTS*, WE WERE DEVELOPING A HUGE CRUSH ON HIS ON-SCREEN FIANCEE, A FORMER BALLET DANCER. THIS MONTH THE WORLD GETS ITS MUCH-ANTICIPATED SEQUEL—*MEET THE FOCKERS*—AND WE GET OUR WISH: A GORGEOUS PICTORIAL.

**JERRY LEE LEWIS**—ONE OF THE LAST 1950S WILDMEN WAS A REBELLIOUS PRODIGY WHO GAINED NOTORIETY BY MARRYING HIS TEENAGE COUSIN. AND THAT WAS ONLY THE FIRST EPISODE IN A BIZARRE RUN OF 88 KEYS. MEET THE KILLER (AND HIS GREAT BALLS OF FIRE). PROFILE BY **ROBERT GORDON**

**PUNCH DRUNK**—WEBBER AND FLINT—FACES PUSHED OUT OF SHAPE, LIPS SPLIT SO DEEP THEY HAVE FOUR INSTEAD OF TWO—TRAVEL THE COUNTRY IN DRAG, CHARGING PEOPLE TO SLUG THEM. MORE INSPIRATIONAL FICTION BY **CHUCK PALAHNIUK**

**THE WOMEN OF FEAR FACTOR**—THEY'VE EATEN COWS' EYES. THEY'VE SWUM IN GARBAGE CANS FILLED WITH PIGS' KIDNEYS. THEY'VE BEEN SPRAYED IN THE MOUTH WITH SQUID INK. THEY'VE HUNG OUT IN TORTURE CELLS WITH SCORPIONS. BUT THEY'VE NEVER POSED FOR *PLAYBOY*—UNTIL NOW.

**BREASTS: WISDOM, FACTS AND LORE**—BECAUSE YOU'RE TOO BUSY FONDLING HER TO ASK THE DIFFICULT QUESTIONS, WE'VE ASKED—AND ANSWERED—THEM FOR YOU. HOW CAN YOU TELL IF SHE'S HORNY? WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO STIMULATE HER NIPPLES? WHY AREN'T BOOBS EVER THE SAME SIZE? AND WHY IN HELL WOULD ANYONE CHOOSE TO GET THEM REDUCED? A WELL-ENDOWED ARTICLE BY *PLAYBOY* ADVISOR **CHIP ROWE**

**JOLENE BLALOCK**—THE *STAR TREK: ENTERPRISE* STAR ON KICKING PRINCESS LEIA'S ASS, BEING ATTRACTED TO INSANE MEN, THE STRANGEST PLACE SHE'S EVER BEEN BEAMED UP, THE FREAKY SIDE OF BEING A VULCAN AND WHY SHE'S A GEEK AT HEART. 20Q BY **ROBERT CRANE**

**PLUS:** IN THE BEDROOM WITH LESBIAN PLAYMATE **STEPHANIE ADAMS**, COOL PREP FASHION, DRESS-UP WATCHES, A LESSON IN COGNAC, BABE OF THE MONTH **IVANA BOZILOVIC** AND MISS FEBRUARY, **AMBER CAMPISI**.