

WILD SOUTHERN COLLEGE GIRLS

PLAYBOY

ENTERTAINMENT

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CAMPUS
REPORT
HOT SEX
ADVICE
GREAT
FASHION
BEST
FICTION

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GIRLS OF THE
SEC

NUDE AND UNCENSORED

MISS UNIVERSE
ALICIA
MACHADO

20^Q ALI
LARTER

PLUS:
OKTOBERFEST
BEERS AND
PRO FOOTBALL
PREVIEW

RANT ON!
KEITH
OLBERMANN
INTERVIEW





Allow us to reintroduce you to **Alicia Machado**. You may remember her as Miss Universe 1996, the beauty who, after adding a few pounds during her reign, unfortunately was called an “eating machine” by Donald Trump on *The Howard Stern Show*. (As for us, we’ve always liked curves.) But forget that—now think of her only as the most beautiful Venezuelan you’ve ever seen and the first Miss Universe to bare it all for us. “I was so happy to do this,” Machado says. “I had never posed nude before but figured the time was right.” *Queen Alicia* was shot in Mexico, a land that loves Machado; when her pictorial recently ran in Mexican **PLAYBOY**, the issue became that edition’s best-seller at the time. “I felt very beautiful to be outside in the sun and the sand,” she says. “I think it shows in the photos.”



Writer and onetime commune member **David Black** sat with some former flower children to discuss the expectations of their Edens in *The Ranch*. He notes that the romantic ideals of the hippie lifestyle have now been twisted to push cars and 401(k)s. “At the time, there was a general feeling we were reinventing Western history, which turned out not to be the case,” Black says. “We were just reinventing advertising.”



“We were sick of reading pieces about campus sex based on urban legends or absolute bunk in stodgy magazines and the *Old Gray Lady*,” says Junior Editor **Rocky Rakovic** (right). For *Students on Students* he and Associate Editor **Josh Robertson** conducted a roundtable with those in the trenches. “We gave campus columnists a forum in which they could discuss sex in their own words,” Robertson says. “It’s very revealing.”



Selected from more than a thousand entries, University of Arizona student **David James Poissant**’s *Lizard Man* won our annual College Fiction Contest. In the story a buddy trip turns out to be less than friendly. Poissant explains, “I like to write about the way people often hurt those they’re closest to, how we hurt the people we love and how we redeem ourselves. I want readers to feel this story can be hopeful if looked at in a particular way.”



“I give all the students 10 out of 10,” says **Nigel Barker**, who shot this issue’s *Best-Dressed Man on Campus* and is a judge on *America’s Next Top Model*. Barker and the **PLAYBOY** fashion staff held a nationwide search for the sharpest-dressed students and found the best in class. “The concept was to have real collegians show they are the future while respecting the past,” Barker says. “For example, the young man deemed the new scholar is surrounded by stacks of books, but he’s using an electronic writing tablet.” As well as returning to **PLAYBOY** for this shoot, Barker is working on his own reality show, *Click*. “**PLAYBOY** gave me one of my first chances when I was starting out. The fashion we put forth is for actual men. It’s not too quirky or odd as in other magazines. We shot clothes real college students can wear.”

PLAYBOY

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There has been sex on college campuses only since, like, forever. But what is the reality for students trying to live, love and get lucky in 2007? We ask eight female college sex columnists (oh yeah, and one guy) for the scoop on who's doing it, how often, in what ways and by what rules.
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You are a member of a species that has been knocking back beer for 5,000 years, but how familiar are you with the various incarnations of the holy trinity of water, hops and barley malt? Crack open a cold one and find out what the ale you are drinking, thanks to our sudsy syllabus.
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They are grown now and have turned into good, productive workers and citizens of the world. But at one time children born and raised communally were part of a grand social experiment that promised peace, love and harmony. Our writer, an ex-communard himself, sits down with a group of hippie offspring to reflect on the demise of a utopian dream. **BY DAVID BLACK**
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Okay, Peyton's finally got his Lombardi. Can he cop another? In our annual pro pigskin preview Rick Gosselin tackles who's up, who's down, the top grudge matches and our picks for the 2007–2008 season. Also: football's most significant stat.

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When Cam's dad dies, he and his best friend travel from St. Petersburg to Lee, Florida to tie up loose ends. At his father's abandoned house, they expect to find the place in disarray; what they don't expect is the gator waiting for them in the backyard. In this tale by our College Fiction Contest winner, it turns out some life stories are crocks. **BY DAVID JAMES POISSANT**

the playboy forum

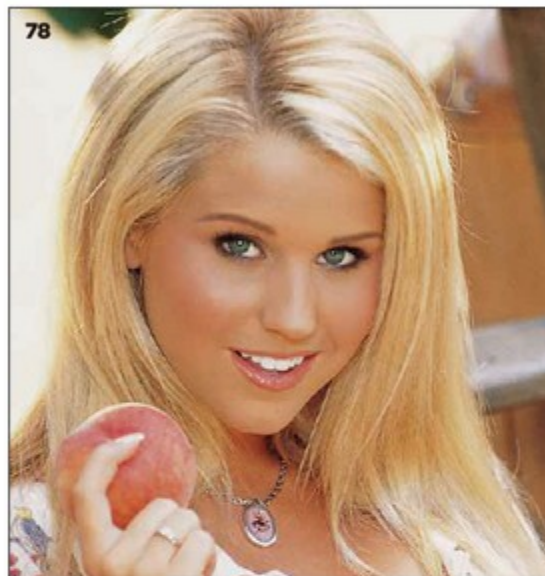
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The author of *Broken Government* says it is vital for Democratic presidential candidates to start holding Republicans accountable for their persistent abuses of process that have fouled up Washington's political systems. **BY JOHN DEAN**

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The duplicitous one-woman army from TV's *Heroes* chats with us mere mortals about battling the undead in *Resident Evil: Extinction*, why she can't respect a man who hasn't got game and why she's now okay with being the hot blonde. **BY DAVID RENSIN**

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In 2003, nearly a dozen years and several unsuitable jobs after helping reinvent the sportscast on ESPN's *SportsCenter*, the witty anchorman located his political voice on *Countdown With Keith Olbermann* and became MSNBC's liberal antidote to Bill O'Reilly. The increasingly popular pundit pulls no punches here as he explains why Fox News is as dangerous as the KKK, who really is the worst person in the world and how he finds joy living with a woman half his age, even if she wants to get rid of his vintage baseball books. **BY KEVIN COOK**



COVER STORY

The SEC is in top form and not just because of the championships its teams won in the past year. We sent photographers to Southeastern Conference schools to study the student bodies and discover the most captivating coeds. Senior Contributing Photographer Stephen Wayda finds Miss April 2007 Giuliana Marino in the campus spirit; our Rabbit is on time for the unzipping.



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The first trick in getting to the head of the class is to look the part. We check in on college guys from around the country to see what threads are making the grade at their schools this fall.
BY JOSEPH DE ACETIS

this month on playboy.com

THE A-LIST

We horn in on America's 10 best jazz clubs. playboy.com/alist

MAGAZINE BLOG

News, views and inside perspectives from PLAYBOY editors. playboy.com/blog

THE 21ST QUESTION

Get the very last word from resident beauty and ultimate hero Ali Larter. playboy.com/21q

PLAYBOY U

Matriculate Mansion-style at our college-only social network that will keep you connected. playboy.com/pbu

THREE'S A CHARM

Video and much more of the Girls Next Door. playboy.com/gnd



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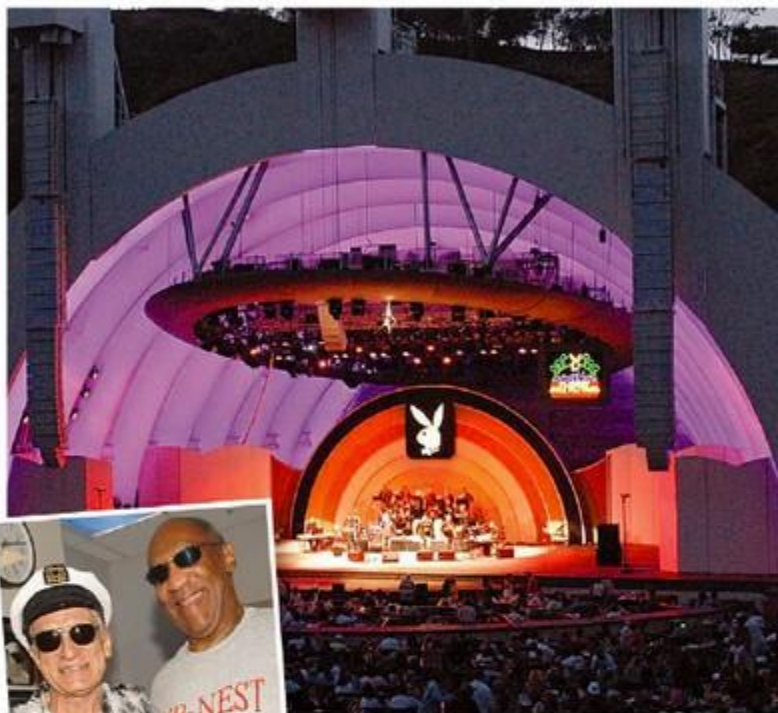
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THE WORLD OF PLAYBOY

HEF SIGHTINGS, MANSION FROLICS AND NIGHTLIFE NOTES

HERE'S TO YOU, MORT

Hef celebrated Mort Sahl's 80th birthday with comedy greats at the Wadsworth Theatre. Standing, from left: Richard Lewis, Jay Leno, Norm Crosby, Kevin Nealon, Hef, Ross Shafer, Drew Carey, Albert Brooks. Seated: Shelley Berman, Jonathan Winters, George Carlin, Mort Sahl, Harry Shearer.



LISTENERS LAP IT UP

Girl Next Door Bridget Marquardt has taken to the airwaves with the *Bridget & Wednesday Friday Show* on Playboy Radio, co-hosted by her canine sidekick, Wednesday. PLAYBOY fans are howling with delight.



SWINGIN' SET

Hef and his beauties attended another red-hot Playboy Jazz Festival (right). Bill Cosby (above) returned to host a lineup that included performances by jazz-world greats, from Buddy Guy to the Count Basie Orchestra.



THE AFI AWARDS

No one, we repeat, *no one* knows how to make an entrance like Hef. Mr. Playboy was surrounded by begowned beauties, including Kendra, Holly and Bridget, along with five Centerfolds (above left), for the 35th annual American Film Institute Life Achievement Award gala to honor pal Al Pacino (above right), held at the Kodak Theatre in Hollywood. Screen legends like Kirk Douglas (far right) and his wife, Anne, led the applause.

**HANGIN'
WITH H&F**



Hef and the Girls Next Door accepted an invitation from Prince Albert of Monaco to the Monte Carlo Television Festival. Their reality show is a huge hit abroad. (1) Kendra, Holly, Hef and Bridget at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. (2) Keith Hefner and his date share a drink with the gang at La Voile Rouge in St-Tropez. (3) Celebrating Kendra's birthday at Villa Romana. (4) The foursome meet 24's Mary Lynn Rajskub and Dennis Haysbert at the home of the Monte Carlo state minister. (5) Terry O'Quinn from *Lost* says hello to Hef at the fete. (6) Adrian Pasdar from *Heroes* with the Man at the television-festival press event. (7) The girls parasailing over the Mediterranean. (8) The quartet attend a cocktail party hosted by Prince Albert at the palace. (9) Mr. Playboy and his ladies at the television-festival awards ceremony. (10) Back home, Kevin Federline pays a visit to the Mansion. (11) Jamie Foxx at the jazz fest. (12) Hef with Mort Sahl. (13) Jay Leno, Hef and Holly at Sahl's tribute. (14) Bill Maher receives an award at a Marijuana Policy Project party at the Mansion.



SUPER SOAKER

Kudos to Daniela Federici for her stylish, graceful photos of Olympian Amanda Beard (*Adult Swim*, July).

Jerry Lasensky
Irvine, California

Beard is stunning, but unless Gabrielle Reece has died, she can't be called the sexiest athlete alive.

Rich Black
Carbondale, Illinois

Humans love winners and beautiful people. Beard is both—an incredible swimmer and (as Derek Zoolander



Whether by land or by sea, Amanda looks good.

would say) really, really ridiculously good-looking. The postings on my swimming-news site, timedfinals.com, have been overwhelmingly positive.

David Cromwell
Missoula, Montana

Beard's pictorial has stirred controversy over whether a top female athlete should be posing for *PLAYBOY*. Only a select few women are given a chance to capture their youthful beauty. You can't fault anyone for seizing the moment.

Dan Young
Ashley, Ohio

SUMMER OF DRUGS

Frank Owen vividly describes how in 1967 the "hoodies" caused a speed epidemic in Haight-Ashbury (*The Dark Side of the Summer of Love*, July), but I don't think he places enough emphasis on the neighborhood's inherent weakness for meth. I first heard the snarling glossolalia of speeders there in 1964. At Timothy Leary's suggestion, the LSD millionaire Owsley Stanley put a little meth in his first batches of acid, "for clarity." In those days there was a severe drought of mari-

juana in the summer, so the flower children couldn't toke up. Because most people couldn't take LSD every day, speed became more popular. As more people took speed, the street became worse. So they took more speed to deal with all the speeders. It became an arms race and a slow-motion catastrophe.

Charles Perry
Los Angeles, California

Perry is the author of The Haight-Ashbury: A History.

I used methedrine during the 1970s, but the horror stories about crystal meth sound nothing like what I experienced. We never hid in our basements for days, nor did we ever binge. If you took a dose that kept you happy for more than 10 or 12 hours, you would only feel jittery and have no fun. There were no addictive cravings. Is today's meth a different substance?

Todd Shuffler
Syracuse, New York

Owen responds: "The meth you did back in the day was manufactured using phenylacetone (P2P). When the feds restricted P2P, in 1980, underground chemists discovered how to make meth using

ephedrine/pseudoephedrine, which is twice as powerful. Having done both types, I can attest to how much edgier and paranoia-inducing this new meth, especially Mexican ice, is. It's also much easier to make than 'biker meth,' which requires bulky equipment. The discovery of the ephedrine reduction method opened the door to the era of kitchen chemists."

Speed in the Haight in 1967? How do you think Santana got to be so popular? Owen's article is a welcome dissenting view from the treacly 40th anniversary stories I've read everywhere else. I wrote a book about this period and suggested the publisher put this blurb on the back: "Fistfights, gunplay, drug overdoses, deceit, betrayal and chicanery...all in a day's work in the Summer of Love." I've always wondered why they didn't use it.

Joel Selvin
San Francisco, California

Selvin is the author of Summer of Love: The Inside Story of LSD, Rock & Roll, Free Love and High Times in the Wild West.

POLITICAL ACTION HERO

I am impressed with Bruce Willis's concern for teachers in the *Playboy*

Interview (July), but it's incorrect to say that teachers earn \$40,000 or \$50,000 a year. It's more like \$30,000. And people wonder why there is a shortage.

Chelsea Bestra
Killeen, Texas

You're both right. According to the American Federation of Teachers, the average salary is \$47,602, and the average starting salary is \$31,753. The union argues that, to be competitive, teacher pay needs to increase by at least 30 percent.

Bill Clinton may have "taken a shit" on the Oval Office, as Willis claims, but his man, George W. Bush, has taken one on the Constitution.

N.K. Booher
Bristol, Tennessee

It is wonderful to see Willis express his concern for indigenous peoples. A major issue facing tribes has been the U.S. government's refusal, even after a decade of lawsuits, to provide an accounting for the billions of dollars it holds in trust. These funds come mainly from revenue generated by the development of tribal natural



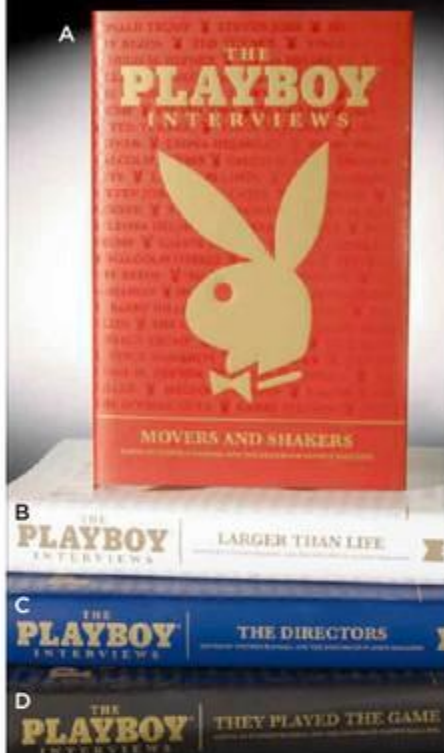
Bruce Willis has a few thoughts on politics.

resources, such as timber, minerals, oil and gas. A fallacy persists that all Indians are flush with casino profits; as a group, Native Americans remain the nation's poorest people.

John Echohawk
Native American Rights Fund
Boulder, Colorado

I'm a Makah from the Makah Nation. In seven words—"Life there is as bleak as ever"—Willis sums up

RIVETING READS



In a publication known for its photographs, the *Playboy Interview* still stands out as the best long-form Q&A in any magazine. The *Playboy Interviews* is a series of books that collect the most memorable discussions from the magazine's history. The most revered—and reviled—American sports stars from the past six decades speak openly in *They Played the Game*; 17 of cinema's greatest directors candidly discuss their craft in *The Directors*; 14 of the world's most iconic personalities chronicle their rise to fame in *Larger Than Life*; and America's most influential businesspeople talk about their triumphs, failures and what it takes to succeed in *Movers and Shakers*.

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the experience on the reservation for myself and my family. The government needs to honor the treaties it has made with Native Americans. As long as people like Willis are aware of the situation and make noise about it, I will not give up hope.

Steven Burley
Neah Bay, Washington

I like Willis as a person and an actor, but some of his ideas, such as paying teachers \$150,000 a year, are ridiculous. This is why people are so sick of Hollywood actors. I'm a Democrat, and I'm not going to switch sides when the waters get choppy.

Jason Wahl
Indianapolis, Indiana

By supporting the underdogs in our society, Willis is much like some of the characters he has played.

Tammy Smith
DeLand, Florida

MAC DADDY

What is your tech guru's problem? He seems to have a grudge against Apple. A year ago he pushed a gaggle of ugly iPod wannabes while dismissing the iPod as too fragile. Now he's pimping a bunch of iPhone "alternatives" (*Sweet Talk*, June). What's wrong with going with the best?

Drew Haney
Glendale, California

Scott Alexander responds: "Experience has taught us to hold off on Apple products until at least the third generation. We have every reason to believe the 2009 iPhones will be astounding."

HOT AND COLD

Since you love grapefruit soda (*The Grills Next Door*, July), try this: Add two ounces of Tanqueray Rangpur gin to a Collins glass of ice, fill with grapefruit soda and finish with a twist. It's best after several hours of tanning with your girl.

Steve Combs
Charlotte, North Carolina

CROSSING THE LINE

A cartoon in July appears to depict a lifeguard raping an unconscious woman. If I'm missing the joke, please explain. Otherwise you owe readers an apology for violating the standards of good taste you have upheld for so many decades.

Ivy Shoots
Niskayuna, New York

In the caption for a July *Grapevine* item about Rose McGowan, who plays a one-legged woman in *Grindhouse*, you write, "amputees were never our bag." That is probably

the case, since you airbrush away imperfections. But let it be stated by an amputee, some of us are hot and have no doubt starred in a few fantasies. Beauty is not about having all your parts; it's using all the parts you have with confidence.

Stacey Burgess
Huntsville, Alabama

OUR HEARTS ARE RACING

Assuming you consider race-car drivers to be athletes, as I do, then the world's sexiest is clearly Danica Patrick (20Q, July).

Rick Jerome
Denver, Colorado

Here's a question you should have asked Patrick: How much gas was left in her car when she was leading the 2005 Indianapolis 500 at lap 194 but slowed down to conserve fuel? Was



Patrick is the first 10 to race the Indy 500.

there enough after the race to suggest she might have won by keeping the pedal down?

Joseph Cleaver
Council, Idaho

Every report said she would have run out of gas. It was a calculated risk—Patrick skipped the final fuel stop to take the lead but then had to slow down so she could finish. Unfortunately, three drivers caught up with her.

Thank you so much for the Patrick interview. As a female welder working in a man's world, I enjoyed reading about the similar challenges she faces. Her success is inspiring and empowering.

Shawna Burns
Lampe, Missouri

Read more feedback at blog.playboy.com.



P L A Y B O Y

a f t e r h o u r s

babe of the month

Amber Lee Ettinger

POLITICS ISN'T ALWAYS AN UGLY BUSINESS

We meet Amber Lee Ettinger at Cafeteria on a blazing Thursday in New York City. The umbrella isn't cutting her any shade, so she's wearing a pair of large sunglasses as she sucks on a raspberry lemonade, which conjures up an image of the *Lolita* poster with Sue Lyon. The model and actress known to YouTube viewers as Obama Girl spears a fat raspberry with her straw and smiles as she lifts it to her lips, well aware she's in the sweet spot. Millions have watched the video "I Got a Crush on Obama"; the sequel, "Debate '08: Obama Girl vs. Giuliani Girl," will drop in four days. In both, Amber plays a singing coquette hung up on Barack Obama. The first clip sparked confusion when it was posted: Was it a bid for hipness from Obama's camp or a Republican smear? Neither, really—just a bit of fun. What wasn't fun for Amber were the snotty digs from typical Internet dorks. ("Why is every chick in America fat?" wrote an apparently blind person.) "They were saying my boobs are fake, my teeth are fake," Amber laments. "Some said I should take it as a compliment. But I've never had plastic surgery. If I had fake boobs, I'd say, 'I have fake boobs.'" We're surprised to hear Amber wasn't recognized at the recent MLB All-Star festivities, where she interviewed players for the Free the Fan website. "I was asked to autograph a baseball," she says. "But I think they thought I was Alyssa Milano. I get that a lot."



"If I had fake boobs, I'd say, 'I have fake boobs.'"

from russia with malice



Leave the Gun. Take the Piroshki

DAVID CRONENBERG'S *EASTERN PROMISES* DELVES INTO THE RUSSIAN MAFIA. BY THE WAY, RUSSIA HAS A MAFIA. DON'T MESS WITH IT

"The Russians are number three in the world," says Mark Galeotti, director of the Organized Russian & Eurasian Crime Unit at the U.K.'s Keele University. "The Italians are still the beasts, and the Chinese triads are second because China is booming." Here's what else you need to know. **GREATEST ASSET:** Russia itself, says Galeotti. "The country is thoroughly corrupt and undercontrolled, but its resources are intact. The Mafia can launder money through Russian banks and provide weapons stolen from Russian stocks." **STRUCTURE:** Nothing like the Italians'. "It's not about family; there's no godfather giving orders. The Russian Mafia is a Mafia of the cell phone and the Internet, a network of criminal entrepreneurs." **HISTORY:** Emerged from the gulags. "If you want to make any money off a forced-labor camp, you don't want to spend a lot on guards. The Stalin regime essentially turned to organized crime to control the prison population. It was a stroke of brutal genius." **APPEARANCE:** Russian mobsters sport visible tattoos, "like a résumé showing where you've been imprisoned and what crimes you've committed." **REACH:** Dominates Eastern Europe and Israel; base in the U.S. is Brighton Beach in Brooklyn, New York.

foreplay

First Time's First Lines

INTRIGUING OPENERS FROM A PLAY ABOUT LOSIN' IT

Since the Mesolithic era of the Internet (1996) MyFirstTime.com has collected anonymous tales of defloration. Bits from more than 100 of them have been stitched together for the off-Broadway play *My First Time*. Here are some of our favorite opening lines:

"I know you aren't supposed to have a physical relationship with your stepsister."
 "I lost my hymen in a bicycle accident." "I apologize my English, I am not a native English writer."
 "His tribe and my tribe have been enemies for hundreds of years."
 "Now *slut* is a pretty harsh word, but it was no secret that she put out for \$50."
 "He was an asshole." "She had a real nice ass." "She had on white bell-bottom corduroys and a black T-shirt that said FUTURE FOX."
 "He put on a Boz Scaggs disc and got my shirt off by putting marbles down it."
 "We met at Bible camp." "We worked together on the Clinton campaign." "Okay, here's one for you to jack off to."

foreign phrase of the month

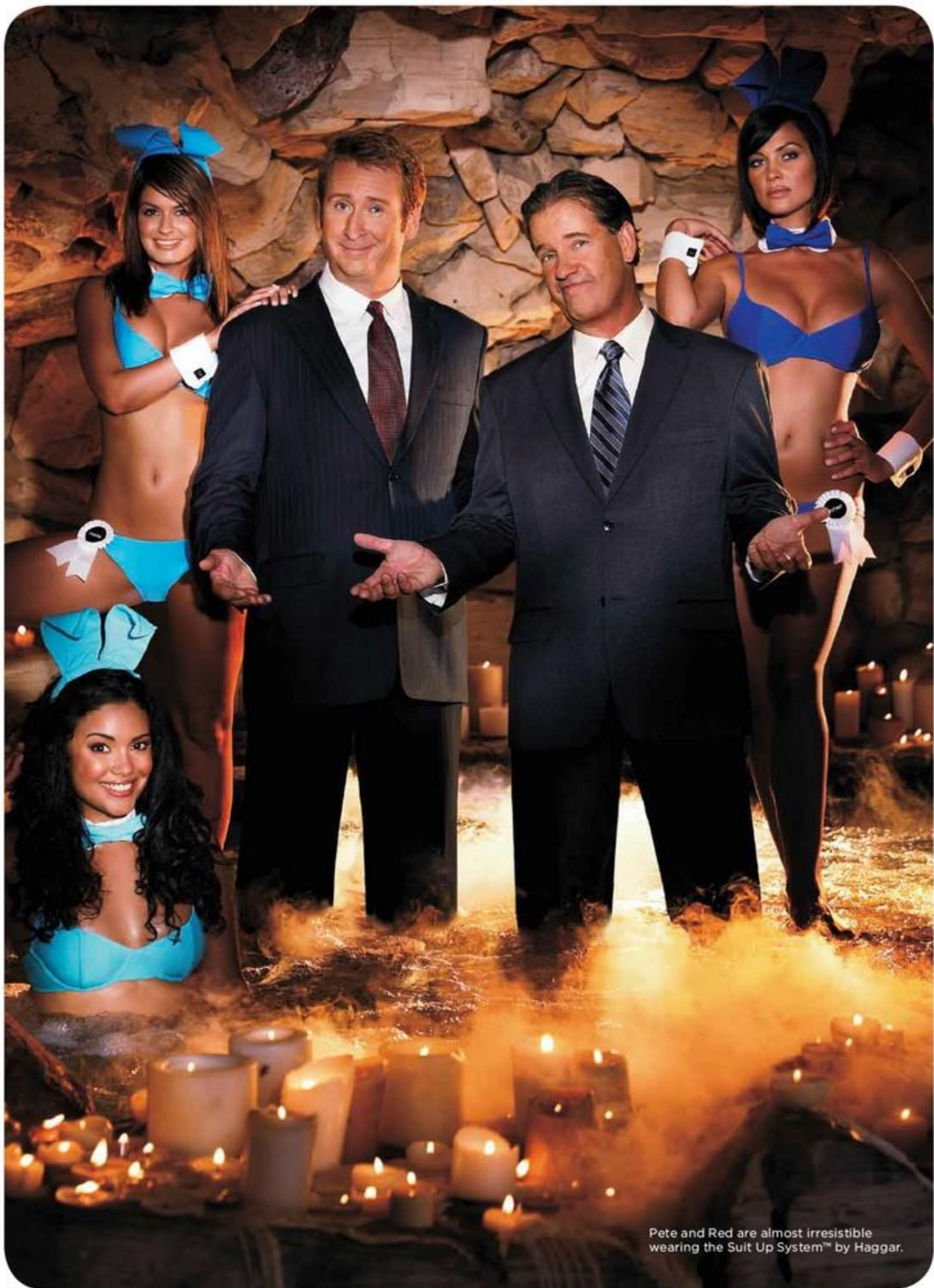


Bon-Kyu-Bon

TODAY'S JAPANESE T&A HAS MORE T, MORE A

For Westerners who dig Asian women but wish they were a bit curvier, there's good news: Japanese ladies have been eating their burgers and shakes, and it's working. The term for the new shape is *bon-kyu-bon*—literally "big-small-big" in Japanese. From *The Wall Street Journal*:

"Today the average Japanese woman's hips, at 35 inches, are around an inch wider than those of women a generation older. Women in their 20s wear a bra at least two sizes larger than that of their mothers, according to lingerie maker Wacoal. Waist size, meanwhile, has gotten slightly smaller.... The physical changes are largely the result of an increasingly Westernized diet, say nutritionists. Meals that used to consist of mostly fish, vegetables and tofu now lean heavily toward an American-style menu of red meat, dairy and indulgences such as Krispy Kreme doughnuts."



Pete and Red are almost irresistible wearing the Suit Up System™ by Haggard.

★ PETE AND RED ★

HAGGAR'S DYNAMIC DUO TALK SHOP ABOUT GOATS, BODY OIL, AND DEFENDING THE AUSTERE ART OF MAKING THINGS RIGHT.

Q1

PLAYBOY: Your show is "Making Things Right." How long was that idea in the works?

PETE: We really can't take credit for the idea. Hagggar contacted us about the concept, and our first impression was "what the hell do we know about acting?"

RED: The thinking behind it was Hagggar clothes are built for real men, and just look at us. It don't get no realer.

Q2

PLAYBOY: So I take it you guys didn't attend Julliard?

RED: Neither of us has been to prison, no.

PETE: I think he means the acting school, big fella.

Q3

PLAYBOY: I'll take that as no formal training.

PETE: They taught us a few tricks, but we're not exactly channeling Brando when we teach some jerk a lesson.

Q4

PLAYBOY: In one of your episodes, you guys employ an army of goats to take care of your neighbor's overgrown lawn. What was that like?

PETE: Those goats were surly. You ever look into a goat's eyes? It's like they can read your thoughts. Weird.

Q5

PLAYBOY: Would you guys consider yourselves as crusaders for justice?

RED: Wow. That question made me throw up in my own mouth a little.

Q6

PLAYBOY: Okay... So how does Hagggar fit into this equation?

PETE: It's like that old saying: "If something's worth doing, it's worth doing right."

RED: Hagggar gets it.

Q7

PLAYBOY: Truthfully, did you guys wear Hagggar prior to this gig?

PETE: Yep. Plus one of Red's old buddies works for Hagggar. He threw our names into the ring during casting.

RED: My good buddy, Dane. We call him that because he's got a "neck" like a Great Dane.

Q8

PLAYBOY: How are you adjusting to stardom?

RED: Can't stand the makeup. Before every shot some numbnuts is in your face with a freakin sponge.

PETE: Red almost called the whole deal off. Until they told him even John Wayne wore makeup. Then he was cool.

Q9

PLAYBOY: Any groupies?

RED: Just stop right there, pal. Word to the wise: When your wife lets you appear in Playboy, DON'T push it.

Q10

PLAYBOY: Duly noted. So do you guys feel like notoriety has changed you?

PETE: We were never like these aspiring actors passing out headshots. Hagggar picked us because of who we are, not who we wish we could be.

RED: Nice quote, Pete!

Q11

PLAYBOY: In the Making Things Right intro, there's a vignette of you two wrestling with your shirts off. What's the deal?

RED: Just because you have an issue that needs resolving the old fashion way, it doesn't mean your shirt has to suffer.

Q12

PLAYBOY: It looks like you were sorta oiled up when you were wrestling. What's up with that?

PETE AND RED: Next question.

Q13

PLAYBOY: Did you grow up together?

RED: We met in school. Old school. Get it?

PETE: Where we come from, trust isn't easily earned.

Q14

PLAYBOY: At the risk of getting sappy, what does it take to earn that kind of bond?

PETE: Dependability through thick and thin. Red's 50-inch flat screen doesn't hurt either.

RED: Fate may choose our in-laws. But we all get to choose our friends.

Q15

PLAYBOY: You guys ever been in a serious fight with each other?

PETE: Nah, we're too old to fight...actually, correction: We're too old to fight each other.

Q16

PLAYBOY: Pete, has your son started wearing Hagggar now that his dad is the face of the brand?

PETE: Nah, he's 15. If I can get him to keep his jeans above his crack, I'll feel like I've done my job.

RED: He'll come around once he starts growing consistent facial hair.

Q17

PLAYBOY: Sounds like a tough house.

PETE: Depends. A good dad knows when to be a pal, and when to drop the hammer. He's a great kid. But he's also a teenager.

RED: Ah, to be a teenager again. You only have two things on your mind: chicks, and...yeah, chicks.

Q18

PLAYBOY: As experts in manliness, what's it going to take to bring toughness back into style?

RED: We need to return to some core values. Like this kid I just interviewed for a job. I shake his hand and he gives me a bunch of wet noodles. I mean...

PETE: That's strikes one and two! Without even throwing a pitch!

Q19

PLAYBOY: Sounds like perfect fodder for Making Things Right.

RED: It would be like a manhood intervention. Except without all the crying. Or talking.

Q20

PLAYBOY: You guys obviously take your mission very seriously.

RED: Nincompoops and jackass neighbors everywhere, tread lightly.

PETE: Now if you'll excuse us, we're gonna go admire the architectural design of the Grotto.



employee of the month

One Hot Property

MOVE OVER, MR. FURLEY—CHRISTINE STEVENSEN OF MINNESOTA IS OUR NEW FAVORITE LANDLORD

PLAYBOY: So you're the master of the house?

CHRISTINE: Yes, I rehab and then rent properties.

PLAYBOY: Would you consider yourself a handywoman?

CHRISTINE: I guess. My forte is really painting and handling the trim.

PLAYBOY: What do you like best about your job?

CHRISTINE: Going home, sitting down and having that first cold beer after a long day.

PLAYBOY: Drinking beer at home? It's official: You are a handywoman. Shouldn't you be out painting the town red?

CHRISTINE: It's too cold up here to be running around outside. What else am I supposed to do? In fact, I'm currently installing a beer tap in my house.

PLAYBOY: Do you have any work-related horror stories?

CHRISTINE: My first renters were being evicted on a Monday, so that Sunday they decided to throw a party for the Vikings game and invited 300 people. They trashed the house. The cops came, and they even trashed two police cars. It was a mess.

PLAYBOY: The Vikings must have been playing the Packers. Why is a sweet girl like you dealing with riffraff like that?

CHRISTINE: I can take care of myself. You'll never see me pull any of that fake diva crap. I'm a real woman.

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.

sarcastically yours

Oh, Danny Boy

COMEDIAN DANIEL TOSH GETS ON OUR NERVES

What's your relation to reggae legend Peter Tosh, one of the original Wailers? He was a bad father and is dead to me. And to everyone, for that matter. What does the name Daniel mean? Comedy superstar. No, it means "God is my judge." Is he? Only on Sundays. Can we call you Danny Boy? I wish you wouldn't. How about D-Tosh? Yes, if I can call your magazine pansy porn. Is white guilt funny? If it's done by a Mexican. Is it as funny as angry black people? Yes, but don't tell them that or they'll beat you up. Do you have black friends? One's Cuban—is that close? What ethnic group is angriest with you? It's a five-way tie. How are you different from other comics? I don't lip-synch my jokes in concert. Are you the next Dane Cook? That's what my bio says. Do we need another Dane Cook? One's plenty. How did your parents fuck you up? My mother would only breast-feed my friends. Are you capable of sincerity? Sure, whatever. What offends you? Nudity. Do you like TV? It beats reading magazines. Have you had cosmetic surgery? No, God just did a really good job on me. Why do you have so many gay fans? Because you can see Margaret Cho only so many times. Do comedians have groupies? Yes. What are they like? Whores. Why don't you use segues between bits? Speaking of whores, I'm not good at segues.

*Daniel Tosh's Comedy Central special, **Daniel Tosh: Completely Serious**, is currently available on DVD.*

brown out

The Mighty Buck

FAREWELL TO ONE OF PLAYBOY'S LEGENDARY CARTOONISTS

Buck Brown, whose cartoons lampooned racial issues and sexual mores, recently died at the age of 71. A regular contributor since 1962, Brown published nearly 600 cartoons in *PLAYBOY*. With interviewer Alex Haley and Playmate Jennifer Jackson, Brown

was one of several African Americans to break barriers in these pages during the civil rights era. Yet Brown was more than a black cartoonist; he was a master cartoonist, adept at challenging the status quo but not obsessed with it. His work was, above all, funny. Fittingly, his signature creation was Granny, a libidinous elderly white lady. We'll miss you, Buck.



"It must be a trap!"



airing them out



In Sirius Trouble

RADIO HONCHOS SHOCKED—SHOCKED—BY NUDITY

The *Playboy Radio Morning Show's* visit to the Sirius studios in New York was an adventure. The stated plan was for the hosts and guest expert Bridget Marquardt to evaluate some aspiring Playmates; little did Sirius expect its lobby would become what host Kevin Klein calls *Tits-a-palooza 2007*. "We kept telling the girls not to get naked," he says, "but they just didn't want to keep their robes on. It was like a nudist resort with microphones." While nobody on hand seemed upset by the goings-on, our radio partners worried that some visitors wouldn't be so chill. The heat coming into Klein's headset was intense. "The Sirius guy was yelling in my ear, 'No more nipples!'" he recalls. "'Abort all nudity, or we will pull the plug!'" Klein's co-host, Andrea Lowell, wasn't exactly part of the solution. "I showed my tits a few times," she says. "I didn't think they'd get so upset."

virtual paradise



Fantasy Island

WHO NEEDS TATTOO AND MR. ROARKE?

In the anarchic world of *Second Life*, an online community 8.5 million members strong, the new hot spot is the Rabbit Head-shaped *Playboy Island*. Surrounded by beaches and tiki-torch-lit pavilions, the island's main structure contains a version of the *Playboy* store where avatars can suit up in official *Playboy* duds. Comely Bunnies are on duty to answer your questions or just shoot the breeze. The joint starts hopping after dark. Take the elevator to the second-story lounge where live DJs spin tunes and *Second Life's* beautiful people shake it on the dance floor. Make a love connection amid the dry ice and strobes, and who knows? You may end up getting friendly in the replica of the Mansion's famous Grotto.

hot boîtes

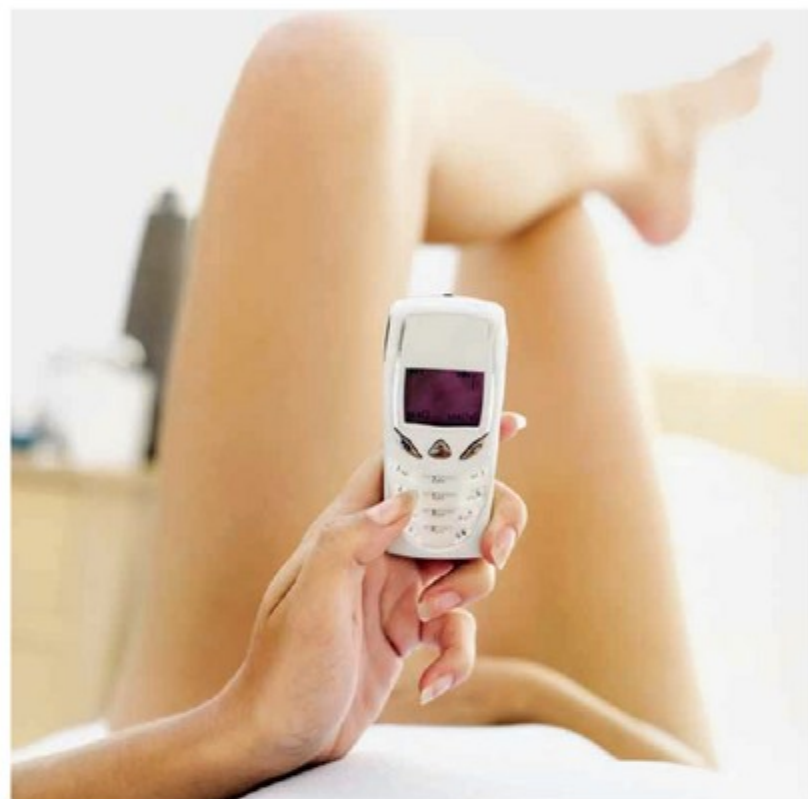


Ace of Clubs

DOWNTOWN NEW YORK'S JAZZ MECCA

A lesson from *Playboy.com's* list of the top 10 jazz clubs, compiled by aficionado Steve Dollar: "Max Gordon was a law-school dropout when he opened this cellar space in 1935, little knowing that his modest hangout would shape the future of America's greatest art form. The phrase 'Live at the Village Vanguard' has now adorned more than 100 albums, and the stage that hosted timeless performances by John Coltrane, Bill Evans, Sonny Rollins and Charles Mingus still resonates with their giant steps."

what they're thinking



According to a survey by Samsung, **39%** of single women have sent a text message that they regretted the next day, a feeling known as "text shame."

Dig This

Since the U.S. government heightened surveillance of the Mexican border following 9/11, more than **50** tunnels have been discovered. To date, **\$2.7 million** has been spent on filling at least **6** of them.



book of pointless records

1,502

Weight in pounds of the world's largest pumpkin, verified at a Rhode Island weigh-off in October 2006.

Steady Streams

According to analysts at Ellacoya Networks, YouTube videos account for nearly **10%** of all Internet traffic.

price check

\$2,640



Amount paid at auction for a pill bottle that once contained Elvis Presley's prescription medication.

Nocturnal Admissions

About **8%** of dreams include sex; of those, **4%** result in an orgasm. Surveys found that men dream of multiple partners **twice** as often as women do; women are **twice** as likely to dream of public figures.



Feeling the Earth Move

Given the rate of movement through space of the Earth, the solar system, the Milky Way galaxy and the universe itself, British scientists calculate that during an average act of sexual intercourse, lasting **7 minutes, 54 seconds**, the Earth travels **89,180,153 miles**.

Undergrad Overview

59% will attend more than one college.

Right to Bare Self

Due to a ruling that states women are equally entitled as men to doff their tops in public, a New York woman who'd been picked up for baring her breasts recently accepted **\$29,000** to settle a civil rights lawsuit.



Slow Food

The average speed of Heinz ketchup leaving the bottle is **25 miles a year**.

Who the Hell Are You?

Contrary to popular belief, identity theft isn't an Internet-only phenomenon. How thieves do their dirty work:

Through the Internet: **16%**.
 Through stolen snail mail: **9%**.
 Through transactions conducted in stores, by mail or by telephone: **15%**.
 By friends, relatives, acquaintances or domestic employees: **15%**.
 From lost or stolen wallets, credit cards and checkbooks: **38%**.

R E V I E W S

m o v i e s



movie of the month

[IN THE VALLEY OF ELAH]

A PLAYBOY article resonates on the big screen

In May 2004 *PLAYBOY* published Mark Boal's *Death and Dishonor*, an investigative piece about a retired Army officer who refuses to accept that his soldier son has gone AWOL upon returning from combat in Iraq. His search unearths a possible military cover-up of his son's murder at the hands of his own platoon members. Among the readers of Boal's powerful article was Paul Haggis, the Oscar-winning director and co-writer of *Crash*. "I could barely speak after reading that article, I was so deeply saddened," says Haggis. He found a champion in Clint Eastwood, who commended it to the head of Warner Bros. That helped pave the way for Haggis to write and direct *In the Valley of Elah*, which fictionalizes elements of Boal's article and other true events in a character-rich mystery-thriller that doesn't pull its political punches. The adaptation stars Tommy Lee Jones, Susan Sarandon, Charlize Theron, Jason Patric, Josh Brolin, James Franco and a number of real-life servicemen. "It's too easy to make a movie that just says, 'War is bad,'" says Haggis. "I'm very proud of the men and women who go to Iraq and put their lives on the line. I hope the film makes audiences ask some of the troubling questions I ask myself about where we are as a nation. If you can find a way to make yourself as guilty as everyone else—and I think I am—then you've got the possibility of a good film."

"It's too easy to make a movie that just says, 'War is bad.'"

—Stephen Rebell

now showing

BUZZ

The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford

(Brad Pitt, Casey Affleck, Sam Rockwell) This brooding Western saga based on Ron Hansen's novel has young Ford saddling up with his gunslinging idol James, only to be so consumed by jealousy that he hatches a plan to snuff his hot-wired former hero.

Our call: Don't go expecting shoot-'em-up antics but instead a beautifully acted, powerfully directed, magnificently photographed meditation on a vanished American way of life.



Michael Clayton

(George Clooney, Tom Wilkinson, Tilda Swinton) Clooney's Clayton is a burned-out fixer for a powerful law firm. He gets called in to do damage control when a guilt-ridden colleague's mental meltdown threatens to derail a nasty multimillion-dollar class-action lawsuit brought against a chemical company.

Our call: Writer-director Tony Gilroy's riff on the theme "Is there anything sadder than a guy for whom it's too late?" is a sharp, complex, well-acted thriller for grown-ups.



The Kingdom

(Jamie Foxx, Jennifer Garner, Jeremy Piven) It's balls-out action sprinkled with explosive geopolitics as an FBI agent leads a team of specialists into Riyadh to destroy the perpetrators of a deadly anti-American attack. Disoriented by the culture, the team takes assistance from a sympathetic Saudi cop.

Our call: Despite the annoying clichés of you-are-there, shaky-cam cinematography, the direction, convincing cast and pulse-pounding finale are a winning combination.



The Darjeeling Limited

(Owen Wilson, Adrien Brody, Jason Schwartzman) After tragedy befalls their parents, three brothers go on a train trip through India in an attempt to renew their family bond. When smuggling a poisonous snake gets them booted off the train, their further adventures in self-discovery don't turn out as expected.

Our call: Whether or not you find this journey too retro-trippy, laid-back and quirky for your taste, we think anytime Wes Anderson is in the driver's seat, the ride is worth taking.



dvd of the month

[**KNOCKED UP**]

Writer-director Judd Apatow gives birth to a new breed of romantic comedy

In creating the funny, richly entertaining blockbuster *Knocked Up*, writer-director Judd Apatow (*The 40-Year-Old Virgin*) plays the fascinating beauty-and-the-beast gambit. When blubbery, bong-hitting slacker Ben Stone (Seth Rogen) beds blonde TV hottie Alison Scott (Katherine Heigl) after a boozy night at a bar—thus yeasting the film's titular oven bun—you think, Yeah, right. Apatow's gift, though, is in setting up this premise and running with it, allowing the couple's relationship to evolve believably over the term of the pregnancy. *Knocked Up* feels surprisingly smooth and true. **Best extra:** The *Finding Ben Stone* series, which takes you through a mock casting process, featuring actors James Franco and Michael Cera. Also on HD DVD. **★★★★** —Greg Fagan



28 WEEKS LATER (2007) Another Rage-virus outbreak puts British civilians in the crossfire between crazed cannibals and the U.S. Army. The stylized action is bloody good fun. **Best extra:** Flash-animated graphic-novel segments. **★★★**—Brian Thomas



DEATH PROOF (2007) and **PLANET TERROR** (2007) **UNRATED EXTENDED DIRECTOR'S CUTS** Quentin Tarantino and Robert Rodriguez's *Grindhouse* gets split into two longer thrill rides. **Best extra:** Multiple behind-the-scenes featurettes. **★★★★½** —Matt Steigbigel



REIGN OVER ME (2007) Adam Sandler plays a devastated man who lost his family on 9/11. He reconnects with old roommate Don Cheadle, and they tackle their issues with unexpected freshness. **Best extra:** A production journal. Also on Blu-ray. **★★★** —G.F.



DELIVERANCE: 35TH ANNIVERSARY DELUXE EDITION (1972) John Boorman's tense man-versus-wilderness squealer resonates even more today. **Best extra:** A shot-by-shot breakdown of the climax. Also on HD DVD and Blu-ray. **★★★★½** —Buzz McClain



tease frame



In *Monster's Ball* (pictured) Halle Berry loses her top in the heat of the moment. The Oscar winner loses her husband in the new drama *Things We Lost in the Fire*, co-starring Benicio Del Toro.

easter egg hunt

Forgotten footage and surprise nude scenes are a few of the DVD Easter eggs you can discover with a little patience and remote-control massaging. Here are 10 buried bonus features worth digging for.



- 1. MEMENTO** (limited edition)—If Christopher Nolan's reverse narrative overwhelms you, scroll backward from the end credits to view the story.
- 2. X-MEN** (original edition)—Spider-Man scurries in to back up three heroes, only to realize he's in the wrong movie.
- 3. V FOR VENDETTA** (two-disc special edition)—Jay-Z ain't got nuthin' on trash-talkin' actor-cum-rapper Natalie Portman in this SNL segment. Word.



Natalie Portman's hilarious SNL rapping rant is hidden on the *V for Vendetta* DVD.

- 4. BEDAZZLED** (special edition)—Liz Hurley helps Brendan Fraser party like a rock star in this axed sequence.
- 5. THE OFFICE SPECIAL**—Watch angelic Ricky Gervais lip-synch to "If You Don't Know Me by Now" and lose it during every shot.
- 6. STAR WARS EPISODE III: REVENGE OF THE SITH**—Show some love for an animated hip-hop Yoda getting jiggy with a few storm troopers.
- 7. THE BEASTMASTER**—Check out brief flashes of flesh from sexy Tanya Roberts in these silent outtakes.
- 8. THE 40-YEAR-OLD VIRGIN** (unrated edition)—An improv scene illustrates more ways to "Whack It."
- 9. DAWN OF THE DEAD** (ultimate edition)—A Buddhist monk reveals that he can find inner peace and harmony but still enjoy face-ripping carnage.
- 10. STAR WARS TRILOGY**—See the elusive *Revenge of the Jedi* trailer.

Tired of fiddling with your remote? Get step-by-step instructions for finding these Easter eggs by visiting playboy.com/magazine. —Bryan Reesman

superfreak

[HIS ROYAL BADNESS?]

Calvin Harris brings back the sound of dodgy 1980s synth funk

There's a particular sound from the 1980s that can make people of a certain age wince. You'll recognize it from Cameo, Rick James and *Controversy*-era Prince. It's not the icy, futuristic pulse of vintage electro or the meaty break beats of early rap, both of which are perennially exhumed by DJs and musicians. It's the awkward sound formed by electronic hand claps, synth fills and funk bass—1980s R&B—and when



it went out of fashion, it really went out of fashion. All those DeBarge records? The basement was not far enough away—they had to go. But just when it looked as if that sound might never, ever reappear, even ironically, along comes **Calvin Harris**, a Scottish bedroom producer who can't get enough of it. Harris—whose sly, slinky debut LP, *I Created Disco*, is out this month on Sony—is the best of a new crop of young, hip artists mining this sound. As with much of the postpunk material that new bands have recently recycled, part of the appeal of mid-1980s funk is its gawkiness.

Harris is smart enough to acknowledge this with such songs as "Acceptable in the 80s," a track as catchy as the cream of the original genre, featuring Harris singing falsetto over cheesy gurgles of that era's uncool synth sounds. Elsewhere, such as on "The Girls," Harris slides comfortably into Hot Chip territory—or rather, Hot Chip-meets-Rockwell's "Somebody's Watching Me" territory. This is the party record of the year.

PLASTISCINES • LP1

French rock has long been an undeserved punch line, but anyone who has heard Jacques Dutronc's mid-1960s output knows Paris had sounds even back then to rival the grittiest British Invasion material. Now the city has produced a combo able to hold its own against the Scandinavian garage-band explosion and also serve as a Gallic answer to the Donnas. These girls make stripped-down guitar rock, and with most songs clocking in under two minutes, they do it right. (Caroline) **YYY** —Tim Mohr

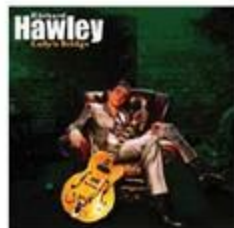


THE GO! TEAM • Proof of Youth

This jubilant U.K. troupe made a name with its childlike enthusiasm, schoolyard-chant vocals and aggressively unorthodox approach to sampling, taking in every possible genre and style of music and spinning it all into a sparkling, upbeat funfest. The collective's signature treble-heavy, blissed-out cut-and-paste sound is once again in full effect on this second album, but it accommodates a surprising range of music, extending here even to Belle & Sebastian pop. (Sub Pop) **YYY½** —T.M.

RICHARD HAWLEY • Lady's Bridge

The former Pulp guitarist makes gorgeous throwback music, his deep voice crooning over guitar twang that evokes the era when swing metamorphosed into rockabilly. He is also a pop classicist, floating his songs—all of which are exquisite on this remarkably consistent album—on arrangements rich with strings, pianos and horns. The effect is like a modern-day version of Gene Vincent, whose "The Night Is So Lonely" wouldn't be out of place on this record. (Mute) **YYY** —T.M.



quick hits

[HOT TUNES LIST]

You want the best stuff for your iPod, but who has the time to find it, eh? Editors do. We've got you sorted, mate: Just go download these.

"Sheila," **Jamie T** Attitude of the Libertines and sass of the Streets, with Brian Wilson-meets-Beasties production aspirations.

"Koop Island Blues," **Koop** Late-night lounging with a tiki feel from a Stockholm jazz-and-downbeat collective.

"Pure Gold," **Heavy Trash** Jon Spencer's roots project is Sun Records rock distilled to its sludgy, pompadoured essence.

"Sick Hipster Nursed by Suicide Girl," **Film School Nu** shoegazing with aggressive Spacemen 3 or Swervedriver edge.

"Axis Mundi," **Magik Markers** Sonic Youth-approved noise duo with screeching guitars and Kills-like girl vocals.

"Choci Loni," **Young Marble Giants** From reissue of classic postpunk LP *Colossal Youth*, it's taut but restrained proto-indie.

"We Will Break Our Own Hearts," **Small Sins** Bubbling electro-folk from Toronto act's second album, *Mood Swings*.

"La Esquina," **Federico Aubele** Gotan Project-like meld of Argentinian guitar and Thievery Corp-produced beats.

"This Aching Deal," **Shocking Pinks** Woozy, washed-out lo-fi pop genius from one-man New Zealand band.

"The White Flash," **Modeselektor** Radiohead's Thom Yorke brings vocals to the hammering Euro-crunk festivities.

"Head Games," **Five O'Clock Heroes** Jagged, soaring indie somewhere between Franz Ferdinand and the Police.

"Moon Pulls," **Múm** Less of an atmospheric smear and more of a mournful piano-based ballad from the Icelanders.

"Cut the Meat," **Drug Rug** Imagine a musical point where the Carter Family, Mazzy Star and the White Stripes intersect.

"The Party Punch," **Oh No! Oh My!** Hints of Tapes 'n Tapes, Arcade Fire and the Shins color this gentle, inventive pop.

"She Took All the Money," **Black Francis** Rollicking acoustic guitar and *shangalangs* from main Pixie.

game of the month

[LADY KILLER]

A gorgeous brawler slices her way to the top of the PS3's must-have list

Nariko has a problem. The ancient sword she must wield to save her world drains her life force as she eviscerates waves of invading enemy hordes. Better work quickly, then. Spectacular and immediately engaging, *Heavenly Sword* (PS3) will have even novices creating action sequences worthy of Peter Jackson. Its stunning, revenge-driven heroine keeps the blood splattering as she switches combat modes on the fly: dual rapiers, a chain-based distance weapon and a massive two-handed blade. Button mashing works, but players are rewarded for mastering all three fighting styles. Whether you're hacking through arenas full of gladiators or facing off against horrific behemoths, this game's frenetic pace, gorgeous visuals and plentiful carnage will keep you coming back for more.

YYY½ —John Gaudiosi



PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 4 (360) Deftly balancing precision with fun, the franchise adds more than 120 motorcycles and classic cars, as well as insanely detailed tracks. Team matches bring a new dimension to online competition. YYY½

—Damon Brown



CLIVE BARKER'S JERICHO (PC, PS3, 360) In this supernatural shooter you'll jump between characters and switch between historical epochs with your squad of covert specialists to confront the root of all evil. Twitchy, gory fun. YYY

—C.H.



SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE AWAKENED (PC) Victorian-era sleuthing meets eldritch occultism in this literary mash-up of Lovecraft and Conan Doyle. It's old-school adventure fleshed out with mini games, puzzles and solid acting. YYY

—Chris Hudak



SKATE (PS3, 360) A deep, simlike approach offers authentic physics, along with cameras that focus on your footwork and deliver a great sensation of speed. Be warned: The learning curve is knee-scrapingly steep. YYY

—Marc Saltzman



JOHN WOO PRESENTS STRANGLEHOLD (PC, PS3, 360) Woo's bullet ballet makes ideal game fodder. You'll belly surf on dim sum carts through enemy-filled teahouses in slow motion, handguns blazing. A heady, violent romp. YYY½

—Scott Jones



BLACKSITE: AREA 51 (PC, PS3, 360) Unsettling creatures, a paranoid narrative and *Rainbow Six*-style squad tactics aren't quite enough to put this competent effort over the top. After a genuinely eerie first hour, the hohums begin to set in. YYY½

—S.J.



play back

[THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING AUTO]

How *GTA* changed everything

On October 16 Rockstar Games will release *Grand Theft Auto IV*, which features an incredibly detailed Liberty City (read: New York) and the story of an Eastern European immigrant adrift in its underworld. In all the fuss it's easy to forget that just 10 years ago *GTA* was an obscure blip on the cultural radar. But over the past decade it has changed the nature of video games forever. Here are four reasons why:



OPEN-ENDED GAMEPLAY David Jones conceived *Race 'n' Chase* (later renamed *Grand Theft Auto*) as an advanced version of *Pac-Man* using cars. Jones's 2-D game featured enduring bits of DNA such as gang alliances and cheeky humor, but its "sandbox" gameplay would come to define the series (and many others).



OPT-IN STORYTELLING Sam and Dan Houser of Rockstar Games took over the franchise in 1999, turning it into a 3-D action adventure and weaving a rich story throughout. Up to this point story-driven games usually forced you down specific paths—the more choice you had, the less story you got.



GTA gave players a story and the freedom to ignore it.

CELEBS LOSE THEIR SHAME Gaming's early years saw a lot of B-list actors and acting. *GTA* featured work by Samuel L. Jackson, Joe Pantoliano, Robert Loggia and many others. Games now routinely sport A-list talent.



GAMES AS ANTICHRIST *GTA* let people do anything from killing cops to patronizing hookers. "For shame!" said the morality patrol. The game's attitudes were blamed for real-world tragedies, and when a crude sex minigame was found in *San Andreas*, politicians and parents flipped. The public flogging cost the publisher \$50 million in recalls and gave gaming its Elvis-on-*Ed Sullivan* moment. Just as with Elvis, 10 years from now it will all seem adorably quaint.

—D.B.

american conflicts

[DENIS JOHNSON]

The author of *Jesus' Son* reminds us that some war stories are too big for celluloid

"War is 90 percent myth," proclaims aging cold warrior and CIA operative Colonel Sands to his nephew Skip, an agency language specialist eager for action, at the start of Denis Johnson's magisterial Vietnam novel *Tree of Smoke*. This may explain why, despite many fine books to date, our most rigorously analyzed yet stubbornly murky conflict has found its most resonant summations on celluloid. No longer. A hard-drinking soldier-scholar, the colonel instantly joins the ranks of the great wartime characters—real and imagined—evoking Douglas MacArthur and Colonel Kurtz in equal measure. As such he also embodies America's doomed foray into Southeast Asia in all its well-intentioned blundering and decadent amorality. The colonel and his nephew—the Ugly American and the quiet American, respectively—preside over a large cast of characters, gods and legends, shot through with doubles (agents, brothers, widows, friends), civil wars (Vietnam, late-1960s America, a generationally divided CIA) and arcane theology (predestination, superstition, ritual sacrifice). Johnson's prose propels the narrative forward without neglecting existential undertow or spiritual malaise. CIA buffs of Angletonian inclination may long for a deeper explication of the psyop—rich in biblical metaphor and ur-Soviet deception—but as with most covert schemes (and the colonel's trail), verifiable details dissipate like smoke. **KKKK**

—Andrew Hultkrans



the erotic eye

DO IT YOURSELF • Uwe Ommert

We owe photographer Ommert a debt of gratitude for giving his subjects full artistic control. Sure, he facilitated the process, helped arrange the mise-en-scènes, but then he left the room and relinquished the shutter trigger to a woman's hand. What's striking about the results is not just the range of physical beauty and attitudes but the joyful exhibitionism throughout. What's sexier than a woman eager to offer you a glimpse of her most private self? —Amy Grace Loyd



top 10

[TRIPPY BOOKS]

Novelist Jonathan Lethem's picks for mind-altering reads

The list below consists of books most likely to be enjoyed on psychotropic journeys, whether of the mild leafy variety or otherwise. Not that I'm recommending anything illegal. This is as opposed to another possible list of those books (from Thomas De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* to William Burroughs's *Junky* to Geoffrey O'Brien's *Dream Time*) that best represent drug activities literally. The works named here mostly skirt the depiction of personal chemistry experiments and set up their own version of an altered state inside a reader's mind—whether intoxicated or not.



The Man Who Was Thursday: G.K. Chesterton takes a surreal look at order and anarchy in turn-of-the-century London. **The Hunting of the Snark:** Lewis Carroll's absurd epic poem about an eccentric hunting party tracking a mythical beast. **The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch:** Philip K. Dick visits the future, where men and women vacation in Antarctica and take drugs to fashion their lives after those of their beloved Perky Pat dolls.



Burning Your Boats: The Collected Short Stories: Salman Rushdie called Angela Carter "a very good wizard" when she died. This collection spans her life's work. **Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas:** Hunter S. Thompson's wildly popular account of illicit activities in the city of sin remains a potent reminder that the American dream is often more manageable when you're stoned. **Trout Fishing in America:** Richard Brautigan's series of tales, including one about a character named Trout Fishing in America.

The Third Policeman: Flann O'Brien's Irish landscape gradually becomes distorted beyond recognition in an eerie mystery of proportions. **Fantastic Four (#1-101):** The first of the famously trippy Marvel Comics series by Jack Kirby and Stan Lee. **Ficciones:** The great Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges tells stories of secret nations and magical borderlines. **The Joy of Cooking or The Joy of Sex:** Written in 1931 and 1972, by Irma Rombauer and Alex Comfort, respectively, they're still the only how-to books one really needs.





Ultimate Ferrari

How does the world's most awe-inspiring car company celebrate its 60th birthday?

WE'RE ON THE storied grounds of the Ferrari factory in Maranello, Italy, standing next to Piero Lardi Ferrari, son of founder Enzo Ferrari. This alone should be sufficient to drop the jaw of any motor-sport enthusiast. Not that we're bragging. Next to Piero is the vehicle pictured above, the company's 60th-birthday present to the world. "This is truly a special car," he says. "It sets a new standard." The car is the 612 Sessanta ("sixty" in Italian). Based on the 612 Scaglietti, currently Ferrari's only four-seater, the Sessanta features signature wheels and trim, two-tone livery and an electrochromic glass roof with adjustable opacity. When you sit in the cockpit (inset, above), you feel as if Monica Bellucci is giving you a naked bear hug. Even the floorboard rug displays unparalleled craftsmanship. Piero wouldn't hand us the keys, but under the hood this car is basically the same 612 Scaglietti we know and love. With its 540 bhp, six-liter V12 and six-speed F1 gearbox, it'll rocket from zero to 62 (100 kilometers an hour) in 4.2 seconds. Top out at 199 miles an hour with Vivaldi blasting from the Bose media system, and you're living. The factory is producing only 60 Sessantas, each dedicated to a defining moment in the company's history, which is commemorated with a unique badge on the dash. You can't buy one of these cars; all were sold to handpicked customers for hundreds of thousands. But you can dream. For a slide show of 60 years of Ferraris, go to playboy.com/magazine.



Wheels of Fortune

FEW OBJECTS ON earth are as prized as vintage Ferrari racing cars. The priciest beauties sold at this spring's auction at the Fiorano racetrack next to the Ferrari factory: **1. 1962 330 TRI/LM** The car that won Le Mans in 1962: **\$9,418,750.** **2. 1953 340/375 MM Berlinetta Competizione** Won at Spa that year in the hands of legends Nino Farina and Mike Hawthorn: **\$5,801,950.** **3. 1970 512 S** At the time, it was the fastest Ferrari ever built, capable of 230 mph: **\$3,616,800.** **4. 1966 Dino 206 SP** This car's shocking space-age body took the world by storm. It placed third at the Nürburgring: **\$3,315,400.**

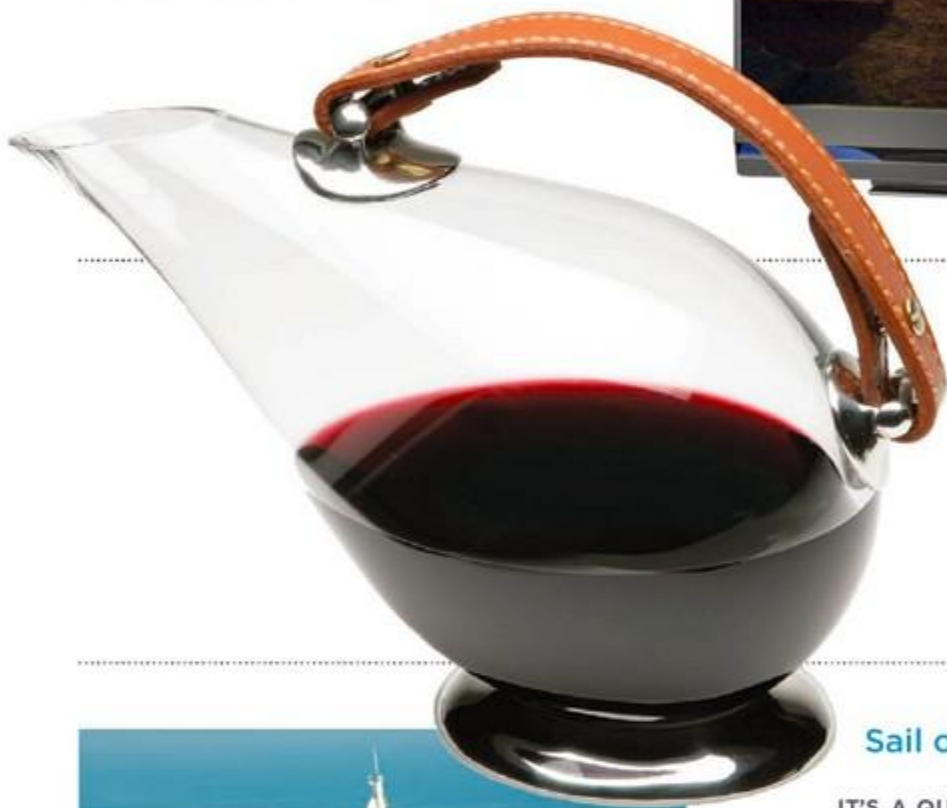
About Time

IT'S HARD TO find a conversation-worthy watch from an American company. We've looked, and the Swiss are hard to beat. But this Accutron Gemini skeleton (bulova.com), new this year, caught our attention. See-through with a sapphire crystal and clear case back, it has water resistance down to 100 meters. What's more, it's one of the few American self-winding watches, and at a reasonable \$1,295, you don't need to tap a Swiss bank account to own one.



Screening Process

DLP SETS HAVE long been the Jan Brady of the TV market: solid, dependable and well priced but bulky and with far less wow factor than their Marcia-like flat-screen counterparts. Well, think of Mitsubishi's WD-73833 (\$5,900, mitsubishi-tv.com) as Jan's coming-out party. The company sliced its 73-inch, 1080p sets from 200-plus pounds to a svelte 92.4 and squeezed its DLP guts into a chassis that's just 17.5 inches deep. Now that's what we call marriage material.



A Little Breather

IN THE *APOCALYPSE NOW* documentary *Hearts of Darkness* an obsessive and indulgent Francis Ford Coppola insists the red wine used in a segment breathe from the bottle for two hours. If only he had a decanter like this from Peugeot (\$250, broadwaypanhandler.com) to turbocharge the blossoming of his nectar. Arguably, he could have saved thousands—and the scene.

Sail of the Century

IT'S A QUESTION with which every man must at some point wrestle: Do I buy a boat or an island? We've always been island people, but the Swan 131 (nautorgroup.com) is making us rethink our position. This 40-meter Finnish sweetheart is the biggest yacht the company has ever produced and is luxurious beyond compare. In keeping with Nautor's philosophy, the fiberglass-



and-foam-hulled 131 is equally adept at racing and cruising, and optional twin engines let her tootle along at 14 knots in a dead calm. Although that's leagues better than drifting in the horse latitudes for a few weeks, you could do worse than loll around in the beautifully appointed anegre wood cabin that sleeps six Brazilian models. Starting at around \$35 million, it's a darn sight cheaper than a chunk of the Caribbean—and more portable, to boot.

The Playboy Advisor

I was with two female friends in downtown Vegas when they decided to flash some passersby. As soon as they lifted their shirts, a cop came up and told us it's illegal. Some Vegas hotels allow topless sunbathing. I have traveled in Europe, and this is not a problem there. Why should it be illegal for a woman to expose her breasts?—M.S., Las Vegas, Nevada

It shouldn't be, and it won't be if "top-free" activists have their way. (They prefer that term to "topless," which brings to mind strip clubs.) By arguing that breasts are not "private parts" and that requiring only females to cover themselves is discriminatory, half-naked women scored legal victories in Washington, D.C., New York state, three Canadian provinces (Ontario, Saskatchewan and British Columbia) and assorted counties and municipalities. That doesn't mean police won't arrest a woman for baring her breasts, only that she has a better defense. Paul Rapoport, a nudist and former college professor who 10 years ago helped found the Topfree Equal Rights Association (tera.ca), says women should have the right to remove their tops wherever men can. "People always say to me, 'Well, a woman who walks without her shirt along the highway will cause accidents,'" he says. "But it's the driver's responsibility to keep his or her eyes on the road. More important, if women walked around all the time without tops, as men do, there would be no accidents." The law assumes female breasts are sexual when exposed, he says, "because men usually see them that way, and men make the rules about women's bodies. If you remove the sexual context, it's easier to see this as a simple matter of equality."

What is the definition of a blow job? My girlfriend says any mouth-to-penis contact qualifies. I say it's not a real blow job unless the man reaches orgasm; otherwise it's just foreplay. What is your take? A real blow job is at stake.—M.D., San Diego, California

We have our thoughts about this, but if your girlfriend will blow you only if she's right, then by all means she's right.

I have decided to break up with my girlfriend of six years. The problem is we are both in my best friend's wedding and it's still months away. I am the best man, and my girlfriend is maid of honor. She confronted me about how distant I have been, so she knows something is up. Do I end the relationship and potentially ruin my friend's wedding or lie to my girlfriend for a few months, knowing it will hurt her more when I go through with it?—M.T., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Tell her now. That will give you a few months to work through the drama and allow the news to circulate so other guests will know you are not together. This won't be easy, but



all you have to do is be civil to each other. If divorced parents can behave themselves for the sake of the bride and groom, so can you. Don't bring a date.

I know you can judge wine by smelling the bouquet, but what about scotch? I hear people describe a scotch as having hints of vanilla or almond or three or four other flavors, but I don't pick them up.—M.F., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

*The more scotches you sample, the better you will become at dissecting their flavors. On his site, scotchdoc.com, David McCoy lists nearly 100 descriptive terms that could be applied, including the good (molasses, honey, custard pudding), the bad (spent fireworks) and the ugly (turpentine). "A perfumery in Paris once identified 28 aromas in one single malt," he tells us, "although even an experienced sniffer may recognize only seven or eight." Scotch lovers are so serious about aroma, McCoy says, because most of its taste is processed through the olfactory glands. Before you sip, raise the glass under your nose until it's at about chin level. Take a good sniff, then add water and sniff again. "You'll be blown away by the aromas the water releases," McCoy says. For more from the doc, see blog.playboy.com under *The Advisor*.*

My shirts get yellow sweat stains under the arms. Is there a way to get rid of them?—R.T., Glendale, Arizona

These stains are notoriously difficult to remove, especially after the shirts have gone through a heat cycle. The best strategy is prevention: Wear an undershirt or rinse the underarms of your shirts in cold water immediately after removing them (or as soon as possible; don't stop any foreplay). If you take your shirts to the cleaners, ask them to prespot for perspi-

ration. If you use an antiperspirant, consider switching to a deodorant or at least apply only a thin layer and allow it to dry before putting on your shirt. Before washing, attack old stains by dabbing the area with detergent, ammonia, white vinegar or, as a last resort, a bleach stick or hydrogen peroxide. Always pretest for color fastness. But don't get your hopes up.

A female reader wrote in June to say she and her girlfriends aren't getting enough sex from their boyfriends. I am appalled that you would say you don't believe her. You compound your error by implying guys are off the hook if they've worked a double shift. As a woman, I work as hard as any man, and when I get home from a 10- to 14-hour shift, there damn well better be some fucking taking place. Times are changing.—C.M., Boston, Massachusetts

They are changing for the better, it seems.

My soon-to-be ex is always "tired." It feels horrible being rejected by the guy who is supposed to be more into me than any other. This happens to women far too often.—E.S., Norman, Oklahoma

It's a terrible feeling, we know.

I agree with the assessment offered about men these days. I am 46 and once had a 27-year-old boyfriend who wanted sex several times a day for the first year but then backpedaled to about once a month. If I tried to initiate, he would say something like "Let's not start something we can't finish" or "I'm doing the best I can." Men claim they want sex constantly only because they are desperately trying to keep up the persona of a stud.—C.E., Boise, Idaho

We understand your frustration, but you obviously can't reach this conclusion based on one guy. No man we know claims to want sex constantly, but we are typically ready for action if presented with a reasonable offer. That's why we are renewing our call for explanations from males who have grown disinterested. Are you depressed? Are you not sexually attracted to your partner but comfortable with her as a roommate? Is it easier to masturbate than negotiate? Dear God, man, what is it?

After reading the ongoing discussion about love, affection and sex, I decided to see what would happen if I acted like the guys in my wife's romance novels. I borrowed a few and read every mind-numbing word. At first my wife seemed flattered while being romanced by her "new" lover, but I saw no difference in her behavior, especially in the bedroom. She did not act like the women in the books: She was never at a loss for words, and she was never clumsy or silly because she was trying not to let me know how

much she wanted me. I asked why she didn't rip my clothes off after I had fulfilled her every need. She said she married me because she wanted to grow old with me, not because she wanted to be romanced for the rest of her life. She also agreed that some women live in this blurred reality. My fantasy is for several blondes with big tits to cater to my needs. So the next time my wife needs a shoulder to cry on or needs me to be there for her, I'm going to go to the bar until I get my fantasy.—L.B., Phoenix, Arizona

Good luck with that. It sounds as if you may have suffered brain damage.

It's too bad that a couple, out of love and respect for each other, will tolerate relatives and friends who are not to their liking but refuse to accommodate the partner with the healthier sexual need.—S.R., Riverhead, New York

It's best to avoid the word "accommodate" when discussing sex with a reluctant spouse. The word "relative" isn't good either.

As far as whether a wife should have sex with her husband even when she's not in the mood, what about the wedding vow she took to love him? To me, that means what is important to your spouse becomes important to you. Sexual fulfillment is extremely important to most men. Accordingly, a wife who does not make her husband's sex life a priority is violating her vows. She should not be surprised or outraged if he responds by violating his vow to be faithful. Without affairs and divorce, the withholder would always win.—L.W., Houston, Texas

What does the "withholder" win—a life without sex? That's no prize. We appreciate your point but would never equate a passive lack of interest with an active betrayal. Besides, there is no such creature as a "husband's sex life" or a "wife's sex life." One exists only in the context of the other. Firing both barrels is always the goal.

For many years I have used a moisturizer on my face in the morning, then washed with warm water at night. Now that I'm in my 40s, I've decided it's time to get serious about slowing down Father Time. A trip to the department store left me dazzled at how far men's skin care has come. But the salespeople's explanations of their products were superficial, and everything was described in the context of a woman's regimen. Can you recommend a simple skin-care program for men?—G.S., Chicago, Illinois

You're on the right track if you're using an aftershave-balm moisturizer in the morning; all you need to add at this point is an overnight moisturizer in the evening. "At 40 you don't yet need a product designed to repair the skin," explains our skin-care correspondent, Donald Charles Richardson. He suggests, at the extravagant end, a line by Davi created using a by-product of Napa Valley grape skins and seeds. Its products start at \$175 each, so

don't say we didn't warn you. They're at Bergdorf Goodman (bergdorfgoodman.com). Jack Black products are more moderately priced (getjackblack.com), as are those from Kinerase (kinerase.com) and the Refinery, a British collection just launching in the U.S. (available at Barneys and www.the-refinery.com).

Earlier this year a woman shared her frustration about not being able to bring her husband to climax through oral sex. Your advice focused on technique, but the mental aspect is equally important, if not more so. I had this problem as a young man. My first partner made me promise never to come in her mouth, making it clear she thought it was disgusting. One day we were engaged in 69, and she nearly made me climax. I remembered my promise, and the urge to come disappeared instantly. I was amazed at this involuntary reaction—and disappointed. I had problems reaching orgasm from oral with every partner until I met a woman who told me, "Nice girls like to do it too," which I took as code for "I get the same satisfaction making you come with my mouth as you do making me come that way."—R.R., Kansas City, Missouri

You're absolutely correct. The woman's approach is 67 percent of the equation.

I found a used condom in my fiancé's room. When I confronted him, he said he uses condoms when he masturbates to avoid making a mess. Have you ever heard of this? Is it common? Is he cheating and using this as an excuse?—A.W., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

It sounds like bullshit, given that most men hate wearing condoms even for sex. However, when we brought up your dilemma on the Playboy Radio morning show (Sirius 198), several callers insisted they have worn condoms while masturbating for easier cleanup. We remain skeptical, but these claims introduced reasonable doubt. Without further evidence of infidelity, we suggest you just file this away.

I'm a 23-year-old woman and thought I would never find true love until four months ago when I met the man of my dreams. My happiness came to an abrupt end when he told me he wanted to continue as "intimate friends." After a few weeks of that, I asked why he had ended our relationship. He said, "I was afraid of making you unhappy or making myself unhappy or both of us being unhappy." Is there something I should be doing to ease him from such a life-hindering fear?—B.T., Los Angeles, California

He's making you unhappy, so the plan isn't working. Gather yourself and start walking. Don't look back or you will turn into a pile of condoms.

In June you advised men to "grab some lube, stroke your erection and see who shows up in your fantasies" to determine their sexual orientation. Life and

human sexuality are not so simple. I have been an active heterosexual for 60 years yet enjoy gay fantasies. Why? Because homosexuality is considered by so many people to be dirty, perverted, an abomination, taboo, sinful and disgusting—the perfect material for fantasies! When I was younger I considered suicide because I read somewhere that heterosexuals fantasize only about the opposite sex. Please print this letter to help any straight boys who may be concerned about their homoerotic daydreams.—D.M., Aurora, California

We're happy to. If you read our response carefully, you'll see we suggest only that a man is heterosexual if women "consistently" show up in his fantasies. We included some wiggle room because one can never tell what detours might tempt a dirty, perverted, sinful mind.

I'm 23 and work for a Fortune 500 company. My co-workers are all 10 to 20 years older than I am. Occasionally someone will ask my age, which I find not only inappropriate but also embarrassing for me and usually for them when they realize how much younger I am. Is there a good way to avoid answering this question without coming off like a jerk?—J.G., Indianapolis, Indiana

It is inappropriate but not surprising, given the age difference. Unless you sense a condescending tone, we would answer in an open, straightforward, friendly manner. They may be asking because they are impressed by your work. Or they may simply be daydreaming about their lost youth, first job, the open road, etc. Don't let it distract you.

My best friend from college married a woman who is vocal about her liberal beliefs, which include criticizing the president, volunteering for environmental organizations, recycling everything and taking the bus. She has challenged me by asking how much I am doing to help the world. I think she is a hypocrite because she and my friend are desperately trying to have children and overpopulation is the biggest threat of all. Although I drive a luxury car, the "damage" they would do is far greater. Am I right? Is she a hypocrite?—D.C., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

We don't see the point of this argument. But she turns you on, doesn't she?

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



THE PLAYBOY FORUM

DEFEATING DYSFUNCTION

THE AUTHOR OF *BROKEN GOVERNMENT* URGES PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES TO FIX WASHINGTON'S FOULED-UP SYSTEMS

BY JOHN DEAN

It is long past time for Democrats to realize that a key to political success is paying attention to process issues. As the 2008 elections approach, it is vital that Democrats start holding Republicans accountable for their persistent abuse of the political process—not only for the Democrats' own electoral success but, more important, for the well-being of American democracy.

What is process? In William Safire's *New Political Dictionary* it's defined as "the majesty of the machinery; the inexorable procedures of government; more broadly, the American way of self-government." Safire says the term came into vogue in the mid-1970s as a short form of both "the democratic process" and "the decision-making process." Safire quotes an aide

to Jerry Brown as saying the then California governor drove people nuts with a quote from Gandhi: "The means are the ends in process." Brown makes a good point, because for Republicans the means are truly the ends.

The ruthlessness so common in contemporary conservative Republican politics has made that party particularly adept at taking advantage of process and using the machinery of government to its advantage—though it often breaks rules, traditions and laws in doing so.

Yes, Democrats criticize Republican policies, but they ignore the persistent abuses of process that have become normal Republican political behavior. Democratic distaste for addressing process issues first came to my attention following the 2004 presidential campaign, when I spoke to one of Senator John Kerry's top advisors. I was curious why Kerry had not pressed President Bush about the excessive secrecy he and Vice President Cheney had imposed on their administration. In fact, in the final days of that campaign, Dorothy Samuels, a writer for *The New York Times*, raised the same question. In a bylined editorial, Samuels confessed "to feeling disappointed over Senator Kerry's failure to home in hard on one of the more worrisome domestic policy developments of the past four years—namely the Bush administration's drastic expansion of needless government



secrecy." Kerry's advisor told me the campaign had not addressed this concern because "secrecy is a process issue." Process, apparently, was an area where the Democratic candidate did not go.

Robert Kuttner, co-editor of *The American Prospect*, was similarly told by Democrats at the outset of the 2004 elections that they were reluctant to criticize the Republicans' antidemocratic behavior in operating the House of Representatives because it involved matters of process. "Democrats are ambivalent about taking this issue to the country or to the press because many are convinced that nobody cares about process issues," he reported. Several Democrats and Democratic campaign consultants confirmed this was all but the official position of the party.

The party ignored these matters—and countless others—because the current inside-the-Beltway wisdom holds that the public is not interested in process. In fact, empirical data show this is wrong. A research team from the University of Nebraska, headed by John Hibbing and Elizabeth Theiss-Moore, was studying attitudes toward government institutions (Congress, the presidency, the Supreme Court) when it discovered the importance of process to Americans. Indeed, members of the team were taken aback by what they learned. They had assumed, like most political scientists, that Americans were confused by governmental processes while retaining at least a few clear policy desires. Their research, however, revealed it was the other way around: People do not find process complicated but do find policy to be so.

Hibbing and Theiss-Moore established that Americans are "influenced at least as much by the processes employed in the political system as by the particular outputs emanating from the process." For example, at the time they began their research they found that the Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas hearings were fresh in people's mind. Although few cared whether Thomas's nomination to the Supreme Court was confirmed, most had strong negative feelings about "the process leading to that decision: the way things looked, the way the Senate's hearings were run and how they unfolded,

ISRAEL SHOULDN'T GET A FREE PASS

REAL DEBATE IS NOT ANTI-SEMITIC

By Jonathan Tasini

and the Senate's structure, rules and norms." In short, average Americans have no trouble judging government institutions by how their key processes are carried out. Americans can relate to process because they know what is fair and what is not. They also know when officials are taking care of themselves or special interests rather than the American people—a fact attested to by countless public-opinion polls.

Republicans understand that somewhere between two thirds and three quarters of the American people—both voters and nonvoters—are totally uninformed about policy and politics. It is not what the nation's founders envisioned, but it is a fact. For example, only about half the population knows which party controls Congress, and an overwhelming majority of Americans cannot name either of their state's U.S. senators or even one of the candidates running for a seat in the House of Representatives at the height of an election. Endless studies have been unable to provide a definitive explanation for why Americans are so remarkably uninformed.

Republicans prey on this public ignorance: In 1994 they won control of the House after working for years to undermine Congress as an institution, assuming the public would hold the Democrats accountable. It worked. Once in control, the GOP ran Congress for the benefit of the party, not the people. This undemocratic use of process worked until Bush's growing unpopularity, combined with the stench of corruption and Republican hubris, cost the party its majority.

But have you noticed that even though the Democrats took over this year and are busy cleaning up the mess left by the conspicuously corrupt, do-nothing GOP-controlled Congress, public approval of the body has continued to decline? After six months under Democratic control and despite that party's reforms, congressional approval ratings are at all-time lows.

The explanation is very simple: Republicans are better at process politics. They continue to manipulate the traditional Washington processes and get away with it because Democratic leaders and Democratic presidential candidates do not make an issue of it. Fortunately the solution is also simple: Democrats must aggressively address process. A review of presidential platforms from 1960 to 2004 reveals that in every election except 2004 the Democrats addressed an array of process issues. The vitality of American democracy demands that they once again take up process in 2008.

Why can't American Jews, particularly liberal Jews, think straight about Israel? American Jews can easily condemn the war in and occupation of Iraq, as well as the death of hundreds of thousands of civilians and the violations of civil rights there. Yet the same passion for peace, justice and human rights is muted when it comes to talking about unpleasant activities of the Israeli government. American Jews and many politicians who pander for Jewish votes are hurting

step-grandfather, an old man who was no threat to anyone, was killed by a Palestinian who took an ax to his head while he was sitting quietly on a park bench. His murder was revenge for the massacre of dozens of peaceful Muslims the day before, slaughtered by an ultranationalist Israeli settler as they knelt in prayer. I care about Israel, as I care about our country, but I wish to speak the truth about it.

In 2006, when I ran in the New York Democratic primary for senator because



Israel and the cause of peace by refusing to have an honest debate about our country's historically one-sided position vis-à-vis Israel and the Middle East conflict. An honest debate is under way in Israel itself, but in the U.S. it's impossible to be critical of Israel without being labeled anti-Semitic or worse.

Before I dive further into this, I should establish my bona fides for making this argument, which in itself says a lot about the terrain. I am a Jew. My father was born in what was then Palestine and fought in Israel's war of independence. My father's cousin was killed in that war. I lived in Israel for seven years, including the period of the 1973 Yom Kippur war. A cousin of mine was killed in that war, leaving a young widow and two children. My

of incumbent Hillary Clinton's support for the Iraq war, my campaign coincided with Israel's bombing of Lebanon, a move triggered by the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers. While campaigning I said the Israeli military had committed acts that violated the Geneva convention and international standards. Within an hour reporters from all four New York daily papers called me, alerted to my comments by my opponent's operatives. Betraying their bias, the reporters had no idea my position would not be considered novel or radical in Israel, where the country's conduct in the war was a topic of hot debate.

Indeed, the reporters need only have consulted Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem. Referring to last summer's Lebanon bombing, B'Tselem's

website states, "International humanitarian law...requires that the combating sides direct their attacks only against specific military objectives, take cautionary measures to prevent injury to civilians and refrain from disproportionate attacks, i.e., attacks directed against legitimate targets but that are likely to cause excessive harm to civilians. Over the past week Israel has killed hundreds of Lebanese civilians in its attacks against targets in Lebanon. There is a concern that at least some of them were disproportionate attacks, which constitute war crimes."

Here are some other inconvenient truths. Israel is holding 1,000 Palestinians in administrative detention, where, according to B'Tselem, they are exposed to "moderate pressure," a euphemism for torture. And while six Israeli soldiers and 17 civilians died last year, the Israeli military killed 660 Palestinians, roughly half of them innocent bystanders.

So why is there such a lack of debate in the U.S.? Jews and non-Jews who can easily tell foreigners that being American is not the same as supporting the American government are incapable of making the same argument in Israel's case. Elected officials won't say anything because of the political cost or at least the perceived threat from Jewish voters. And there is residue from the Cold War, when Israel was seen as the region's bulwark against the Soviet Union. Among Jews there is a reflexive "Israel, right or wrong" attitude that is deeply rooted in the memory of the Holocaust. My own family lost people in the Holocaust. But the Holocaust should not be used as a moral shield to suppress honest criticism of Israel.

It's also important to acknowledge that some critics of Israel undercut their own positions by painting a caricature of the country. Israel is a democracy, and like all democracies it has flaws. But the open debate heard in Israel is rarely heard in the region's other countries, most of which are ruled by dictators or generals. Israel has a very free and rambunctious press; can the same be said about Egypt or Syria? Israel's attorney general recently went after the country's president for sexual harassment. We can't even get Congress, not to mention the attorney general, to investigate the



president for lying about a war. These facts make Israel's conduct even more troubling: The country's democratic principles and societal fabric are being undermined by its role as an occupier.

People who refuse to criticize Israel because of friendship are no friends of Israel. A true friend would not have stood by and remained silent as Israel dropped thousands of cluster bombs in Lebanon, leaving a million unexploded bomblets—small devices the size of a light socket that are still killing and injuring civilians—littered throughout the southern part of the country. A true friend would have taken Israel's leaders to the woodshed and said, "Responding to Hezbollah is one thing, but turning Lebanon into rubble and embittering a new generation toward the existence of your country

is madness." Instead, politicians like senators Joe Lieberman and Clinton actually encouraged the bombing by uttering vigorous endorsements of Israel's right to defend itself. A friend of Israel would not try to fan fears by tarring as anti-Semitic people who are critical of U.S. Middle East policy. Criticism of Israel may be painful to American Jews, but it is high time anyone, Jew or non-Jew, were able to raise questions about our one-sided policy without fear of a McCarthy-like smear. A friend would argue strenuously that Israel's moral fiber and security are weakened every moment it allows the so-called separation barrier in the West Bank to stand, in violation of international law. Whether Jews like the comparison or not, Jimmy Carter is correct in his book *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid* when he describes the control over Palestinians' movements as similar to South Africa's apartheid system.

As a Jew, I have always been proud of the Jewish concept of *tikkun olam*, which means roughly "repairing the world." I like to think it is what brought so many Jews into the civil rights and labor movements in the 1960s and 1970s and into the current antiwar movement. I feel great sorrow that Israel is an occupier of another people, and I believe Israel can never be whole or at peace until that occupation is ended in a just way. I also believe *tikkun olam* means we must never be silent.

MARGINALIA

FROM COMMENTS BY

Australian Defense Minister Brendan Nelson, admitting the importance of oil and "energy security" in Australia's participation in the U.S.-led military coalition in Iraq: "The defense update we're releasing today sets out many priorities for Australia's defense and security, and resource security is one of them. The entire Middle East region is an important supplier of energy, oil in particular, to the rest of the world. We're also there to support our key ally—that's the United States of America—and we're there to ensure that we don't have terrorism driven from Iraq which would destabilize our own region. For all of those reasons, one of which is energy security, it's extremely important that Australia take the view that it's in our interests to make sure we leave the Middle East and leave Iraq in particular in a position of sustainable security."



FROM A STATEMENT by NAACP

head Julian Bond, concerning a mock funeral for the word *nigger* held by the organization at its annual convention this past summer: "This is the first funeral I've been to where people were happy to be here. The entity in this casket deserves to be dead."

FROM AN APOLOGY issued by Senator David Vitter, a family-values Republican from Louisiana, in response to revelations that his phone number appeared on lists of alleged Washington madam Deborah Palfrey:

"This was a very serious sin in my past for which I am, of course, completely responsible. Several years ago I asked for and received forgiveness from God and my wife, in confession and marriage counseling."



FROM NEWLY RELEASED diaries of Alastair Campbell, British prime minister Tony Blair's longtime spokesman, describing Blair's reaction on learning that Noel Gallagher, guitarist for the band Oasis, would be attending a party at the official residence, 10 Downing Street, in 1997: "TB was worried that Noel Gallagher was coming to the reception tomorrow. He said he had no idea he had been invited. TB felt he was bound to do something crazy. I spoke to Creation Records boss Alan McGee and asked if we can be assured he would behave. Alan said he would make sure he did. He said if we had invited Liam it might have been different."

(continued on page 45)

READER RESPONSE

THE NUCLEAR OPTION

In promoting nuclear plants as the answer to the world's energy needs, James Lovelock dismisses the dangers of a Chernobyl-like accident ("Greens for Nukes," July). But accidents will happen. The number of deaths attrib-



Nuclear power still instills fear.

utable to nuclear plants is currently low because they are used so little. He also counts air-pollution deaths from fossil-fuel products but doesn't mention the widespread cancers and birth defects in the area around Chernobyl. If nuclear energy became the dominant player, accidents would happen all the time. Just look at how many oil refineries catch fire in the U.S. Now imagine if every one of them left a Chernobyl-size area uninhabitable.

David Relue
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Lovelock suggests nuclear power is the only way to provide environmentally safe electricity. Contrast this with a series of articles in *The Nation* magazine by Alexander Cockburn, one of its regular columnists. Cockburn seems to come from the opposite direction as Lovelock. He argues that we are experiencing global warming today because we are still emerging from the Little Ice Age of the 15th through the 19th centuries and that we have so much CO₂ in the atmosphere because of the resultant overall warming of the oceans. In other words, global warming is a natural process, and Cockburn quotes Martin Hertzberg, a combustion research scientist, as saying man's contribution to global warming and the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere amount to "a couple of farts in a hurricane." Cockburn essentially charges that the nuclear-power industry (which Lovelock seems to be championing in his *PLAYBOY* article) is trying

to stampede the popular mind into believing humans are the chief culprits of global warming and then put forth nuclear-generated power as the best solution to the perceived problem.

Jay Castor
Paradise, California

LUCKY AL

Although I agree with Curtis White's conclusion in "The Truth About Al Franken" (May), as one of those America lovers, I offer an alternative explanation as to why Al Franken and Rush Limbaugh find convergence. Perhaps through their own efforts and with support from family and friends, they have risen to positions of renown, influence and significant socioeconomic status in their respective milieus. Perhaps they understand that no place else on earth offers such opportunity to rise from obscurity to influence. Just ask Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, Bill Gates, Oprah Winfrey, César Chávez and Martin Luther King Jr. Perhaps Franken and Limbaugh find comfort in knowing that when they walk out of the studio after a good session of partisan yakety-yak no secret police will be waiting for them. Perhaps they understand that, for all the real and imagined problems America



Living the American dream?

has, there are no more fortunate human beings in the history of mankind than those living here right now.

Scott Zepp
Eugene, Oregon

WINDS OF CHANGE

Frederick Barthelme would have us believe New Orleans was the only area affected by Hurricane Katrina on August 2005 ("Help Wanted," June). Katrina was a category-three hurricane and struck not only Louisiana but Mississippi, Florida and Alabama. Yet contrary to Barthelme's assertions, all we hear about is

New Orleans. Miles of Mississippi were destroyed and still lie ravaged for lack of money and insurance. Thousands of people were evacuated to Texas only to face the even larger Hurricane Rita (a category five, with gusts of 175 miles an hour and sustained winds of 135 mph). The entire area from Johnson's Bayou, Louisiana to Winnie, Texas was obliterated for miles inland. The destruction was such that it was hard to fathom how mother nature could unleash such a force. Rita entered Texas at the mouth of Lake Sabine and literally blew the water—along with tugs, barges and what-



Readers question fairness of hurricane aid.

ever else was around—onto the town of Sabine Pass. We had extensive damage to our home, barn and fencing. We lost 35 trees—some of which were three to four feet in diameter—that were pushed over as if by some giant hand. We dove in, cleaned up and refurbished. Yes, insurance replaced some of what was lost, but the bulk of the repairs came from good old back-breaking work and sweat and tears. Members of my family settled in this area of Texas in the early 1800s and survived many hurricanes over the years, including the storm of 1900, which practically sent Galveston out to sea. They didn't cry to the government for handouts; they picked up the pieces and rebuilt with the help of neighbors. I have survived several of these hurricanes without any help from the government. Now everyone wants a handout, and FEMA is giving away money as if there were no tomorrow. When will this stop? To these people I would use the words of John F. Kennedy: Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.

James Keith
Bridge City, Texas

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

NEWSFRONT



Knight Sweats

LONDON—Prolific author Salman Rushdie, whose 1988 novel *The Satanic Verses* raised the ire of the Muslim world and led Iran to issue a fatwa in 1989 calling for his murder, was awarded a knighthood this past summer, causing renewed protests. Iranian and Pakistani government officials criticized the honor for Rushdie, whose second novel, *Midnight's Children*, won the prestigious Booker Prize in 1981 and the Booker of Bookers in 1993—meaning it was judged the best Booker winner in the award's then-25-year history. Pakistan's minister of religious affairs went so far as to say the honor would justify future suicide bombings in the U.K. The British government is standing firm, pushing back against what *Guardian* writer Mark Lawson called "censorship by terror."

Weird Science

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Dr. Richard Carmona, the surgeon general from 2002 to 2006, told a congressional panel that Bush administration officials repeatedly tried to weaken or suppress health reports, based on political considerations. He said he was not allowed to speak or issue reports about stem cells, emergency contraception and sex education, among other things, and was discouraged from attending the Special Olympics supposedly because of the Kennedy family's involvement with the organization. He was also asked to make speeches supporting Republican political candidates. Carmona consulted the six most recent surgeons general, and all said they felt Carmona faced more political interference than they had. "The reality is that the nation's doctor has been marginalized and relegated to a position with no independent budget and with supervisors who are political appointees with partisan agendas," Carmona wrote in prepared testimony for Congress. "Anything that doesn't fit into the political appointees' ideological, theological or political agenda is ignored, marginalized or simply buried. In public health, as in a democracy, there is nothing worse than ignoring science or marginalizing the voice of science for reasons driven by changing political winds."

Prosecutors Gone Wild

DOUGLAS COUNTY, GEORGIA—The troubling case of a teenager who landed in jail after having consensual oral sex with another teen just gets more bizarre. Genarlow Wilson has served more than two years of a 10-year sentence for having oral sex with a 15-year-old girl when he was 17. When the act took place, in 2003, consensual oral sex

between teens was illegal under Georgia law. The state legislature has since changed the law to ensure similar situations will no longer carry such a harsh punishment, but Wilson remains in jail. To make matters worse, David McDade, the county prosecutor who tried Wilson, has handed out at least 35 copies of a homemade video tape of the act in question in an apparent attempt to derail efforts to gain Wilson's freedom. McDade claims the law compels him to make the video available to the public.



legislator is trying to change disclosure laws for sex cases. Another, State Senator Vincent Fort, an Atlanta Democrat, says, "This has been a ferocious, vindictive prosecution of Genarlow Wilson. What is going on is a vendetta."

Deuce Coupe

FORT LAUDERDALE—Mayor Jim Naugle wants to spend \$250,000 on an experimental public toilet with a door that automatically opens after a short time. His rationale? It will hinder "homosexual activity," which he deems "anonymous sex, illegal sex." Local police say restroom sex is not a problem.

MARGINALIA

(continued from page 43)

Gallagher said he thought Number 10 was 'tops,' said he couldn't believe that there was an ironing board in there."

FROM THE MEMOIR

You Must Set Forth at Dawn, by Wole Soyinka, 1986 recipient of the Nobel Prize in literature: "I should have remembered the Nigerian killer factor. Simply defined, it is the stressful bane of the mere act of critical thought within a society where power and control remain the playthings of imbeciles, psychopaths and predators."



FROM AN ESSAY by retired U.S.

Army Lieutenant General William E. Odom decrying the extended tours of duty the Bush administration's policies have forced on the Army's soldiers and advocating withdrawal from Iraq as the only way to support the troops: "The president is strongly motivated to string out the war until he leaves office in order to avoid taking responsibility for the defeat he has caused and persisted in making greater each year for more than three years. To force him to begin a withdrawal before then, the first step



should be to rally the public by providing an honest and candid definition of what 'supporting the troops' really means and pointing out who is and who is not supporting our troops at war. The next step should be a flat refusal to appropriate money to be used in Iraq for anything but withdrawal operations with a clear deadline for completion. The final step should be to put that president on notice that if he ignores this legislative action and tries to extort Congress into providing funds by keeping U.S. forces in peril, impeachment proceedings will proceed in the House of Representatives. Such presidential behavior surely would constitute the high crime of squandering the lives of soldiers and marines for his own personal interest."

FROM CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS compiled in 1977 by British government officials as they prepared to defend themselves against several suits filed by the Church of Scientology, which was seeking religious status and the lifting of a ban on entry visas for foreign members of the organization (the ban was lifted in 1980, but church status has never been granted): "The effect of losing the actions could of course be grave, not only for the defendants but as giving some seal of respectability to an organization that is essentially evil."



PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: KEITH OLBERMANN

A candid conversation with MSNBC's liberal firebrand about all the things that piss him off: Iraq, Bush, Fox News and people who don't speak English

To some he is a smirking, left-leaning smartass, MSNBC's answer to Bill O'Reilly. To a growing number of others he is all that and more: the truth teller in chief, a modern Edward R. Murrow. Either way, the 48-year-old star of *Countdown With Keith Olbermann*—a mix of news, talking heads, wacky video clips and stern, often eloquent opinion—is riding high. Olbermann's ratings were up 72 percent in the second quarter of 2007. Presidential candidates now vie for his attention. Opinion makers quote his Murrowesque "special comments." His book *The Worst Person in the World: And 202 Strong Contenders* comes out in paperback this month. Any day now *People* magazine may name him the sexiest pundit alive.

Not bad for a guy who began as a shrimpy baseball-card collector in Westchester County, New York, the son of an architect and a schoolteacher. He was always precocious, so smart he skipped first grade and went into second at the age of five. A punching bag for playground bullies, he escaped to Cornell at 16. After graduating, Olbermann landed sportscasting jobs in Boston and Los Angeles, where his wit and sharp writing won every sports-TV award in sight. In 1992 ESPN hired and paired him with Dan Patrick for SportsCenter. Thus began the heyday of sports TV, with Patrick's catchphrase "En fuego!" matched by Olbermann's sly "If you're scoring at home or even if you're alone...." In the next five years they reinvented the sportscast.

Patrick thought the gig was paradise, but Olbermann chafed at the limitations ESPN imposed: living in backwater Bristol, Connecticut; getting paid less than he thought he was worth; sticking to sports when the real world was more interesting. In 1997 he bolted, fleeing ESPN for MSNBC. When that didn't work out he spent three bumpy years at Fox Sports, followed by stints at CNN and ABC Radio. In 2002, at the age of 43, Olbermann was reduced to writing a blog for Salon.com and serving as a substitute host on MSNBC. He seemed lost in the media wilderness, fodder for a "Where Are They Now?" segment. But in 2003 the network gave him Phil Donahue's old time slot. At first *The O'Reilly Factor* on Fox News trounced him night after night. Then, due in part to Olbermann's rants against George W. Bush, Donald Rumsfeld and Rudolph Giuliani, *Countdown* gained steam in a hurry. Now its host's rapid rise is one of the media stories of the year.

We sent Kevin Cook, author of the popular golf book *Tommy's Honor*, to talk with Olbermann about his sportscaster past and liberal-hero present.

"I knew Keith a little and had always found him to be a great conversationalist, sharp and sarcastic," reports Cook. "But after one quick chat, he ducked me for two months. 'Keith's busy closing on a condo,' his publicist said. True enough—I saw a newspaper item on the

\$4.2 million, marble-trimmed, three-balcony place he'd bought on the 40th floor of one of Donald Trump's towers. So we rescheduled. Then he hurt his foot and didn't feel up to talking. Aw, poor Keith. Then, just as I was writing him off as the worst person in the world, the phone rang: 'Keith will meet you.'

"We ate at his favorite upscale lunchroom in midtown Manhattan, where he got a better table than Damon Wayans, who was also there that day. Keith hobbled in with a protective boot on his broken foot, and I felt like a jerk for doubting he'd really hurt it. Over the next few hours, he proved he's still a hell of a conversationalist."

PLAYBOY: After years as a cult favorite, *Countdown* is on the march, racking up enough ratings to worry Bill O'Reilly. Why now?

OLBERMANN: We had been building steadily, but Hurricane Katrina was the start of our rapid ascent. A lot of people joined me in seeing the Bush administration in the light of a line often attributed to Abraham Lincoln: "You can fool some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time." Lincoln never said that, but it's true.

Another tipping point came last summer when I began doing my special comments. There was a confluence of



"My first special comment on Donald Rumsfeld had about a million live viewers. The number of YouTube viewings was two or three times that. It's the best advertising we can get. We get new customers from the Internet."



"Al Qaeda really hurt us, but not as much as Rupert Murdoch has hurt us, particularly in the case of Fox News. Fox News is worse than Al Qaeda—worse for our society. It's as dangerous as the Ku Klux Klan ever was."



PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID ROSE

"When you've been through as much tumult as I have, you learn that age is way down on the list of what's important in a relationship. The first question is, Can you stand being with this person? If the answer is yes, the rest doesn't matter."

disillusionment with the administration and plain old disgust with its tactics. Bush's crew kept pressing the terror button until Americans started rejecting what Barack Obama calls 9/11 fever. It got harder for Bush to capitalize on 9/11—some of us were calling him on it. **PLAYBOY:** Have you finally hit the jackpot with *Countdown*?

OLBERMANN: In the game of Scrabble that television is, our show is a long word with a Q on a triple-letter score and the whole word on a triple-word score. We've hit our moment.

PLAYBOY: You've been pegged as a liberal. Are you?

OLBERMANN: Many of my opinions coincide with liberals', but I have conservative opinions, too.

PLAYBOY: Want to trash a liberal position for us?

OLBERMANN: I believe American history teaches us that we should do as much as we can to get immigrants to speak English. For the melting pot to work, we need to understand one another. So after two or maybe three years of bilingual education, you say, "You want to live here? School is gonna be in English." This is an ultra-conservative opinion. You've got Minutemen hunting illegal immigrants in Texas, saying, "I'm happy to shoot 'em on the way over, but make 'em all speak English? No way!"

PLAYBOY: So why are you tarred as a liberal?

OLBERMANN: There's a false concept of balance that Rupert Murdoch and Fox News have successfully pushed: Everybody has to be left or right; every argument has to be countered. That's "fair and balanced." It's really the moral relativism they always complain about, applied to journalism. If you say a falling coffee cup will shatter on the floor, that must be "balanced" by someone saying no, it will fly upward into the hand of God. Nonsense! But if you put this nonsense on television, it gains credibility. You can say TV is crap, but the most authenticating thing in the world is "I saw it on TV."

PLAYBOY: On *Countdown* this past April, after Rudolph Giuliani made a speech saying Democrats would make us more vulnerable to terrorist attacks, you went off on him for eight solid minutes. You seemed truly offended by what he'd said.

OLBERMANN: Giuliani tried to out-Bush Bush. He tried to get votes by talking about casualties as if another attack like 9/11 were inevitable, suggesting that voting for anyone but him would lead to more people getting killed. That's about

an inch from saying, "If you don't vote for me, you'll die," which is another inch from saying, "If you don't vote for me, I'll kill you." And that, to me, is not America. In fact, it's not Earth. I don't usually single out candidates for praise or brickbats, but if they're going to politicize terror, to do the work of the terrorists by terrorizing the populace, I'll come down on them like a ton of bricks. That's my job.

PLAYBOY: In your "Worst Person in the World" bits, you discuss which villain is "worse" than another. Is Giuliani worse than Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney?

OLBERMANN: They danced around the same idea without coming right out and saying it. Bush doesn't know how to say what he wants to say. Rudy basically said,



Bill O'Reilly has been almost as good for my career as Dan Patrick and George W. Bush.

"There will be more deaths if you vote Democrat." In that respect he's worse.

PLAYBOY: Do you really think Giuliani was doing the work of the terrorists?

OLBERMANN: Not just him. Other politicians have a rooting interest in keeping people scared. Newt Gingrich would like to suspend parts of the Constitution. That may save money: You don't need a counterterrorism budget if you're the terrorists' enabler.

PLAYBOY: How would you assess the threat of another attack?

OLBERMANN: Michael Bloomberg said, "Your chances of being injured by a terrorist are significantly less than of being hit by lightning." He was right. I mean, if you want to go around worrying about

something, worry about hereditary disease. Lose some weight. Stop smoking. But people think we're in a constant state of threat from terrorists, with the world more dangerous every day. There's not a shred of evidence for that.

PLAYBOY: Your fire-breathing was kindled last year when Rumsfeld, then Secretary of Defense, gave a speech comparing those who opposed the Iraq war to Nazi appeasers.

OLBERMANN: I was furious, but nobody else seemed to be.

PLAYBOY: You targeted Rumsfeld in your first special comment. You said, "The man who sees absolutes where all other men see nuances and shades of meaning is either a prophet or a quack. Donald H. Rumsfeld is not a prophet." We heard your decision to speak out had something to do with, of all people, James Gandolfini.

OLBERMANN: It did. We were sitting in the lounge at LAX, and we quickly exhausted all conversational possibilities. "How ya doin'?" he said. His interests appeared to be Rutgers football, community theater and that's about it; he waxed on about doing summer stock in Rhode Island. But his assistant was a politics junkie. So we were sitting at LAX, Gandolfini was nodding off, and the assistant and I were reading the Rumsfeld speech. Finally, I said, "Are you as pissed off about this as I am?" He was. But nobody in the media was reacting. Then it came to me: I have a TV show. I could provide the reaction. So I did.

PLAYBOY: Along with fiery special comments, you've made news by racking up viewers in the 25-to-54-year-old demographic. Why is that such a big deal?

OLBERMANN: Advertisers love them. The premise is simple: People under 25 have no money; people over 54 are set in their ways and understand that advertising is largely bullshit. It's fine to have viewers outside that group, but they don't count as much. They're like people who got free tickets to a ball game.

PLAYBOY: There was evidence of voting irregularities in Ohio in the Bush-Kerry election. Was there a fix? Do you think the election went the wrong way?

OLBERMANN: Possibly. It was academic once Bush was sworn in, but if you brought all of Ohio's voters together today, they'd look around at one another and say, "I didn't vote for him. It must have been a fix!"

PLAYBOY: Who has impressed you in this year's debates?

OLBERMANN: The Democrats have a lot

of good speakers. I think Joe Biden scores highest on the three keys: passion, detail and eloquence.

PLAYBOY: Why is most public discourse so lame? What happened to speakers like JFK and Martin Luther King Jr.?

OLBERMANN: Lincoln used to give 30-minute answers in debates; today we expect 30 seconds. You can't hold an audience spellbound for 30 seconds. And sadly, for the most part the best speakers today are broadcasters and actors. Our politicians should try speaking more like Charles Osgood and Charles Kuralt and less like Charlie the Tuna.

PLAYBOY: What about sites like YouTube? Have they helped *Countdown*?

OLBERMANN: Enormously. It's a live show, but a huge part of the audience sees it in clips. My first special comment on Rumsfeld had about a million live viewers for two airings. The number of YouTube viewings was two or three times that. The clips get e-mailed over and over. They reach people who have given up on television.

PLAYBOY: Do you know who's watching your clips?

OLBERMANN: Hillary Clinton, for one. I was at a 60th birthday party for Bill, and Hillary's mother came up to me. "I watch you every night," she said, "and I e-mail clips and links to my daughter." Now, I had met Hillary several times, and she had no idea who I was. The next time I saw her she said, "Keith, my mother's been e-mailing me. I don't watch much TV, but I've seen you now!"

PLAYBOY: Some TV people see YouTube as a menace. Viacom won't let YouTube carry clips of *The Daily Show*, for example.

OLBERMANN: They have a point—it's copyrighted material. But I don't care, because it's the best advertising we can get. Broadcast and cable networks never figured out how to make money off the Internet, so here's the next-best thing: We get new customers from the Internet. It's funny that the web is couched as this antiestablishment, do-it-yourself, viewer-takes-over thing when it is, simply put, the greatest advertising mechanism yet. Word-of-mouth for the electronic age.

PLAYBOY: Does the hard-right tilt of the Supreme Court worry you?

OLBERMANN: The Court is on the edge of becoming a clean-shaven version of the religious courts of Iran. But it could be worse—you get the feeling that even this crew would have decided *Dred Scott* in favor of Scott, not in favor of slavery.

PLAYBOY: Do you think Bush and company plan to invade Iran before next year's election?

OLBERMANN: They might like to. These guys would love to do something dramatic and panoramic. "Shock and awe!" But they don't have enough soldiers. We're stretched too thin. Invading Iran would be like playing football with 23 players: 22 starters and one guy to handle punting, kicking, holding and punt returns—he's

the special teams. Well, you'll need more players because some will get hurt. It's that simple. But our military may run bombing missions—and Lord knows what the Iranians might do then.

PLAYBOY: Describe President Bush.

OLBERMANN: Nixonian. The difference between Bush and Richard Nixon is that Nixon sent draftees to Vietnam. If draftees instead of volunteers were dying in Iraq, I think Bush would have been impeached by now.

We will see a draft if the Republicans win in 2008, because they've got a plan to invade every country except Liechtenstein but not enough soldiers to do it. To get enough soldiers, they would need a draft. And that would be interesting. You'd have rioting in the streets within 48 hours. And it wouldn't be the kids rioting; it would be their parents.

PLAYBOY: How does the rest of the world see Uncle Sam?

OLBERMANN: From what I can tell, they view us as some old, formerly reliable uncle who has suddenly started to wear a tinfoil hat and shoot up the house. What do you do when there's one

*Sports fans aren't dumber
than the rest of America.
They're smarter. The rest of
America believes in crazy
plots because they listen to
Limbaugh and Giuliani.*

superpower and he goes crazy? The world's keeping its fingers crossed, waiting for this time to pass.

PLAYBOY: What would you like to ask Osama bin Laden?

OLBERMANN: "Would you please die?"

PLAYBOY: Who's worse, Al Sharpton or Don Imus? Sharpton still stirs up racial debates, and Imus, whose show was on MSNBC, your network, was fired for calling the Rutgers women's hoops team "nappy-headed hos." Are they both racists?

OLBERMANN: Sharpton is an opportunist with a saving grace: He draws attention to actual wrongs. Imus had been doing stuff like that for years without being called on it. MSNBC management had promised a lot of us, "Yes, eventually we'll stop simply trying to discourage him and actually stop him." The rank and file there called in those promises, and people outside NBC did the same.

PLAYBOY: You're old enough to remember Vietnam.

OLBERMANN: It is tragic—breathtaking—to think about the thousands of draftees who went to their death in Vietnam. Our

government killed them for the stupidest, most mismanaged war until Iraq. And to me, the ones who didn't go are heroes as much as those who did.

PLAYBOY: The conscientious objectors?

OLBERMANN: The draft dodgers too. I was 16 years old in 1975. If the war hadn't ended, I would have been one of them. I would have found a way not to go.

PLAYBOY: Let's switch to a less serious conflict: your feud with Bill O'Reilly. He started an online petition to get you fired from *Countdown*, saying MSNBC should bring back Phil Donahue.

OLBERMANN: That was manna from heaven. O'Reilly has been almost as good for my career as Dan Patrick and George W. Bush. Fox News is a joke, and O'Reilly is one of the most buffoonish, laughable characters in broadcasting history.

PLAYBOY: He allegedly harassed a Fox producer. She said he'd made a slobbery phone call saying he wanted to take a shower with her and rub her with a loofah, which he called "the falafel thing."

OLBERMANN: If you don't know the difference between a loofah and falafel, you shouldn't be showering with a woman.

PLAYBOY: O'Reilly has been *Countdown*'s "Worst Person in the World" more than anyone else. Is he really worse than Charles Manson?

OLBERMANN: Well, it's not a legal definition. It's a gimmick. Obviously, I don't think O'Reilly is the worst person on earth. A killer could stab someone right now and pull ahead of him for 30 seconds.

One way he and I are different is that when he does his "Most Ridiculous Item of the Day," I'm sure he believes it really is the most ridiculous. That's the delusion of being Bill O'Reilly: If you have sudden success after 20 years of failure, you become half Napoleon and half Stalin.

PLAYBOY: What do you think of the Fox News slogan, "Fair and balanced"?

OLBERMANN: I've suggested a more accurate one: "Fox, not facts." But they haven't adopted that yet.

PLAYBOY: When a caller mentioned you on *The O'Reilly Factor*, O'Reilly sicced Fox security on the person. Paranoid?

OLBERMANN: That may have been the moment when he segued from journalist with some influence to public hilarity. People started to laugh at him. He thinks he has his own police.

PLAYBOY: He'd probably like to throw a punch at you.

OLBERMANN: We're both big—he's six-foot-four, and I'm almost as tall—but I'm betting he has no physical courage. Every confrontation he's had has been with small people. Think about it. Al Franken. Janeane Garofalo, who could stand under a coffee table. Maybe Janeane should sit on Al's shoulders and beat the shit out of Bill.

PLAYBOY: Do you think bullies are usually cowards?

OLBERMANN: I know they are. In 1967 in Hastings-on-Hudson, New York I was

eight years old and small. I felt an inch high. All year I was the butt of the school bullies, repeatedly punched. They actually took turns: "Who gets to beat up Keith today?" Until one day when Ralph, the worst bully, stole my baseball cards. We were going downstairs for recess, and he was three steps below me, taunting me. I leaped on him. I fell on top of him, with my knees pinning his arms down. Then I punched him. Blood came running out of his nose. And the next day the other kids wanted to be Keith's friend.

PLAYBOY: Your fight with Fox got nastier last year when a Fox spokesperson said, "Because of his personal demons, Keith has imploded everywhere he's worked. We wish him well on his inevitable trip to oblivion."

OLBERMANN: I worked there, remember? That company wasted a couple of years of my life, which is minor compared with its negative influence on society. Al Qaeda really hurt us but not as much as Rupert Murdoch has hurt us, particularly in the case of Fox News. Fox News is worse than Al Qaeda—worse for our society. It's as dangerous an organization as the Ku Klux Klan ever was. Fox News will say anything about anybody and accepts no criticism. Half the people there ought to be in an insane asylum. So I don't need advice on mental stability from spokesperson for Fox.

PLAYBOY: Do you have any demons?

OLBERMANN: My personal demon is me. Back at ESPN, for instance, I saw stuff that needed fixing, and 99 times out of 100 I was absolutely right. The demons came in when I made my point public. Instead of saying, "Hey, I've got a suggestion about how we do highlights," I'd fire off an eight-page memo: "How dare you get this wrong?" It was a reflection of my own insecurity.

PLAYBOY: Would you take those memos back if you could?

OLBERMANN: Yes.

PLAYBOY: Why did you leave ESPN?

OLBERMANN: Money was part of it. I told Dan Patrick we were underpaid. Anchoring *SportsCenter* wasn't a \$300,000 job—more like \$2 million. I remember standing in the mail room with Kenny Mayne, Reese Davis, Stu Scott and Rich Eisen. Those four guys might have been making \$500,000, total. I said, "Listen, the price of sportscasters is going up."

PLAYBOY: Did you just bolt, or was there a negotiation?

OLBERMANN: I gave ESPN an offer. I said I'd stay and do the Sunday-night *SportsCenter*.

PLAYBOY: For how much? A million dollars?

OLBERMANN: For \$50,000 a year. They said no.

PLAYBOY: That was 10 years ago. Since then you've stepped up from sports into the real world. Do you ever miss Patrick?

OLBERMANN: Every night. When I go on to do my show, I think, It'd be great to have a partner—no, it'd be great to have *that* partner.

PLAYBOY: You and he may be responsible for dumbing down male voters. Wouldn't we be smarter about politics if we had been reading *The New York Times* instead of watching *SportsCenter*?

OLBERMANN: No, I don't buy that. Sports fans aren't dumber than the rest of America. They're smarter. It's the rest of America that believes in crazy plots: "Some guy is going to blow up the moon with Coke and Mentos! Arrest him!" Too many people believe in Harry Potter stuff—threats with no reality—because they watch 24 or listen to Rush Limbaugh and Giuliani, who want us to be scared. But the sports fan is reality-based. You can't win your fantasy league on hope or ideology. You can't say, "My Devil Rays are gonna win the World Series because I'm rooting for them." Sports fans are sponges for information. So am I. Maybe that's why so many of my old *SportsCenter* viewers watch *Countdown*.

PLAYBOY: What other TV shows do you watch?

OLBERMANN: *Family Guy* and *The Simpsons* are marvelously subversive, state-of-the-comic-art. It's just a coincidence that I guest-starred on *Family Guy* last season and I'll be on *The Simpsons* this year. I never miss *Entourage*; Jeremy Piven's character is one of the absolute best in TV history. And I try to watch *Prime Minister's Questions* on C-SPAN, which reminds me that we're evidently not paying our politicians as much as the British do.

PLAYBOY: We pay network news anchors \$7 million a year and up. Yet Katie Couric, who was an institution on the *Today* show, has flopped as the \$15-million-a-year CBS anchor. What went wrong?

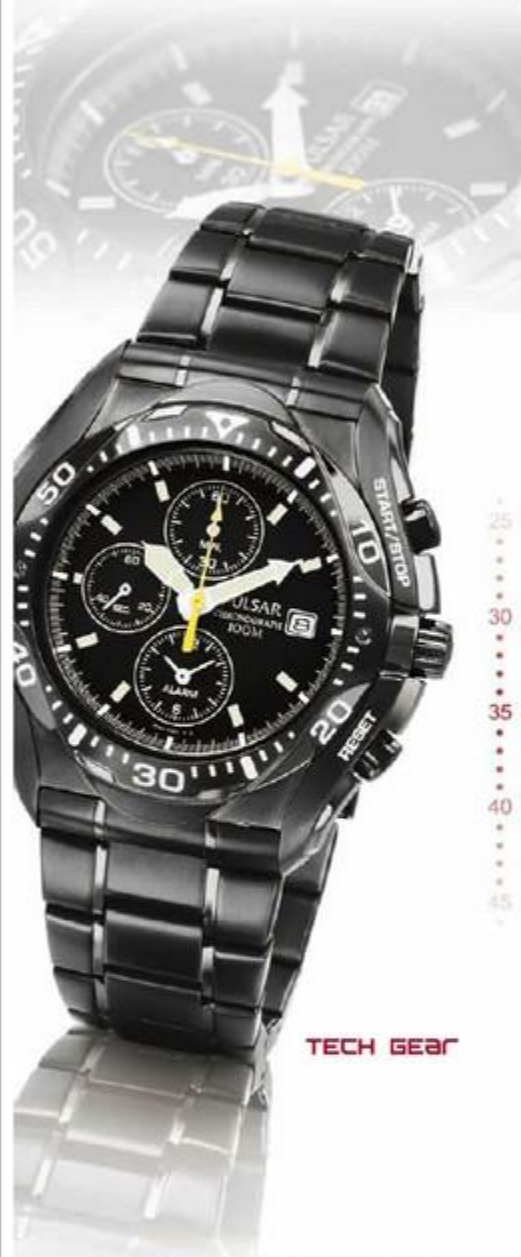
OLBERMANN: It should have been obvious to the people making the decision. Some of us pointed out beforehand that some primal rules of broadcasting were being ignored. One, if you break up a team, the individuals don't necessarily succeed on their own. Two, day parts matter; someone who succeeds in the morning won't automatically succeed at night and vice versa—I'm unbearable in the morning. Three, you don't take somebody who is only a fair-to-average Teleprompter reader and give her a job that is 90 percent reading a prompter.

PLAYBOY: Things are looking up. You recently bought a \$4.2 million condo in one of Donald Trump's buildings, where you're cohabiting for the first time. Your girlfriend, Katy Tur, is 23.

OLBERMANN: I've been ready to live with someone for years. I just didn't have the right person to commit to. And I've been flexible: I cleaned out two closets when Katy moved in. A great many baseball cards went into storage.

But she also wants me to take down my wall full of Spalding's and *Sporting News* baseball guides, which stretch back to the 1880s. "They're not very stylish,"

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she says. No, but I like having the entire history of baseball on my wall.

PLAYBOY: You'll lose that one, won't you?

OLBERMANN: That remains to be seen. I'm very reluctant to give up my baseball wall.

PLAYBOY: You're almost exactly twice Katy's age—

OLBERMANN: We're both actually about nine.

PLAYBOY: Any older man-younger woman issues?

OLBERMANN: There are good ones. She shows me things that have happened in the past five years that I didn't notice, and I show her things that happened in the first 5 million years.

We watch movies at home. We were eight minutes into *Being Julia* when I said, "For God's sake, it's a cheap knockoff of *All About Eve*." Now, Katy's one age-related flaw is that she won't watch movies on video—only a DVD has sufficient image quality. So I found *All About Eve* on DVD. We watched it, and she said, "You're right. The story's better, and Bette Davis was 85 times better than Annette Bening."

When you've been through as much tumult as I have, you learn that age is way down on the list of what's important in a relationship. The first question is, Can you stand being with this person? And the second is, For how long? If the answers are "yes" and "indefinitely," the rest doesn't matter.

PLAYBOY: You and Katy sound happy. Any plans you want to announce?

OLBERMANN: [After a long pause] Yes...I'm getting a haircut this afternoon.

PLAYBOY: Do fans still stop you on the street and ask about ESPN?

OLBERMANN: Not as much. Dan had told me I'd never leave, because I couldn't deal with hearing "Why aren't you on *SportsCenter*?" I didn't believe him, and then it happened all the time. Hourly. "Miss you on *SportsCenter*! When are you going back to *SportsCenter*?" So 1997 and 1998 were rough on Keith, but things have changed dramatically, mostly in the past year. Now they say, "Miss you on *SportsCenter*, but I love *Countdown*."

Much as I love sports, there's a bigger world out there. I went to an ACLU dinner where 700 lawyers, 700 honest lawyers, stood up and cheered me and the attorneys for Salim Hamdan, Osama bin Laden's former chauffeur, who was a prisoner at Guantánamo. And I'm just a guy on TV! That gave me a sense of contributing something to society, as opposed to giving Knicks highlights. Not that there's anything wrong with that. But that night I felt useful.

PLAYBOY: The sportscaster's dream come true.

OLBERMANN: Want to hear a real dream? One night, in the time after ESPN, I had this incredibly vivid dream I've never forgotten: I'm on a bus, and a guy in a windbreaker and sunglasses gets on. I notice his head is held together with epoxy. He

turns around and says, "You're right. It's me." It's John F. Kennedy. So I ask about his assassination. "Was it Oswald?"

He says, "Could I see if it was Oswald? I was getting shot! But I know I got shot from the back and the front."

"Aha!" I say. "So there was a conspiracy."

He says, "No. A coincidence. How many times do you read about two guys who walk into a bank at the same time to rob it? Same thing. Two gunmen, same moment. Coincidence." Then he starts talking about Monica Lewinsky.

PLAYBOY: Really? She probably would have made him wish he were president again.

OLBERMANN: "This is my stop," he says. And as JFK steps off the bus, he turns to me and says, "Miss you on *SportsCenter*."

PLAYBOY: Ow!

OLBERMANN: That's when I woke up.

PLAYBOY: Speaking of Lewinsky, which is worse: getting a blow job in the White House or taking the country to war under false pretenses?

OLBERMANN: Taking us to war.

PLAYBOY: How much worse?

OLBERMANN: How much bigger is an elephant than a mouse? You calculate it and

*I've changed my mind
about Pete Rose. Given
what we know about players
using steroids and human
growth hormone, what
he did doesn't seem as bad.*

I'll go with that number.

PLAYBOY: Okay, an adult elephant weighs about seven tons, and a mouse about half an ounce. You're saying that misleading the country into Iraq was 448,000 times worse than a White House blow job.

OLBERMANN: There you go.

PLAYBOY: You're returning to TV sports this fall, co-hosting NBC's *Football Night in America* with Bob Costas, Cris Collinsworth, Jerome Bettis and Tiki Barber.

OLBERMANN: My main job will be highlights. I'm the guy in this group who is used to looking at the camera and introducing some highlight from a game that finished minutes ago, while my hand is out of the frame, reaching for the shot sheet some kid is handing me—

PLAYBOY: The shot sheet tells you what's on camera; if the highlight just came in, you haven't seen it yet.

OLBERMANN: True. The first shot could be of a butter statue of former NFL commissioner Bert Bell. Or a picture of former New York Giant Ward Cuff. Then the game action. I've got to make those highlights work. That's where some *SportsCenter* training comes in.

PLAYBOY: Will you add any Olbermannic wrinkles?

OLBERMANN: We may liven it up with a "Worst Person in the NFL" bit. Some viewers may expect a weekly diatribe against George Bush or Reggie Bush, but that won't happen.

PLAYBOY: You're also doing commentary for *NBC Nightly News*.

OLBERMANN: That's mostly on pop culture, sports, a little history. I may do some politics. But anyone looking for the fire-breathing dragon from *Countdown* will need to watch *Countdown*.

PLAYBOY: You're a baseball expert and even a consultant to the Topps baseball-card company. Any perks to that?

OLBERMANN: Topps is making a card with me on it. It will have a swatch of my tie in it—a collector's card with a piece of "show-used tie."

PLAYBOY: If you were baseball commissioner, what would you have done about Barry Bonds?

OLBERMANN: I would have banned him from the game.

PLAYBOY: To keep him from breaking Hank Aaron's home-run record?

OLBERMANN: You have the most glorious record in sports history passing to a guy who shouldn't have it. You had fans hoping Bonds would sustain a career-ending injury before he got it. So yes, I would have tossed him. The commissioner has a "best interests of baseball" clause in his contract. If you're the commissioner, step up and throw your weight around. Put the players union in the position of defending him.

PLAYBOY: Bonds would sue you.

OLBERMANN: Let him. Meanwhile, he stays on the sidelines. By the time he finished suing, he would be too old to break the record.

PLAYBOY: Should Pete Rose be in baseball's hall of fame?

OLBERMANN: Yes. I've changed my mind about Rose. Given what we know about players using steroids and human growth hormone, what he did doesn't seem as bad. I think he finally gets that it was bad—about 20 years too late. He's still lying to some degree, but now he's lying less. I would open the door to Cooperstown for him.

PLAYBOY: How about Marvin Miller, who led the players union when ballplayers won free agency, leading to today's zillion-dollar contracts? His battles with then-commissioner Bowie Kuhn are baseball legend.

OLBERMANN: I told Bowie Kuhn that he, Charlie Finley—the colorful Oakland A's owner—and Marvin Miller should all go in together. Bowie laughed for a solid minute, picturing that ceremony. Yes, Miller belongs in the hall.

PLAYBOY: Are there *Countdown* groupies?

OLBERMANN: There are chat rooms that get bawdy. One group of women will start analyzing the issues, but soon it will devolve into talk about my tie and what they'd like to do after removing my tie. That's a strange

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thing about TV—it's like being on the wrong side of a one-way mirror. You don't know if it's a group of Jennifer Lopeses out there undressing you with their eyes or a bunch of Leona Helmsleys.

PLAYBOY: We know you loved baseball cards as a boy. How about another touchstone of boyhood: Did you sneak peeks at *PLAYBOY*?

OLBERMANN: I remember offering some baseball cards for a *PLAYBOY* when I was 12 or 13, but the other kid wanted too many cards.

PLAYBOY: A pivotal moment. You had to choose between sex and baseball.

OLBERMANN: I caught up with *PLAYBOY* later. I distinctly recall Victoria Cunningham, the first Playmate I ever saw. It was during a family vacation. I sneaked out to the hotel lobby and bought the magazine; there she was in all her glory.

PLAYBOY: Miss April 1975. You were 16. Do you remember any other Playmates?

OLBERMANN: When I got to college at Cornell, I suddenly realized, No one can keep me from buying that *PLAYBOY*! I remember Janet Lupo. She was from New Jersey.

PLAYBOY: Miss November 1975, the pride of Hoboken. James Gandolfini probably remembers her too.

OLBERMANN: I'm sure many of us have vivid memories of Janet Lupo.

PLAYBOY: She would probably love to meet you. Has your stardom helped you meet other celebs?

OLBERMANN: One night Katy and I crashed in front of the TV during an *Arrested Development* marathon. We loved it—bought the DVDs, watched every episode of the best situation comedy ever.

Then, out of the blue, I got a call from Jason Bateman, the star of the show, who invited me into his fantasy baseball league. "I'm the biggest *Countdown* fan in the world," he said. On my last trip to L.A., I met him for lunch, and we went to a Dodgers game.

PLAYBOY: Does he really want you in his fantasy league? You'll destroy him.

OLBERMANN: He regrets it. On the night of the most recent Democrat presidential debate, I covered the debate and then punched up MLB transactions: The Astros called up outfielder Hunter Pence. I grabbed Pence, a potential Rookie of the Year.

PLAYBOY: You aced Bateman out of Pence?

OLBERMANN: And Bateman was mad. So I traded him a third baseman, who was instantly sent to the minors. Now he's mad about that, too.

PLAYBOY: Are you beating him?

OLBERMANN: I'm in first place. Bateman is mired in fourth.

PLAYBOY: You never lost your baseball-nerd tendencies.

OLBERMANN: One of my favorite moments was meeting Jerry Coleman. When I was a kid listening to the Yankees on the radio, Jerry was on with Joe Garagiola and Phil Rizzuto. Those

guys basically made me want to go into broadcasting. So one day I was at Yankee Stadium; I'd agreed to be the PA announcer at an old-timers' game. It happened to be Jerry's first Old-Timers' Day since he became the San Diego Padres announcer 30 years ago—

PLAYBOY: He famously called a fly ball like this: "It's a long drive. Winfield back to the wall. He hits his head on the wall. And it rolls off toward second base!"

OLBERMANN: Well, yes. And he never watched *SportsCenter*; had no idea I did sports before *Countdown*. So Jerry said, "Why is the best newscaster since Morrow doing PA at an old-timers' baseball game?" I told him why: He and Joe and Phil were the reason I went into broadcasting. Jerry thought about that for a second and said, "Boy, you need better role models. We were terrible!"

PLAYBOY: Is it true you have more backbone than most of us—an extra vertebra?

OLBERMANN: An X-ray showed I have six lower vertebrae, not the usual five, which may make my spine more rigid than most. Make of that what you will.

PLAYBOY: You had a stalker a few years back. That must have been scary.

OLBERMANN: It started at ESPN. A woman thought I had proposed to her in secret code during *SportsCenter*. She would call and call, leave 50 or 60 messages a night. I thought it was over after I went to work at Fox, then I picked up the phone and it was her. "Please don't call me," I said. "How can you think I want to marry you? We've had no contact for four years."

She said, "You needed time to make up your mind."

This went on for more than 10 years, until she got so sick she couldn't leave her house. Couldn't continue it.

PLAYBOY: Any other scares?

OLBERMANN: Last fall I opened a letter at home and white powder spilled out. I wasn't scared, not at first. I remember thinking, Anthrax is hard to handle; anyone using the real thing would probably kill himself. But I called the authorities, and they were there instantly: 18 cops and FBI agents, some in hazmat suits. They took my clothes and cell phone, my ESPN phone, and blasted them with radiation. I walked out of my apartment in a moon suit made of that heavy plastic-y paper they make FedEx packs out of. Next thing I knew, I was in an isolation ward, thinking, I was stupid to open that envelope.

PLAYBOY: They caught the guy who sent it.

OLBERMANN: They did—after I got a similar package at work. The return address read, "Jay Leno, Burbank, CA." Now, Leno's on NBC; if he wants to send me something, he can use interoffice mail. So I called the FBI. They took the envelope to the California post office noted on the postmark, where the postmaster said, "We sell those envelopes here." He scanned the bar code. Up on his computer screen popped the guy's home

(concluded on page 138)

STUDENTS

ON EIGHT COLLEGE GIRLS (AND ONE OBNOXIOUS GUY) ON THE STATE OF SEX ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES TODAY

STUDENTS

number 2



PHOTOGRAPHY BY
GEORGE GEORGIU

IN recent years a particular species of provocateuse has sprung up at colleges across the country: the sex columnist. Whether she's flip and flirty or deadly earnest, her weekly musings on dating, mating and getting yourself tested can be much needed must-reads in bland campus newspapers. It's probably no coincidence that these pundits of pleasure were raised on *Sex and the City*. Whether they're destined to be Carrie Bradshaws, Dr. Ruths or suburban hausfraus is beside the point; right now, nobody knows more about the sexual goings-on in the collegiate trenches (as it were) than the young ladies who write about them every week. We spoke to seven of the best about campus carnality.

Why all women? Because men just don't write sex columns. Well, one does, and his unapologetic guy talk rubs a lot of people the wrong way. But see for yourself—we talked to him, too.

NICOLE WROTEN (Loyola University New Orleans): Sex is always the buzz on campus. All anyone ever talks about is who's having sex with whom and how they're doing it. The sex column is always the most popular thing in the paper. Much to my parents' and a few boyfriends' dismay, I've never had a problem talking about sex.

MARGO SCOTT (Northwestern University): I once read a sex column at Northwestern that someone else had written, and I felt it wasn't sex-positive. It was an article about anal sex, and it was about buying enemas—a lot of worry. The weird thing is, the guy who wrote it is gay.

CHRISTINE BORDEN (University of California, Berkeley): The previous sex columnist's pieces read like a pamphlet you'd find at a health center. Or the topics were just condescending, like "How to Give a Blow Job." I figured, This is Berkeley; everyone here already knows how to do that.

NICOLE: I've had more sex and more partners than most of the good Catholic girls at my school. But then, I'm not Catholic. A sex columnist shouldn't be a virgin, but she doesn't need to be a whore—unless she wants to be.

JANET JAY (Carnegie Mellon University): I haven't had crazy sex all over the place, so if that's the qualification, I'm not a good sex columnist.

WES MULLER (University of New Orleans): It's absolutely necessary for a sex columnist to have lots of sex. It's about experience. You wouldn't want to read political commentary by a person with no political background. My columns are based on my own experiences.

MARGO: If I'm not friends with you, I don't really give a fuck about what you did last weekend.

GLORY FINK (University of Southern Mississippi): We care about other people's sex life



only if it's Brad Pitt's or Angelina Jolie's. **JANET:** I started writing the column because so many people at Carnegie Mellon are socially inept. The questions I got most often weren't about sex; they were "How do I start a conversation with a girl at a bar?" There are a lot of weird people at CMU. They don't need advice on using condoms or the basics of sexual health. They need advice on how not to creep girls out.

WES: A female reader asked why guys are obsessed with anal sex, so I wrote a column about it called "Why Are Guys Obsessed With Anal Sex?" That was my most controversial column, mainly because of the title.

NICOLE: I did a column called "Wedding Nights Are Overrated," which was not well received at all. It was advice to a girl on how to lose her virginity: Okay, you need to be ready for the mental aspects and the physical aspects, and you need to know who you're going to do it with, and blah blah blah. Normal stuff, nothing very risqué. I wasn't writing *blow job* every other word. The worst word I used was *hymen*.

PLAYBOY COLLEGE SEX SURVEY 2007

In a poll that included 334 students on PlayboyU, our new college networking site, we found that:

71 percent of students own porn.

52 percent of collegians know a student who has slept with a professor or TA.

61 percent of female students admit to not always using a condom during intercourse.

69 percent of female students are normally sober when they have sex.

34 percent of male and **25 percent** of female students were virgins when they began college.

32 percent of students who have gone on spring break have had a one-night stand there.

27 percent of female and **21 percent** of male students have had a threesome.

49 percent of female students have bared their body for a camera phone.

25 percent of students have been filmed having sex.

36 percent of female students believe they will find their future spouse at school, compared with **42 percent** of males who think they'll find their partner on campus.

Join in—take the ongoing survey at playboy.com.

KATE PRENGAMAN (College of William & Mary): I use *blow job* so freely I accidentally said it on NPR once.

NICOLE: The responses I got were ridiculous. We had alumni from, like, the 1940s coming into the offices, saying, "How dare you write this?" Other faculty members gave my advisor a hard time, saying, "What are you letting these kids do?" I was working at a magazine then, and when my boss read it she threatened to fire me. The old geezers didn't like it, but I didn't care. I wasn't writing it for them.

MARGO: I never had the "You're a slut and you're making other people slutty" kind of attack. My editor was fairly conservative, and she would cringe. She'd be like, "Are we really doing the butt-sex article?"

WES: The other staff members don't like my column. There's a meeting every week. I went to two of them, and the only thing anybody talked about was whether my column was inappropriate. So I stopped going to the meetings.

KEEPING UP APPEARANCES

MARGO: I think a lot of women I ran into at Northwestern liked to talk about their sexual exploits but hadn't actually had vaginal sex yet. They were talking like, "Yeah, then I went down on him, and then blah blah blah...." So there's an air of promiscuity that isn't actually happening. Because we're known as a sort of dorky campus that doesn't party a lot, that's the ongoing thorn in the school's side.

JESSICA HARALSON (University of Pennsylvania): People post Facebook pictures of themselves—"Like, so wasted!!!"—and type drunken IMs to prove how "cool" and "collegiate" they are. What is so cool and impressive about losing control of your physical judgment and your bodily functions?

WES: I have so many female friends who say, "Oh, I was so drunk. I didn't really want to go home with your friend." I'm like, "Yeah, right. I know you were horny."

KATE: We want to see sex as empowering. It doesn't always feel that way, but we're working to get there.

NICOLE: I've been called a slut. It happens all the time.

KATE: Being a slut is different from just being sexually expressive. It's a negative judgment, especially when girls use it. No one wants to be called a slut, but acting a little slutty from time to time isn't shameful.

NICOLE: I lost my virginity relatively late. I didn't lose it in high school; I didn't do anything in high school. But Loyola is a very Catholic campus, and I have a lot of girlfriends who are still virgins. If a girl doesn't like another girl, what's the first thing she'll call her? Slut. Especially if she does screw around. But you know what? Everybody's doing it, so the word doesn't have the same power anymore.

LARA LOEWENSTEIN (UCLA): *Slut* is still an insult. But then so is *virgin*. Sex can be empowering, but it can also be demeaning. It's all about context.

WES: If a guy is called a slut, it's like, whatever, you get laid a lot. If a girl is called a slut, it's always a bad thing, and it will be a long time before it isn't.

WE'VE GOT TONIGHT

MARGO: Some nights you're like, I'm gonna go out and find somebody, and we're gonna fuck. You shave your legs and put on your nice underwear. But sometimes when the girl puts the moves on, there are mishaps. It's like, Does he want me? Are we going to have sex? What's going on? In some ways it's easier to do it the old way. He says, "Whoa, it's getting late. Do you wanna watch a movie at my place?" She says, "Sure." So you go over there, you get the tour, and you pause at the bedroom. That whole scripted scene is something you both recognize. There are no mixed signals; this is how it goes.

NICOLE: My first one-night stand ended up being a two-night stand; we slept together the next night, too. He was a radio DJ. After that I had to hear him on the radio every morning.





"I FOUND PORN ON MY BOYFRIEND'S COMPUTER. IT WAS INTERESTING."

KATE: I was hooking up with a boy once, and I guess we were drunker than I thought. Things didn't go as smoothly as planned, so he got kind of embarrassed. "Oh my God, I can't believe I hooked up with the sex columnist. You're going to write about this, aren't you? Ahh!" He just screamed and ran out of my house. That kind of thing happens every once in a while.

MARGO: There are some rules for one-night stands. Don't ask each other if you're seeing or hooking up with anyone else. That totally kills the mood. Also there's less getting-to-know-you.

There's not a lot of talk about work or family—unless he lives with his family, in which case that's probably a deal breaker anyway. On second thought, you probably won't even get laid.

WES: I have some rules for casual sex, for what you'd call a fuck buddy. Keep it to

are naked doesn't mean it has anything to do with sex. Sexual nudity is a lot less common at parties and in public.

WES: Nudity? I love streaking! I've gotten naked at a few parties, but I've been the exception.

CHRISTINE: I went to a stripper party, and in the corner was a guy standing completely naked except for a fishnet bodysuit. It wasn't very flattering. It was kind of disturbing.

NICOLE: I've been to a lingerie party; we called it an underwear party. I wore just underwear and a top. A bunch of people we invited showed up dressed normally, and we were like, "Nope, you gotta take your clothes off." Girls were wearing underwear, bras, high heels and fishnets. It was a great, great party.

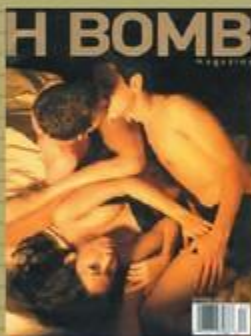
LARA: Girls make out with one another at parties all the time.

KATE: Many college women do it for the attention of the boys at the parties. Their boyfriends don't mind, and they don't consider it cheating, but it's still a bit of a thrill.

WES: They're definitely trying to get

THE RISE AND FIZZLE OF THE COLLEGE SEX MAG

In 2004 a brash bunch of Harvard students grabbed headlines by starting *H Bomb*, a college sex magazine. It contained some predictable collegiate stuff: erotic poetry and fiction, some saucy doodles and ponderous essays ("Elimidate: Towards a Phenomenology of Hooking Up"). Yeah, yeah, and it also had nude photographs of Harvard students—by our count, 18 exposed breasts in the first issue alone. The whole enterprise seemed promising and provocative. Hell, we bought an ad. For the record, *H Bomb* wasn't the first college sex magazine (that



would be Vassar's *Squirm*), it was just the one that seemed to signal a trend. The University of Chicago's *Vita Excolatur* followed, as did *Boink*, which culls material from students on several Boston campuses. Three years later *H Bomb* is defunct. *Vita Excolatur* and more recent startups *Quake* (Penn) and *Outlet*

(Columbia, online only) are, if not dead, extremely sleepy, with websites that haven't been updated in calendar 2007. Only *Boink* soldiers on, sort of. Its winning strategy? Sell out. *Boink* may never publish another issue, but founding editor Alecia Oleyourryk scored a book deal including a six-figure advance.

once a week. Try to have as little communication as possible. The only things you need to discuss are when and where. When you meet face-to-face, have no communication other than deciding on which position and the common moans of coitus. Limit cuddling to five to 10 minutes.

LETTING IT ALL HANG OUT

CHRISTINE: At Berkeley anything goes. You go to a party, and people will already be naked when you get there.

NICOLE: Tourists are the only ones who flash at Mardi Gras. It's not worth it; you'll get beads no matter what—unless you want a really big throw. The only person I've ever seen flash was my boyfriend's sister. She's from Pittsburgh. A girl won't voluntarily take her top off at a party. She has to be intoxicated, but it does happen.

KATE: Sexual nudity and silly nudity are two very different things. Just because people

attention from guys, but it works, so more power to them. We like to think they would do it if no guys were around, but I don't think that's the case.

NICOLE: A lot of times girls do it to get a guy's attention but not all the time. Girls are more comfortable with one another now. They trust one another more than they trust guys. If a guy's not around, they'll make out with each other. I've done it.

LARA: As for a "true" lesbian experience, if people are sexually open, they



OUR UNABASHED COLLEGE DICTIONARY

Ben Applebaum and Derrick Pittman, the editors of *Turd Ferguson & the Sausage Party: An Uncensored Guide to College Slang*, share some of their favorite campus cant.

Bonar: The uncanny ability of a guy to know when a hot girl has set foot anywhere on the hall.

Cleat Chaser: A girl who is obsessed with getting it on with athletes.

Imagination: Thinking intensely about waxing it with a really hot girl when you're in class.

Mass Dumpings: Traditional times throughout the year when students execute simultaneous breakups. Some common mass dumpings are the Turkey Dump (before Thanksgiving break), the Spring Cleaning (before spring break) and the Hat Toss (right after graduation).

Sexiled: When someone is forced to sleep outside his or her room because a roommate wants to get busy with a partner.

Stride of Pride: Like the infamous post-one-night-stand walk of shame across campus but slower, to ensure bragging rights are received. Reserved almost exclusively for dudes.

"GIRLS MAKE OUT WITH ONE ANOTHER AT PARTIES ALL THE TIME."

are often willing to experiment. This goes more for girls than guys, since there is a stronger stigma against gay men.

A/V CLUB

JESSICA: Porn is awesome. Many women my age understand that porn is just sexual stimulation—not competition.

CHRISTINE: It's a masturbatory aid.

NICOLE: Porn can be fun if you watch it together. I mean, guys do it by themselves; why not do it with him? I'm not the kind of girl who watches porn alone, but I don't think it's wrong for guys to look at porn.

WES: I've brought girls home and they've asked me, "You got any porn?" I say yeah, and they say, "So let's watch some." The girl will want to put in the porn, watch it and have sex at the same time.

MARGO: I love porn. A lot of straight porn really sucks. I still watch it because I'm a perv and I like to watch people fucking, but I don't need the melon breasts.

WES: I don't think girls prefer any one kind. I've had them complain about some stuff, but they never turn it off. Most guys keep porn on their computer. If they claim they don't, they're probably lying.

NICOLE: I've found it on my boyfriend's computer. It was interesting. I told him, "Don't be embarrassed. It's no big deal." I don't get it, but if he thinks it's great, I say go for it. A lot of women say they don't understand pornography, but it makes them angry. Why get angry at something if you don't understand it?

WES: Girls can get a little jealous of the porn star. They think you're looking at her and are more attracted to her than to them. There's no reason to think that. Everybody watches porn, but everybody knows the real thing is 10 times better—

100 times better. There's no reason to be jealous of some friggin' porn star nobody knows.

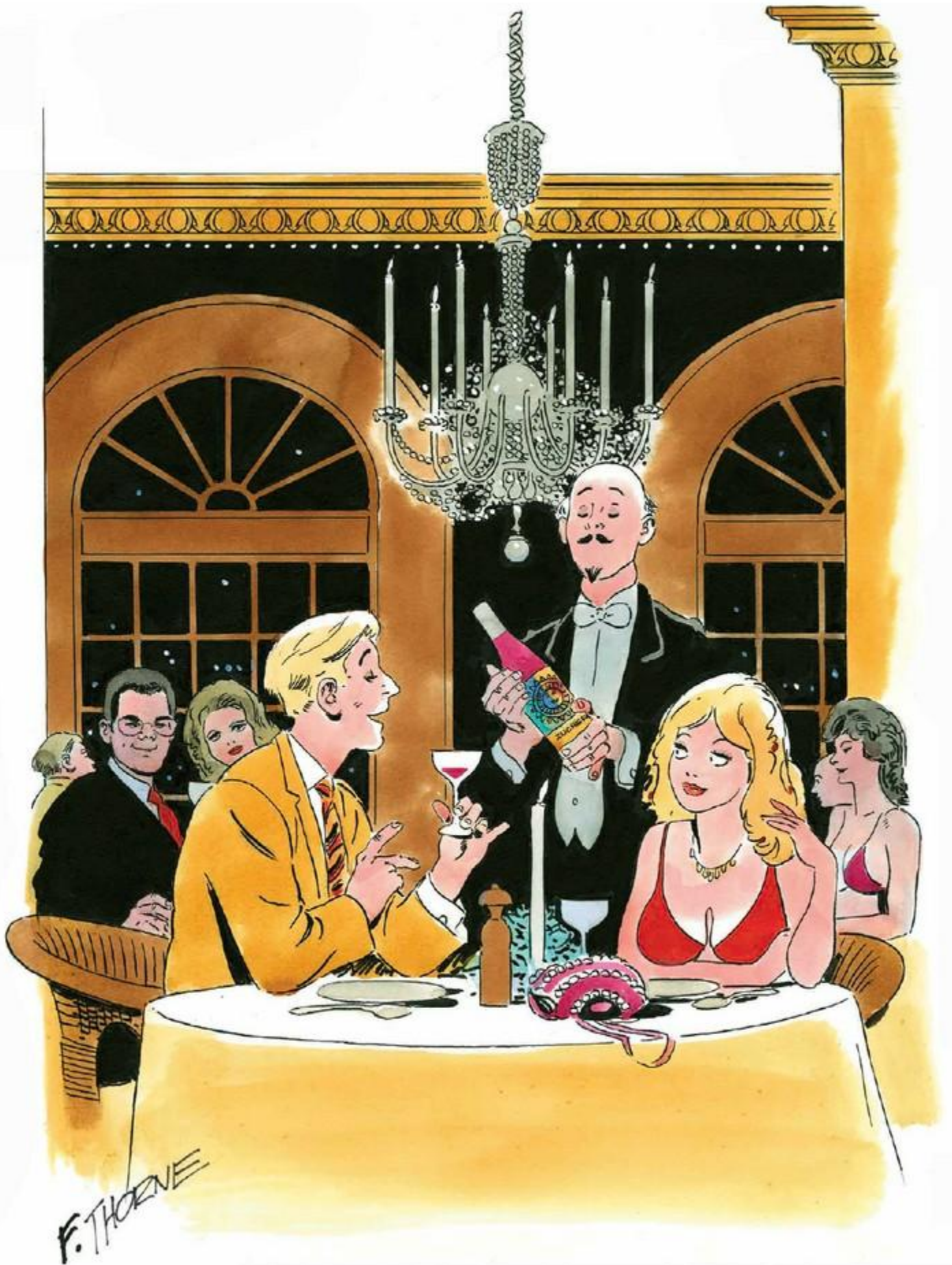
ORAL EXAM

NICOLE: A lot of these Catholic so-called virgins don't consider oral sex to be sex. They use the title *virgin* to mean "I haven't had intercourse." Or maybe "Just the tip, to see how it feels." Oral sex can be just as intimate as intercourse—it's in your mouth, for God's sake.

KATE: Oral sex is way more intimate than intercourse. Your face is all up in there, and you can't be detached or anything, the way you can with a casual fuck.

MARGO: I think vaginal sex is definitely more intimate, but plenty of people have told me oral when I've asked the same question, which kind of blows my mind.

WES: I've never been a fan of blow jobs. Maybe I've just gotten crappy ones, but I've gotten off from a blow job only a couple of times, once from an Asian chick when I was working in a bar, the other from a Peruvian girl. She had nice lips. Girls give blow jobs because they think that's what guys want, but I haven't
(concluded on page 142)



"I dated a professional wine taster once. She wouldn't swallow."

QUEEN ALICIA



SINCE BEING CROWNED
MISS UNIVERSE, ALICIA MACHADO HAS
TAKEN LATIN AMERICA BY STORM

When you step into Alicia Machado's Mexico City home, you quickly learn what kind of man you are. A pet panther named Chuy slides over and sniffs you. The wildcat's eyes size you up. Maybe you see the sparkle of saliva on his fang. Don't let him smell fear or you will disappoint the lady of the house. Suffice it to say, Alicia Machado defines *exotic* in more ways than one. The former Miss Universe (the first Miss Universe ever to appear in the pages of *PLAYBOY*) is a 29-year-old celebrity in Latin America. Turn on the TV and you may see her smiling face. Turn on the radio and you may hear her singing. She first posed for the Mexican edition of *PLAYBOY* in 2006 and got rave reviews; hers became the best-selling issue of Mexican *PLAYBOY* in history at the time. Then she appeared in our Venezuelan edition to even greater acclaim. Now, in the magazine you hold in your hand, she arrives in America. She admits that her nude photos took many of her fans by surprise at first.

"They never saw me like this," Alicia says, "but this is the real me, the real Alicia. This is who I am."

Yoseph Alicia Machado Fajardo was born in Venezuela in 1977 to a Cuban mother and Spanish father. She won the Miss Universe pageant in 1996 at the age of 19. "I was a little kid," she says. But she didn't look like any little kid. Statuesque and elegant, her amber skin so radiant it glowed, she was easily chosen as the judges' winner. She was crowned in a televised ceremony at the Aladdin Resort & Casino in Las Vegas. Since then Alicia has become an actress and a model. She landed a part on a Mexican soap opera, and she recorded an eponymous pop album in 2004. Currently she appears on the TV show *El Pantera*, a popular crime drama that airs on Monday nights in Mexico. She has a major role in *I Love Miami*, a film about Cubans living in the U.S., which came out last year. Her second CD hit stores in August. She's working so much, she says, she barely has time to spend at home with her panther and her horse, La Negra. She's not married, but she has "a partner who is very important to me. I believe in love and relationships." Marriage? "I don't know. Maybe," she says. "Sometimes I believe in marriage, and sometimes I feel different."

For this shoot, we chose a locale nearly as exotic and beautiful as our model. On a Pacific beach in Oaxaca, in the southern reaches of Mexico, Alicia came alive. "Oaxaca is where the most important Indians in Mexico come from," she says. "It's a magical place. Everything there is so mystical." We couldn't agree more.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID EISENBERG













Brew U

So, what'll it be?

with rice, hence their light character and color. Example: Budweiser, which accounts for 49 percent of the beer drunk in the States.

● **Bitter:** A staple of the English pub, bitter is a kind of ale made with lots of hops. It's fruity, slightly bitter and less fizzy than other kinds of beer.

● **Blond:** A species of female known for mental acuity. Also a type of Belgian ale that's golden and fruity. Example: Duvel, Belgium's most popular brand.

● **Bock:** A hearty beer high in alcohol content (often about six percent), this thick, sweet burst of flavor emerged in a German town called Einbeck and was originally made by Catholic monks.

● **India Pale Ale (IPA):** British brewers of the 18th century had a problem: how to ship ale to the West Indies, where there was great demand. It tended to spoil during the long boat journeys—unless, that is, it was brewed with very high alcohol content. Thus the India pale ale, among the booziest brews you can find.

● **Light Beer:** Beer reduced in calories and alcohol content. Example: Bud Light is 4.2 percent alcohol compared with five percent for regular Bud.

● **Malt Liquor:** A high-alcohol, generally cheap version of American lager. It's not malty, despite its name, but it'll get you drunk fast, should the need arise. Colt 45 doesn't list its alcohol content, but it's roughly six percent (eight percent in Canada).

● **Pale Ale:** This term is used as a catchall for any ale that is bronze- or copper-colored, as opposed to dark.

● **Pilsner:** The world's first light-colored beer, pilsner appeared in 1842 in the town of Pilsen in what is now the Czech Republic. A lager, it usually has a golden color and crisp taste. Pilsner Urquell and Heineken are examples. Today pilsner is the world's most popular beer.

● **Porter:** This bittersweet ale, full-bodied and dark brown, is made with well-roasted barley. A good example is Sierra Nevada. First brewed in London circa 1721 and supposedly named for the porters who worked the docks, it's a lighter version of...

● **Stout:** Darker and fuller bodied than sissy beers, stout is made using dark-roasted barley malt and hops. Its name describes its character well. It's also good for you. Doctors have traditionally fed it to blood donors because of its high iron content.

● **Wheat Beer:** Add wheat to the mix of barley malt, hops and water, and you've got wheat beer, a light and slightly sweet mugful. The most popular brands are Hoegaarden from Belgium and Paulaner from Germany (the latter being a *Hefeweizen*, a style of wheat beer that's cloudy because the yeast isn't filtered out). —David Critchell

BEER 101

Humans have been slurping beer for 5,000 years. The Romans called beer *cerevista*, from Ceres, the goddess of agriculture, and *vis*, the Latin word for strength. The Greek philosopher Plato is said to have invented the shotgun technique; he liked to get his goggles on. Through the centuries different types of the beverage evolved according to brewing techniques in different parts of the world, and today there are as many types of beer as there are wine. We encourage you to drink responsibly, and by that we mean you should know exactly what you're consuming. Herewith, a syllabus:

● **Ale:** Every kind of beer today is either an ale or a lager. Ale showed up first, in Europe hundreds of years ago. Brewed from water, hops, barley malt (barley soaked in water until it germinates) and top-fermenting yeast, it tends to have a stronger and fruitier flavor than lager. A good example: Bass Ale.

● **American Lager:** Lager, the other kind of beer, is a crisper, lighter-flavored brew made with the same holy trinity of hops, barley malt and water. Instead of top-fermenting yeast, it's brewed with bottom-fermenting yeast (which settles to the bottom rather than the top during fermentation). Most American lagers are also made

HEADS OF THE CLASS

PLAYBOY'S TOP 10 COLLEGE-TOWN MICROBREWERIES

Avery Brewing, Boulder, Colorado (averybrewing.com) Adam Avery makes big beers with an explosion of flavor in every sip. Although he has fermented such relatively mellow brews as the amber Redpoint ale, he's best known for potent bruisers like the Reverend, his Belgian-style ale, and Hog Heaven, a barley wine. You can buy Avery beer in select stores nationwide. The best place to drink one: in the parking lot outside the University of Colorado at Boulder's Folsom Stadium on game day.

Cambridge Brewing Company, Cambridge, Massachusetts (cambrew.com) Students from across the Boston area come to Cambridge Brewing as much for the tasty porter and other ales (available on-site or in takeaway growlers) as for the weird and wild one-offs Will Meyers brews up, such as Benevolence, a 12 percent alcohol, Jack Daniels cask-aged barley wine.

Capital Brewery, Middleton, Wisconsin (capital-brewery.com) Situated a stone's throw from the University of Wisconsin campus in Madison, Capital has been slaking the thirst of students for more than two decades, most of that time with unapologetically Germanic lagers and wheat beers, such as the much-awarded Munich Dark. Available in locations all over the northern Midwest.

Live Oak Brewing Company, Austin, Texas (liveoakbrewing.com) Live Oak's dry and refreshing pilsner and other brews are draft only, so experiencing them requires an evening out in the Lone Star state. Of course, given Austin's celebrated nightlife, that's hardly an imposition.

Port Brewing/Lost Abbey, San Marcos, California (portbrewing.com, lostabbey.com) We're not saying the students at San Diego State are spoiled, but their city is a short drive from a fabulous brewery that makes two exceptional lines of beers. Port Brewing offers ultrahoppy American-style ales, while Lost Abbey ("for sinners and saints alike") makes Belgian-inspired beers

with outrageous complexity and depth. Look closely and you may find this brew in a store near you.

Schlafly Beer, St. Louis, Missouri (schlafly.com) It may brew in the shadow of the big dog (Anheuser-Busch), but Schlafly is no schnauzer when it comes to full-bodied beers.

This brewery offers a dizzying range of styles. Its imperial stout is a strong favorite come exam time at Washington University. You can buy Schlafly in bottles all over Illinois and Missouri, and it's available in kegs at the brewery.

Steelhead Brewing Company, Eugene, Oregon (steelheadbrewery.com) Any brewpub that serves Hairy Weasel (a Hefeweizen) and Raging Rhino (a red ale) is okay in our book. Steelhead is located in Eugene, home of the University of Oregon, and also has two California locations, in Burlingame and Irvine.

Terrapin Beer Company, Athens, Georgia (terrapinbeer.com) If you think rye is for distilling, not brewing, Terrapin will convince you otherwise, with both a rye-accented pale ale and a stronger, intensely flavorful Rye Squared. And its Wake-n-Bake coffee-oatmeal imperial stout is a natural for those A.M. happy hours. Terrapin beers are sold in stores throughout the Southeast.

Upland Brewing Company, Bloomington, Indiana (uplandbeer.com) Hoosier beer can be fine stuff indeed, especially when it's the smooth and coffee-ish Bad Elmer's Porter from Upland Brewery. Its roster of seasonal brews, such as autumn's Oktoberfest and summer's Belgian-style Saison (available in keg only), is also top-notch. Available on tap and in bottles all over Indiana.

Wolaver's, Middlebury, Vermont (wolavers.com) In crunchy Middlebury it goes without saying the local college microbrewery is all organic. What deserves mention is that the righteous enjoyment of Wolaver's wonderful ales, particularly the brightly bitter IPA, involves no sacrifice of flavor. Available at select shops all over the 50. —Stephen Beaumont

THE ULTIMATE OKTOBERFEST MEAL

HINT: IT CONTAINS BOTH ESSENTIAL FOOD GROUPS, BEER AND MEAT

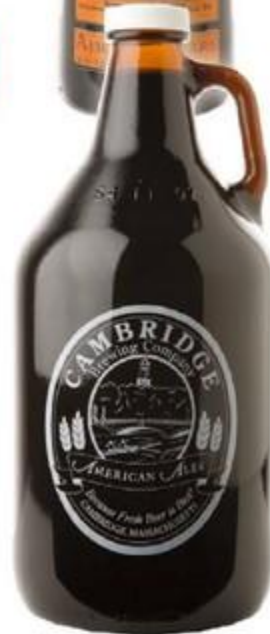
We've tried every recipe for bratwurst boiled in beer. This beer-simmered bratwurst with onions and red-cabbage sauerkraut is our fave. It comes courtesy of Bobby Flay and serves eight.

- 3 large onions, peeled and thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, smashed
- 3 pounds of the best bratwurst you can find, pricked several times with a fork
- 6 bottles dark beer
- 2 cups water
- 1 teaspoon coriander seed
- 1 teaspoon caraway seed
- 1 teaspoon mustard seed
- 1 (one-inch) piece of fresh ginger, peeled and chopped
- Hero rolls

- Sweet-hot German mustard
- Spicy brown mustard
- Red-cabbage sauerkraut (don't be lazy; make your own!)

Preheat grill to high. Arrange onion slices and garlic along bottom of a medium stockpot. Place bratwurst on top, then add beer, water, all seeds and ginger. Bring to a simmer over grill grates or on a burner. Simmer sausages for about 10 minutes.

Remove pan from heat and let bratwurst sit in liquid for 10 minutes more. Remove sausages and grill until their casings are crisp and golden brown, about four minutes on each side. Remove onions from beer with a slotted spoon and place them in a bowl. Serve bratwurst on rolls with onions, mustard and sauerkraut on the side.



BEER GEAR



WITH THESE
GOODIES
AT YOUR
FINGERTIPS,
YOU'LL BE
SERVING
LIKE
FEDERER

A home bar starts with a kegerator, the basic tool that turns any room into a genuine gathering place. The **Perlick Beer Dispenser Cabinet** (\$5,228, bringperlick.com) is available with two or three draft taps and an attached minifridge for chilling bottled beer and mugs. It's outdoor rated and has a variable-speed compressor coupled with an electronic temperature control and display for ultra-quick, precise keg cooling. (We suggest cellar temperature, 55 degrees.) To make sure you pull your pints with authority, **Taphandles** stocks all kinds of handle styles (from about \$22, taphandles.com). You can go with a simple paddle or pub-style handle or choose from a catalog of more than 100 custom beauties. The company will even fabricate resin handles especially for your homespun suds (\$3,500 for a minimum order of 100). If you insist on having the brand name of your go-to bevvie, **BeerTaps.com** has the usual suspects for about 50 bucks. Even more than wine, beer needs the right glass to bring out its full flavor. You don't want to

pour a Belgian triple into a pint glass; you may offend a monk a few thousand miles away. There are countless styles available, but make sure you have the basics covered. The **Essential Beer Glass Set** (\$37, beerheads.com) includes one each of the following glassware: a *Hefeweizen*, a tulip for *Doppelbocks* and lambics, a pilsner, a goblet for abbey-style beers, an imperial pint and a *cervoise* to class up virtually anything. Finally, if you're willing to take the home-brew plunge, go with the **Super Ultima-Bru Brewtree Kit** (\$3,500, brewtree.com). Simpler systems run as low as \$100, but we like this swankier one. It's seriously advanced—no *Brewing for Dummies* here. Within a month of opening this item, you'll be making 15 gallons of any style beer you want. Design a label on your computer, print it onto adhesive-backed paper from an office-supply store and slap it on the bottle of your choice. You can pick up bottles at any home-brew outlet, such as **Brew Your Own Brew** (brewyourownbrew.com). Feel free to send us samples. —Todd Alström

TASTE TEST

MATCH THE BEER QUOTE WITH THE MOUTH THAT SPILLED IT

- "I was at a bar, nursing a beer. My nipple was getting quite soggy."
- "Beauty is in the eye of the beer holder."
- "I learned early to drink beer, wine and whiskey. And I think I was about five when I first chewed tobacco."
- "Give me a woman who truly loves beer and I will conquer the world!"
- "You can't be a real country unless you have a beer and an airline. It helps if you have some kind of football team or some nuclear weapons, but at the very least you need a beer."
- "I would kill everyone in this room for one drop of sweet beer."
- "In a study, scientists report that drinking beer can be good for the liver. I'm sorry, did I say scientists? I meant Irish people."
- "I've only been in love with a beer bottle and a mirror."
- "Beer is proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy."
- "Twenty-four hours in a day, 24 beers in a case. Coincidence?"
- "He was a wise man who invented beer."
- "We are here to drink beer. We are here to kill war. We are here to laugh at the odds and live our lives so well that death will tremble to take us."

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| a. Sid Vicious | g. Kaiser Wilhelm II |
| b. Homer Simpson | h. Kinky Friedman |
| c. Frank Zappa | i. Erno Phillips |
| d. Babe Ruth | j. Steven Wright |
| e. Tina Fey | k. Benjamin Franklin |
| f. Plato | l. Charles Bukowski |

Answer key:

1. f; 2. h; 3. d; 4. g; 5. c; 6. b; 7. e; 8. a; 9. k; 10. j; 11. f; 12. l.

SIX-PACK OF ST. PAULI

THESE CENTERFOLDS HAVE ALL SQUEEZED INTO THE WORLD'S SEXIEST DIRNDL



Neriah Davis
Miss March 1994,
St. Pauli Girl 2001

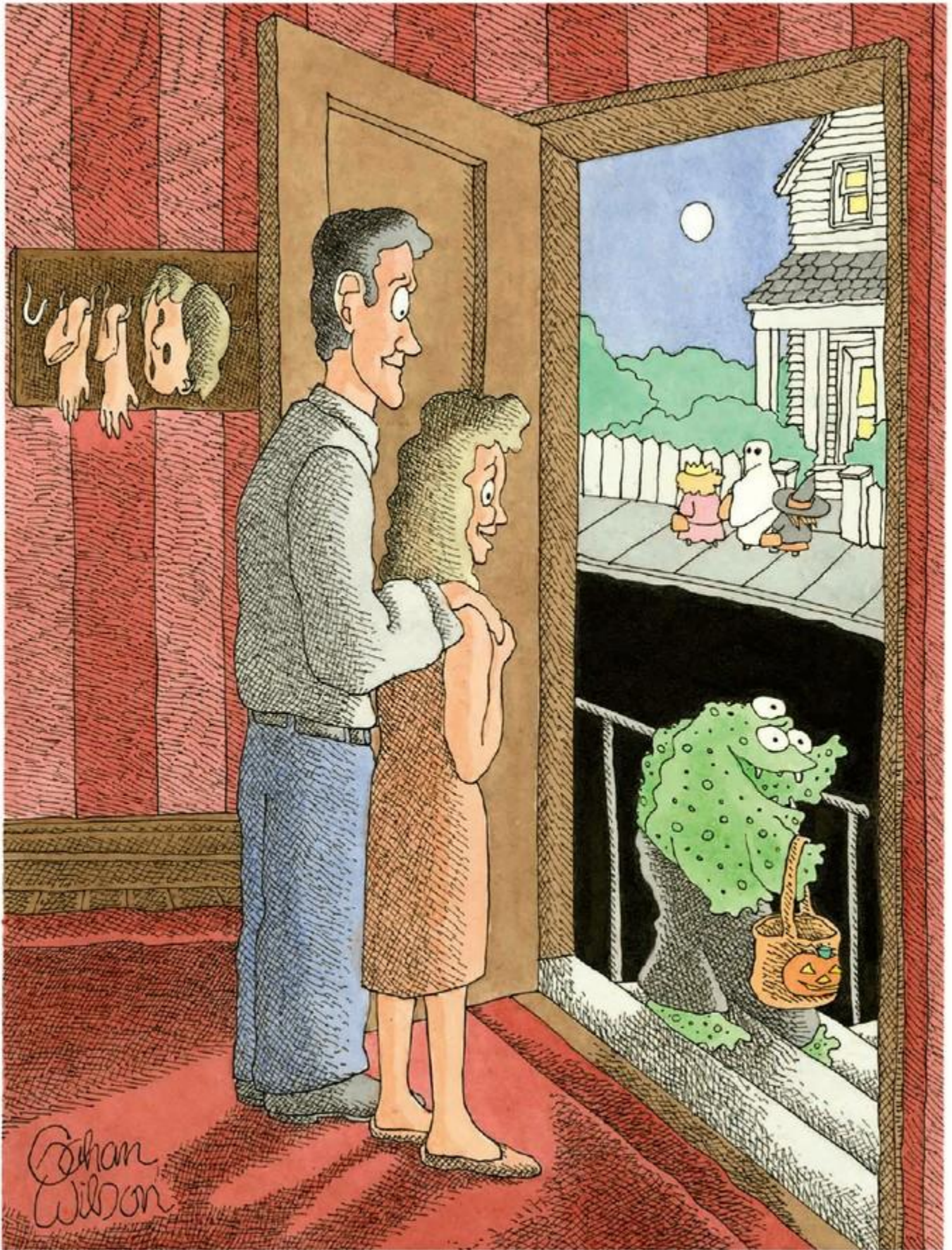
Heather Kozar
Miss January 1998,
St. Pauli Girl 2002

Lisa Dergan
Miss July 1998,
St. Pauli Girl 2003

Angela Little
Miss August 1998,
St. Pauli Girl 2000

Jaime Bergman
Miss January 1999,
St. Pauli Girl 1999

Stacy Fuson
Miss February 1999,
St. Pauli Girl 2005



"It's the one night of the year he can go out without his mask and costume!"





TV'S HOTTEST HERO TALKS ABOUT HER ON-SCREEN SPLIT PERSONALITY, DISCUSSES CHEST SIZE, LEARNS TO POLE DANCE AND EXPLAINS WHY HER IDEAL MAN HAS TO BE A SPORTS FAN

Q1

PLAYBOY: On *Heroes* you play two parts: Niki, the good girl, and her dead sister, Jessica, who is trouble. Since they now see each other only in reflective surfaces, how has your role changed your own mirror routine?

LARTER: Not much. I feel mirrors are more for when you're young and nervous and judging yourself. When I look in the mirror now, I see happy. There's a little twinkle in my eye. It's a nice time in my life. There are always ups and downs and in-betweens, but my family is healthy, I'm in love with my boyfriend, and I love my TV show. It's a nice moment. And here comes the hurricane! [laughs]

Q2

PLAYBOY: Imagine the Niki-Jessica action figure. Will they make one with a head that flips or sell two dolls separately?

LARTER: If I had to guess based on the way we're going on the show right now, there would be only one. The two characters will merge, taking the strengths of both—Niki's

vulnerability and Jessica's backbone—to make a complete woman.

Q3

PLAYBOY: The other heroes have some pretty cool powers. Who would you like to trade with?

LARTER: Ooh! I don't know. For a day I would like to teleport. I would love to experience different time periods. I would love to have felt the counterculture movement in the 1960s, to have been a flapper, to have had dinner with my great-great-grandfather.

Q4

PLAYBOY: Your current film is *Resident Evil: Extinction*. Give us a short course in fighting zombies, killer crows and creatures infected with a terrible virus.

LARTER: The movie is two hot girls kicking ass in the desert. I play Claire Redfield, an established video-game character. She is really strong and the leader of a convoy, and she treats all the other characters in different ways: She acts as a mother to one; she

treats another like a boyfriend. She knows what's going on. It's a huge international movie, and I thought the script was pretty good. It was also a chance to go to Mexico for six weeks, kick some butt, shoot some guns, make some money and get a new audience.

Q5

PLAYBOY: As part of a sci-fi-fantasy television series, you appear at comic-book conventions. When did you last tell a fan to get a life?

LARTER: I did Comic-Con last year. This year I was at WonderCon for *Resident Evil*, and a guy asked me, about *Heroes*, "You're the worst on the show. When are you going to die?" All I could think about was how he must have stayed up late the night before thinking about how he was going to get me. I didn't say "Get a life," because his comment hurt a bit. But I'd say it now.

Q6

PLAYBOY: When do you most like being the hot blonde? *(continued on page 131)*

PLAYBOY'S
COLLEGE FICTION CONTEST WINNER



FICTION BY
DAVID JAMES POISSANT

I rattle into the driveway around sunup, and Cam's on my front stoop with his boy, Bobby. Cam stands. He's a huge man, thick and muscled from a decade of work in construction. Sleeves of green dragons run armpit to wrist. He claims there's a pair of naked ladies tattooed into all those scales if you look close enough.

When Crystal left him, Cam got the boy, which tells you what kind of a mother Crystal was. Cam's my last friend. He's a saint when he's sober, and he hasn't touched liquor in 10 years.

He puts a hand on the boy's shoulder, but Bobby spins from his grip and charges. He meets me at the truck, grabs my leg and hugs it with his whole body. I head toward Cam. Bobby bounces and laughs with every step.

We shake hands, but Cam's expression is no-nonsense.

"Graveyard again?" he says. My apron, rolled into a tan tube, hangs from my front pocket, and I reek of kitchen grease.

"Yeah," I say. I haven't told Cam how I lost my temper and yelled at a customer, how apparently some people don't know what over easy means, how my agreement to work the 10-to-six shift is the only thing keeping my electricity on and the water running.

"Bobby," Cam says, "go play for a minute, okay?" Bobby releases my leg and stares at his father skeptically. "Don't make me tell you twice," Cam says. The boy runs to my mailbox, drops to the lawn cross-legged and scowls. "Keep going," Cam says. Slowly, deliberately, Bobby stands and sulks toward their house.

"What is it?" I say. "What's wrong?"

Cam shakes his head. "Red's dead," he says.

Red is Cam's dad, though I've never heard him call him that. "Bastard used to beat the fuck out of me," Cam said one night back when we both drank too much and swapped sad stories. When he turned 18, Cam enlisted and left for the first Gulf war. The last time he saw his father, the man was staggering, drunk, across the lawn. "Go, then!" he screamed. "Go die for your fucking country!" Bobby never knew he had a grandfather.

I don't know whether Cam is upset or relieved, and I don't know what to say. Cam must see this, because he says, "It's okay. I'm okay."

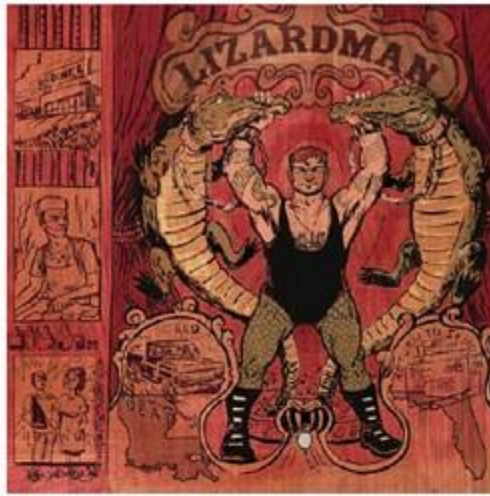
"How'd it happen?" I ask.





FLESH OF MY FLESH





For the past 21 years PLAYBOY has invited the students in Marshall Arisman's illustration class at New York's School of Visual Arts to participate in a contest to produce the perfect complement to our winning piece of college fiction. This year Martin Wittfooth's work proved the most unexpected and arresting take on the conflicts and currents described in David James Poissant's *Lizard Man*. Wittfooth earned his BAA in illustration from Sheridan College in Toronto in 2003. He now lives in New York City, where he works as an illustrator and fine artist and is earning his MFA at SVA. Wittfooth's art has been exhibited internationally and presented in a variety of media, from album covers to music videos. Honorable mention goes to six runners-up, whose provocative work is pictured above. Clockwise from top left, the artists are Jenny Kruger, Andres V. Martinez, Felix Gephart, Eric Losh, Matthew Freel and Dong Yun Lee.

"He was drinking," Cam says. "Bartender said one minute Red was laughing, the next his forehead was on the bar. When they went to shake him awake, he was dead."

"Wow." It's a stupid thing to say, but I've been up all night. My hand still grips an invisible steel spatula. I can feel lard under my nails.

"I need a favor," Cam says.

"Anything," I say. When I was in jail, it was Cam who bailed me out. When my wife and son moved to Baton Rouge, it was Cam who knocked down my door, kicked my ass, threw the contents of my liquor cabinet onto the front lawn, set it on fire and got me a job at his friend's diner.

"I need a ride to Red's house," Cam says.

"Okay," I say. Cam hasn't had a car for years. Half the people on our block can't afford storm shutters, let alone cars, but it's St. Petersburg, a pedestrian city, and downtown's only a five-minute walk.

"Well, don't say okay yet," Cam says. "It's in Lee."

"Lee, Florida?"

Cam nods. Lee is four hours north, the last city you pass on I-75 before you hit Georgia.

"No problem," I say, "as long as I'm back before 10 tonight."

"Another graveyard?" Cam asks. I nod. "Okay," he says, "let's go."

Last year I threw my son through the family-room window. I don't remember how it happened, not exactly. I remember stepping into the room. I remember seeing Jack, his mouth pressed to the mouth of the other boy, his hands moving fast in the boy's lap. Then I stood over him in the garden. Lynn ran from the house, screaming. She saw Jack and hit me in the face. She battered my shoulders and my chest. Above us, through the window frame, the other boy stood, staring, shaking, hugging himself with his thin arms. Jack lay on the ground. He did not move except for the rise and fall of his chest. The window had broken cleanly and there was no blood, just shards of glass scattered over flowers, but one of Jack's arms was bent behind his head, as though he had gone to sleep that way, an elbow for a pillow.

"Call 911," Lynn yelled to the boy above.

"No," I said. Whatever else I didn't know in that time and place, I knew we could never afford an ambulance ride. "I'll take him," I said.

"No!" Lynn cried. "You'll kill him!"

"I'm not going to kill him," I said. "Come here." I gestured to the boy. He shook his head and stepped back. "Please," I said.

Tentatively the boy stepped over the jagged edge of the sill. He planted his feet on the brick ledge of the front wall, then dropped the few feet to the ground. Glass crunched beneath his sneakers.

"Grab his ankles," I said. I hooked my hands under Jack's armpits, and we lifted him. One arm trailed the ground as we walked him to (continued on page 118)



"I don't like to be distracted when I'm doing a Sudoku puzzle."



 **scott
free**

**MISS OCTOBER SPENCER
SCOTT RUNS WILD**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ARNY FREYTAG



We couldn't resist photographing Spencer Scott holding a peach (left). She's a Georgia peach if ever there was one. Succulent and sweet, she is all of 18 years old and dripping with charm. "I had braces and was rough-looking," she says of her early teen years, "but later I turned cute." We like to think of her as sun-ripened.

We caught up with Miss October at the Playboy offices in Los Angeles. She is what you'd call bubbly—prone to frequent giggling spells—and her blue-green eyes sparkle when she smiles. Spencer was born and raised in the tiny town of Dallas, Georgia. "When people hear Dallas, they assume it's Texas," she says. "My Dallas is very country and in the middle of nowhere, about a 45-minute drive from Atlanta." Homeschooled, she was taught to speak without a Southern accent, though she can turn the magnolia in her voice on and off at will. "Sometimes it's better not to have it," she giggles. She says she doesn't feel she missed out by not having a proper graduation or prom night. She did, however, join a competition cheerleading squad called the Georgia All Stars. When she wants to be, she's all pom-poms and team spirit.

Now that she's 18, Spencer has moved to L.A. with her Chihuahua, Dom. In the bright lights and big city she's pursuing her passion: acting. She has appeared on a pilot for the MTV show *Singled Out* (following in the footsteps of 1994 Playmate of the Year Jenny McCarthy) and tried out for a small part on *Entourage*. Not a bad start. Spencer's hoping her Playmate pictorial will alert Hollywood to a hot new talent in town. (Thus far only her family knows about her PLAYBOY shoot. "It's going to be a big surprise to my friends," she says.) She also has a head for business and hopes to get a degree someday. She says she can see herself owning a spa.

As for guys, Miss October is still overcoming the culture shock of L.A. and misses Southern gentlemen. "A guy has to have manners, be polite and treat me like a lady," she says, the hint of an accent creeping in. "L.A. guys don't have it for me. I don't get starstruck, either." Speaking of stars, we see big things in this young beauty's future. Don't count on her taking that midnight train back to Georgia anytime soon.

Stunning Spencer Scott hails from the tiny Southern town of Dallas, Georgia (no, that's not a typo). She turned 18 this past April and has moved to Los Angeles to kick-start a career in acting.















MISS OCTOBER

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH



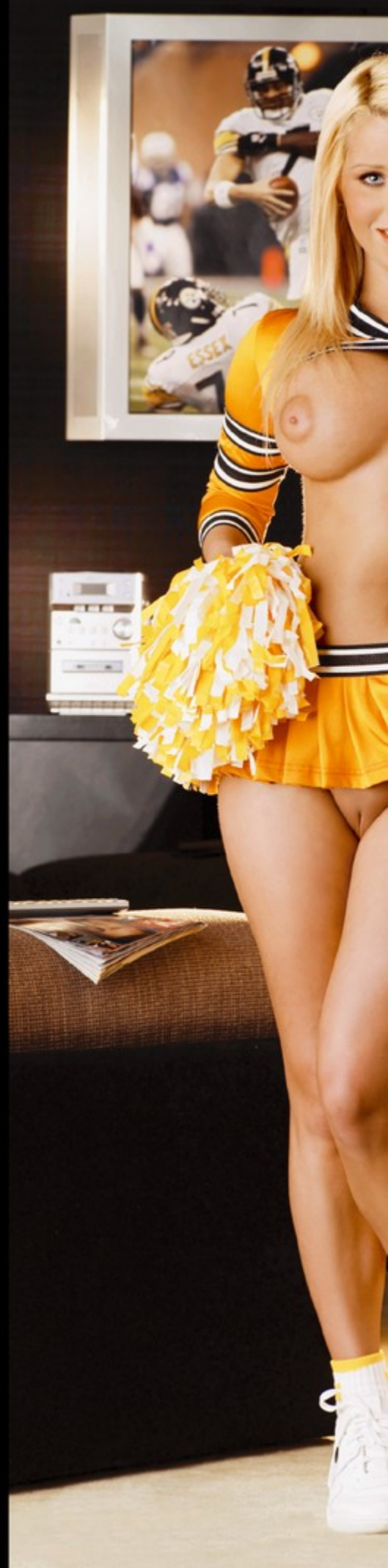




Spencer Booth

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

NAME: Spencer ScottBUST: 32D WAIST: 27" HIPS: 36"HEIGHT: 5'4" WEIGHT: 110BIRTH DATE: 4/4/89 BIRTHPLACE: St. Petersburg, FLAMBITIONS: To be a model for Victoria's Secret and Guess jeans and market products.TURN-ONS: A great smile, self-confidence, a great sense of humor and manners.TURNOFFS: Guys who are too cocky, not outgoing and have bad skin and hygiene.MY FAMILY: My two sisters—an actress-model and an aspiring film producer—and a mom who loves me no matter what.SOMETHING I NEED TO LEARN: How to cook!SPORTS TEAM I FOLLOW: The Atlanta Braves.JOBS I HAD BEFORE MODELING: Hostess at a local restaurant and babysitter.THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE I HAVE SEEN: Cancún, Mexico.Softball picture,
10 years old.Middle school,
13 years old.Cheerleading competition,
15 years old.



MISS OCTOBER

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH



Spencer Scott

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

An American university funded a study to see why the head of a man's penis is larger than the shaft. After a year it concluded that the head is larger to give the man more pleasure during sex.

After that study was published, a French school decided to do its own study. After three years of research the French concluded that the reason the head is larger than the shaft is to give the woman more pleasure during sex.

Canadians, unsatisfied with these findings, conducted their own study. After two weeks they concluded that it is to keep a man's hand from flying off and hitting him in the forehead.



What's a birth control pill?

The other thing a coed can put in her mouth to keep from getting pregnant.

A coed walked into her boyfriend's dorm and caught him in bed with a midget. "How could you?" she asked. "You promised you were not going to cheat on me anymore."

"Take it easy," he replied. "Can't you see I'm trying to cut down?"

Overheard at a frat party:

BOYFRIEND: Baby, since I first saw you our freshman year, all I've wanted to do is make love to you really badly.

GIRLFRIEND: Well, last night you succeeded.

A frat boy walked into a bar and said to the bartender, "A glass of your finest Less, please."

"Less?" the bartender said. "Never heard of it. What is it, some kind of foreign beer?"

"I'm not sure," the student replied. "My doctor told me about it. He said I should drink Less."

After repeatedly warding off her date's advances during the evening, a pretty coed decided to put her foot down. "See here," she shouted, "this is positively the last time I'm going to tell you no."

"Good," her date said. "Now we can start having some fun."

It's a known fact that College Republicans have less sex than College Democrats. After all, who's ever heard of having a great piece of elephant?

Why are you late?" a professor asked a tardy female student.

"I didn't have a ride so I had to walk to campus," she replied.

"Well, that's too bad," said the teacher. "Now I'd like you to join our discussion. Can you tell us where the Canadian border is?"

"In bed with my boyfriend," she answered. "That's why I didn't have a ride."

A college student who moved back in with his parents for the summer nervously walked into the kitchen. "Mom," he said, "I lost a bottle of pills that said ECSTASY on the cap. Have you seen anything like that?"

"Fuck the pills," she answered. "Have you seen the dragon on the ceiling?"

A teacher at an all-girls college returned a test on male anatomy on which his students had done poorly. "I don't understand why you girls can't understand the male sex organ," he said. "You've had it pounded into you all semester."



During college orientation the chancellor addressed the incoming class. "The girls' dormitory will be off-limits to male students," he said. "Anybody caught breaking this rule will be fined \$50 for his first infraction, \$100 the second time it happens and \$250 if he is caught again."

A male student stood up and shouted, "How much for a season pass?"

A frat house decided to throw a sleepover party. The girls showed up in transparent negligees and the boys all came in their pajamas.

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



"I love exploring haunted houses! Is this the one with the friendly ghost?"





THE RANCH

Full-grown children of a commune come to grips with the original green lifestyle

By David Black

Funny you should say that," Karen Barber said. "I was born on a commune." Say that? Say what? I hadn't been paying attention. Or rather, I'd been paying attention only to the routine I had rehearsed: a pitch for a feature film.

Barber, a producer at Lawrence Bender Productions, was the third pitch of the day. I had two more to go before dinner. It was my third day in Los Angeles pitching this project. I was on autopilot. And the pitch had nothing to do with communes.

What had I said to interrupt the pitch with Barber's surprised reaction—a reaction that surprised me even more?

Elegant, sophisticated, cosmopolitan, like the lead in an early-1960s Stanley Donen movie, Barber, I would have guessed, might have been born in Paris, London, perhaps Vienna. But on a commune?

"In northern California," she said.

Her commune name was Cloud. And she was one of the first children born in the community. In a wickiup.

"Ten to 12 kids, maybe more, were born at the ranch," Barber's father, Ben, later explained. "No doctor. No real midwife. No good roads to the hospital, which was miles away. Lucky we had no problems."

Although associated with the 1960s, communal living truly developed in the 1970s. There were big communes like California's Ananda, where a hundred or so adults and children tried to reinvent society through Transcendental Meditation; small communes like Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, where a dozen intellectuals were writing books based on their experiences in finding Eden by truck farming on acid; and urban communes like a feminist household in Washington, D.C. that was run by a male poet. All of them had kids who played and scrapped and competed as kids do anywhere; at Ananda little kids argued after a school rest period about who saw the biggest light of enlightenment. Even today some estimate there are more than 12,000 communal groups in North America, substantially more than *Newsweek's* 1969 estimate of 500 American communes.

Now these kids are adults, working and striving in the mainstream world and, I suppose, on the farm as well. How many turned out like Karen Barber? I was about to ask for her help in finding the answer.

Off and on for five years in the mid-to-late 1960s I'd lived on communes—the largest at Wendell Depot, Massachusetts. My then wife and I had considered having and raising our kids communally. The reasons for doing so seemed compelling

at the time, or so we convinced ourselves in the long autumn evenings as we sat in a circle after a typical dinner of soy burgers (our commune was vegetarian Maoist), passing an ice cream churn from person to person.

Psychologically it made sense: Kids who were raised on communes, we argued, wouldn't have the typical Oedipal issues since parenting would be diffused among many adults. Practically and economically it made sense: We would have built-in child care and shared expenses. Politically and sociologically it offered a glimpse of a renewed humanity: Our intent—that of the 1960s project in general—was to smuggle our way back into a Golden Age of Innocence. Whether reinventing humanity was an inside job (remaking consciousness using drugs and yoga) or an outside job (using revolution), we were sure we would succeed—and do so within one gen-

I had a problem with skinny-dipping. My erections were exclamation points marking my failure.

eration. We may have been the Generation of the Desert, but our children would inherit the future we were building.

That future would be free of conflict and petty jealousies. That future would be egalitarian, perfectly so. Everyone would have his or her heart's desire. That future would renegotiate the social contract. Power would no longer come from economic influence; money would no longer be a fist. That future would ensure everyone an expanded consciousness. An expanded consciousness was, we had no doubt, a better one. Consciousness is like a car; we convince ourselves we have the best available.

So after dinner, farting communally from a diet of soy burgers, soy loaf and soy milk, we'd pass the ice cream maker around the circle, each of us holding the bucket between his or her legs, steadying it with one hand as the other hand laboriously churned the handle in a masturbatory arc, as we listed what we needed to do to conjure this new Golden Age.

First on the list was free love. We were all in favor of it, a free love that would fill our farmhouse with free children. A very expensive—though we didn't know it then—free love.

After these evenings of churning ice cream between our legs and reassuring one another that free love was the foundation of our new life came the languid summer afternoons when, sweaty and tired from weeding our garden, we'd head down to the creek across

the road from our farmhouse to skinny-dip.

I had a problem with skinny-dipping. My consciousness was still unexpanded enough to find swimming naked with the women on the commune arousing. My erections were exclamation points marking my failure to live in our free, egalitarian future, the free-love future that so far remained in the future.

I was already seen as a partial apostate. Every night after dinner and before the ice cream churning we would play a game of non-competitive volleyball. The object was not to beat the other team but to collaborate with it to keep the ball in the air as long as you could.

Some fun.

Unconvinced—or puzzled—by the connection between Maoism and vegetarianism, I used to sneak away after lunch and, in my robin's-egg-blue Volkswagen Beetle, chug to the nearest diner, where I scarfed down

hamburgers made not of soy but meat and played pinball. I was always busted during the postprandial volleyball game: I couldn't keep from acing the ball over the net. Very competitive. "You've been eating meat!" my utopian brothers and sisters accused me. Yes, I ate meat. I had erections during skinny-dipping. I was demonstrably counterrevolutionary!

Then one afternoon one of the women in the commune—the wife of the oldest member of our group, the guy most vociferously in favor of

free love—lagged behind with me at the stream. We were both naked, like Adam and Eve. Heeding the serpent, I made a pass. The pass was rejected. That rejected pass caused an explosion of recrimination that night in our circle. How could I have done that? I'd made the mistake of taking our utopian talk seriously. So much for free love. So much for babies who would be the children of the whole commune. So much for the generation of hope.

I left the commune.

During my movie-pitch session, when Karen Barber told me she had been born on a commune, this whole past, the road not taken, swept over me. What if...? I wondered.

With Barber's blessing, I call her father, Ben, who still has connections to the commune where she was born. He is amenable to helping me get in touch with her communal siblings and fills me in on the genesis of the Ranch. When G. Gordon Liddy—the local district attorney before he became a Watergate burglar—drove Timothy Leary out of a high-profile commune on the Millbrook estate in New York, many of the people who had been living there, including Ben and his friend Walter Schneider, relocated to another property near Mendocino, California: the Ranch. The commune where Karen was born.

"I built a 10-by-14 house out of salvaged

lumber and heavy-duty plastic," Ben says. "I learned how to use an acetylene torch to cut open a milk can for a stovepipe."

Paradise. But Paradise Found inevitably leads to Paradise Lost. "Tension filled the place," Ben says. "During our weekly meeting with chants and drums, we'd go around a circle and start quarreling and blaming. For example, everyone complained about the flies above the communal shower. So I bought a can of Raid, sprayed them all and went back to my hooch. When people saw the dead flies, they said, 'It's a miracle!' 'No,' one of the other communards, Richard, said, 'Ben sprayed them.' At the next meeting there was a crisis. 'Oh my God,' people said. 'Ben brought chemicals into our pure life!'"

Ben Barber left.

The commune grew to 20 to 25 adults and six or seven kids. "As soon as they could," he says, "my kids quickly moved away from the hippie scene, like kids of immigrants." Today all but a handful of the adults have left, but many of the kids have at least stayed in the area, if not on the Ranch. The ones who moved away remain in touch with the others. Last summer Ben went back to a reunion at the Ranch. "Most of them still live in a world where corporations are bad and run the country," he says. "A real us-against-them mind-set. I don't share those views, but I love the people. I went through a lot with them. They're family."

"The Ranch had 14 kids in three years," Walter Schneider says. "For some reason we had mostly boys." Tall, rangy and rugged, with a good face—cautious and humorous—Schneider picks me up in San Francisco in an old Mercedes, a surprising hippie car. He grew up in Teaneck, New Jersey and graduated from Annapolis in 1956. He spent 15 years in the Navy, including a stint at the Center for Naval Analyses in Washington, D.C. While in the service Schneider dropped acid for the first time.

"For my last three years I was using regularly," he says. "And I've been using ever since, for 42 years." He began to question what he was learning as part of a Southeast Asia think tank at CNA. "Like," he says, "we were told we had an overwhelming advantage in Vietnam. 'What about losing?' I asked. 'Not going to happen,' I was told." By the summer of 1967 Schneider had drifted to Millbrook.

"Leary had left West Point," he says. "He understood where I was coming from and helped me get to where I was going." Because of his military flight experience, Schneider became Leary's pilot. "I used to fly him around the country in a Cessna 337," Schneider says, "checking in on communes like Drop City." In 1968 Schneider was one of the founding group that moved from Millbrook to Mendocino. Using savings from his time in the Navy, he, along with a partner, bought the Ranch's land, which is now owned in common by many of the former members.

"We had a big house," Schneider says, "eventually 14 buildings. A goat shed, chickens, a small

(continued on page 132)



"It beats the freeway...!"



FASHION BY
JOSEPH DE ACETIS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
NIGEL BARKER

PRODUCED BY
JENNIFER RYAN JONES

WOMEN'S STYLING BY
KATHY KALAFUT

LEFT Gus's cardigan (\$118) is by **CANTERBURY OF NEW ZEALAND**. His shirt (\$175) is by **7 FOR ALL MANKIND**. His pants (\$275) are by **STITCH'S**. His watch (\$95) is by **ORIGINAL PENGUIN**. His shoes (\$40) are by **SPERRY TOP-SIDER**. **RIGHT** Her top (\$350) is by **RICHMOND X**. Her shorts (\$54) and belt (\$54) are by **SISLEY**. Her shoes (\$62) are by **CONVERSE (PRODUCT) RED**. Her necklace (\$3,075) is by **CATHERINE ANGIEL**. Her bracelet (price available on request) is by **BOSS ORANGE**.

THE NEW SCHOLAR
GUS HORWITZ, Stanford University



"WHEN I WAS GROWING UP IN EAST HAMPTON, MY LOOK WAS INFLUENCED BY MY SURROUNDINGS. IT'S A FUSION OF EAST-COAST PREP SHAKEN UP WITH A BIT OF SURFER ATTITUDE."

THE PROMOTER
MICHAEL BLAINE, Ohio University

LEFT Michael's jacket (\$149) is by **INC INTERNATIONAL CONCEPTS**. His sweatshirt (\$98), shirt (\$198) and tie (\$118) are by **HICKEY**. His jeans (\$187) are by **7 FOR ALL MANKIND**. His shoes (\$120) are by **PF FLYERS**. **RIGHT** Her skirt (\$400) is by **RICHMOND X**. Her shoes (\$345) are by **HUGO**.



"IF I'M TRYING TO GET PEOPLE TO ATTEND MY PARTIES, I CAN'T APPROACH THEM WEARING SWEATPANTS AND A T-SHIRT. I TAKE PRIDE IN MY STYLE—EVEN WHEN I'M GOING TO CLASS."

RIGHT Greg's jacket (\$240), sweater (\$110) and pants (\$175) are by **MODERN AMUSEMENT**. His shirt (\$200) is by **PORSCHE DESIGN**. His shoes (\$190) are by **CAMPER**. **LEFT** Her top (\$225) and shorts (\$225) are by **BOSS ORANGE**. Her shoes (\$345) are by **HUGO**. Her necklace (\$549) and bracelet (\$285) are by **CORPUS CHRISTI**. Her pocket chain (\$69) is by **REPLAY**.

THE VISIONARY

GREG COLUSSY, University of Colorado at Boulder



"I AIM FOR A WARDROBE THAT IS INNOVATIVE BUT NOT OVER-THE-TOP. AFTER I LEAVE THE ROOM A GIRL SHOULD REMEMBER WHAT I WAS WEARING BUT NOT FOR THE WRONG REASON."

LEFT Vaarun's sweater (\$110) is by **PENFIELD**. His shirt (\$48) is by **VINTAGE RED**. His pants (\$185) are by **LENOR ROMANO**. **RIGHT** Her top (\$54), skirt (\$70) and hat (\$34) are by **TRIPLE 5 SOUL**. Her belt (\$54) is by **SISLEY**. Her boots (\$1,215) are by **RODO**. Her ring (\$2,900) is by **CATHERINE ANGIEL**. Her bracelet (\$285) and pendant (\$349) are by **CORPUS CHRISTI**.

THE ACTIVIST

VAARUN VOHRA, Fashion Institute of Technology



"WHETHER I'M DESIGNING CLOTHES OR JUST GETTING DRESSED IN THE MORNING, I PREFER NATURAL FIBERS. THEY ARE MORE SOOTHING TO THE EYE AND THE TOUCH."

LEFT Kurt's jacket (\$1,200) is by **C.P. COMPANY**. His shirt (\$78) is by **SWAG**. His jeans (\$163) are by **7 FOR ALL MANKIND**. His belt (\$65) is by **LEATHER ISLAND BY BILL LAVIN**. His boots (\$415) are by **MARK NASON**.

RIGHT Her jacket (\$1,345), top (\$575) and skirt (\$545) are by **DSQUARED**. Her shoes (\$62) are by **CONVERSE (PRODUCT) RED**.

THE INTERNATIONAL DJ
KURT DANKERS, Bryant University



"I LOVE AMERICAN STYLES, BUT SOMETIMES THE BEST CLOTHING COMES FROM OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY. IF I CAN ROCK SOMETHING WITH A EUROPEAN EDGE, I'M A HAPPY MAN."

THE SHARPSHOOTERS

JOSEPH MICHAEL CHAVANU, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

FLOYD JOHNSON, Cincinnati State Technical and Community College



LEFT Joseph's shirt (\$98) is by **BROOKS**. His pants (\$45) are by **WEARFIRST**. His sneakers (\$75) are by **NIKE**. **RIGHT** Floyd's jacket (\$380) is by **STAPLE**. His shirt (\$25) is by **THREADLESS**. His undershirt (\$15) is by **AMERICAN APPAREL**. His pants (\$58) and shoes (\$55) are by **ETNIES**. His watch (\$20) is by **MOSSIMO**. His belt (\$60) is by **LEATHER ISLAND BY BILLAVIN**. **BOTTOM** Her dress (\$124) is by **POST VEGAS**. Her shoes (\$345) are by **HUGO**. Her necklace (\$3,075) and pendant (\$5,280) are by **CATHERINEANGIEL**.

FOR MORE OF OUR CAMPUS FASHIONS VISIT PLAYBOY.COM/MAGAZINE.

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 104.

JOSEPH DECLARES, "FOR ME, A TIGHT FIT IS THE RIGHT FIT." EXPLAINS FLOYD, "IF I STAND OUT, IT MAKES IT EASIER TO GET HER NUMBER INTO MY SIDEKICK."

PLAYBOY'S 2007 NFL PREVIEW

ZEROING IN ON THE HUMAN DRAMA THAT WILL
MAKE THIS NFL SEASON ONE TO REMEMBER

"MY GREAT CONCERN IS NOT WHETHER YOU HAVE FAILED," ABRAHAM LINCOLN ONCE SAID, "BUT WHETHER YOU ARE CONTENT WITH YOUR FAILURE." THAT WAS EASY FOR LINCOLN TO SAY. HE WON WHEN IT COUNTED. A HANDFUL

of the NFL's marquee players have had to spend their off-season mulling over missed opportunities. For an inordinate number of them, last year was not about end-zone dances and counting money. It was about failure, about disappointing the fans. Sure, **Peyton Manning** won a ring at last, but in the end the season seemed to be about what was lost, not what was won. Which means 2007 will be all about redemption. And that, football fans, is exciting. A closer look....

Over his first two seasons, **Ben Roethlisberger** averaged 8.9 yards a pass, better than Montana, Marino or Elway in their first two. Then he discovered motorcycles and hit the skids. No amount of Listermint can rid him of the bitter taste of 2006. This year Roethlisberger no longer has the

supporting cast he once had, and coach Bill Cowher is gone. Fans will look to their franchise QB to steer the team back into contention. Who is the real Big Ben? We're about to find out.

Some 350 miles away, in New York, **Eli Manning** enters his fourth year. How accustomed we've become to watching the onetime number-one pick walk off the field with his eyes on his cleats, shoulders drooped. Now his most dependable weapon, Tiki Barber, has taken his act to the *Today* show, and the fans have run out of patience. This may be Eli's last chance. In our crystal ball, we see an unemployment line in which Manning the Younger will be standing next to his old pal, coach Tom Coughlin. Spare some change?

And what about **Brett Favre**? The future Hall of Famer turns 38 this season as he

tries for one last moment in the sun. Can he prove that the 47 interceptions he threw in the past two years were the exception and not the rule? (Yes.) Will it be enough to get the Packers into the playoffs? (No.) Will **Jake Delhomme** rebound from his worst year as the Panthers' QB? (Yes.) What about last year's winner of the out-of-nowhere award, **Tony Romo**? Great start. Thrilling. Then he botched the hold on a probable playoff-game-winning field goal in Seattle. We'll bet that still smarts. Okay, Romo, show us what you got. **Donovan McNabb**? **Randy Moss**? **Terrell Owens**? They've all got question marks painted on their helmets.

Finally, there's **Reggie Bush**. In the euphoria over the Saints' best season ever, fans overlooked that Bush wasn't the second coming of Jim Brown in his rookie year (just 565 yards rushing, with a 3.6-yard average). New Orleans is ready for the Bush administration. Is Reggie ready? This we can say: If Bush blossoms as a soph, we could see the Saints go marching into Arizona for Super Bowl XLII come February.
—Allen Barra



PLAYBOY'S PICKS

AMERICAN FOOTBALL CONFERENCE		NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE	
AFC EAST	NEW ENGLAND	NFC EAST	PHILADELPHIA
AFC NORTH	BALTIMORE	NFC NORTH	CHICAGO
AFC SOUTH	INDIANAPOLIS	NFC SOUTH	NEW ORLEANS
AFC WEST	SAN DIEGO	NFC WEST	SAN FRANCISCO
WILD CARDS	CINCINNATI, DENVER	WILD CARDS	ST. LOUIS, DALLAS
CHAMPION	NEW ENGLAND	CHAMPION	NEW ORLEANS

★ SUPER BOWL ★
NEW ENGLAND OVER NEW ORLEANS

THE MOST IMPORTANT STAT IN FOOTBALL

We'll give you a hint. It's not total yards, total yards passing, total yards rushing or how many beers the quarterback downed the night before the game. The most important statistic for winning games in the NFL is yards per pass. Take the gross amount of yards gained in the air and divide by the number of throws. The result is the best simple indicator of offensive effectiveness ever measured. Try this at the office every Monday morning during football season: Have someone open the sports pages to the NFL box scores and, without asking who won or even the names of the teams, have him give you just two totals for each team—the number of yards gained passing and the number of throws. The team that averaged the most yards per throw will be the winner more than 80 percent of the time. That's how it has been for the past half century in pro football, from Johnny Unitas to Peyton Manning. Good teams always finish in the top half of the league in yards per throw; bad teams finish in the bottom half. Let's simplify this even more: In the most recent Super Bowl, the Indianapolis Colts, who averaged 7.9 yards per throw during the regular season (first in the AFC), played the Chicago Bears, who averaged 6.7 (eighth in the NFC). Forget the running game, defense and kicking game, and just remember the two teams' yards per throw. The Colts, of course, won 29-17. History says the Bears never had a chance. —A.B.

In 36 of 41 Super Bowls, the team with the higher yards per pass won the game, including last year's: Colts 6.5, Bears 5.9.



WHO'S UP

BALTIMORE The Ravens won their only Super Bowl, in 2001, with defense and a rushing attack. That great defense remains, and the running game will dominate again with the arrival of Willis McGahee from Buffalo. The Achilles' heel: Can Steve McNair stay healthy?

CAROLINA A healthy Steve Smith and an emerging DeAngelo Williams out of the backfield give Jake Delhomme two surefire targets. Count on him to rebound from his worst season as the Panthers' QB.

CINCINNATI How far can an elite passer (Carson Palmer), runner (Rudi Johnson) and two receivers (Chad Johnson and T.J. Houshmandzadeh) take an NFL team? If you're the Bengals, it hinges on the league's 30th-ranked defense. First-round draft pick Leon Hall at cornerback should instantly make a difference.

DALLAS The Cowboys' season rides on Tony Romo's shoulders. In his first five NFL starts in 2006, Romo threw 10 TD passes and two interceptions. In his last five starts, he threw six TDs and eight interceptions. Who shows up in 2007—good Tony or bad? We'll put our money on good Tony.

DENVER When Mike Shanahan has a running back who can compete for the NFL rushing title, the Broncos are a Super Bowl contender. He's got his man in Travis Henry, and QB Jake Plummer's no longer there to screw things up. Look for Jay Cutler to have a banner year in his first full season under center.

DETROIT Mike Martz crafted one of the NFL's top passing attacks in his first season as offensive coordinator for the Lions. To that, Detroit adds college ball's finest receiver, Calvin Johnson from Georgia Tech. With underrated QB Jon Kitna at the helm, the Lions should have a 400-point offense for the first time since the Barry Sanders era.

GREEN BAY The Packers won their final four games in 2006 to finish 8-8 with the NFL's youngest starting lineup. That experience will pay off this year. Brett Favre will end his career in style.

JACKSONVILLE Coach Jack Del Rio, displeased with a .500 record last season, hired six new assistant coaches. That's a

lot of brainpower. With a healthy Byron Leftwich, the passing game will be firing on all cylinders. A speedy linebacking corps anchors the defense.

NEW ENGLAND Asking Tom Brady to win a Super Bowl with receivers named Reche Caldwell, Troy Brown and Chad Jackson was like asking Jeff Gordon to win the Daytona 500 in a Volkswagen. So the Pats added size (Randy Moss), speed (Donte Stallworth) and playmaking ability (Wes Welker). On defense, All-Pro linebacker Adalius Thomas arrives from the Ravens.

NEW ORLEANS The Saints were the feel-good story of 2006 with their triumphant return to New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. The NFL's best offense is back with playmakers Drew Brees, Reggie Bush (pictured bottom), Deuce McAllister and Marques Colston, plus first-round pick Robert Meachem, another wideout weapon.

NEW YORK JETS Many pundits had the Jets at the bottom of the AFC East in 2006, but New York proved them wrong by gaining a wildcard spot. Running back Thomas Jones from the Bears was the key off-season acquisition. His bruising style will take pressure off Chad Pennington's arm.

PHILADELPHIA The Eagles have the best QB (Donovan McNabb) and coach (Andy Reid) in the NFC East. The team added underrated receiver Kevin Curtis from the Rams, along with All-Pro linebacker Takeo Spikes from Buffalo. Toss an easy schedule into this mix and you've got a heady cocktail come playoff time.

ST. LOUIS Steven Jackson is the most complete running back in the NFC. So the Rams can run the football. But their problem has been stopping the run, which is where first-round draft pick Adam Carriker fits in. He's a 300-pound roadblock at defensive tackle.



SAN DIEGO New coach Norv Turner brings offensive wizardry to the table. The Chargers were the NFL's top regular-season team in 2006, as Philip Rivers engineered 14 wins in his first year as starting QB. Joe Montana, Dan Marino and Ben Roethlisberger all took teams to Super Bowls in their second season as starters.

SAN FRANCISCO Norv Turner left the 49ers a going-away present after his one-year stint as offensive coordinator: accelerating the development of QB Alex Smith and half-back Frank Gore. The Niners also have serious rookie talent, namely linebacker Patrick Willis. This will finally be SF's turnaround year.

SEATTLE Last year Seattle won the NFC West despite injuries to QB Matt Hasselbeck and RB Shaun Alexander. Both are healthy again, and so are Seattle's Super Bowl aspirations. —Rick Gosselin



So who's the man, Brady or Manning? Peyton (left) finally won a Super Bowl ring last season, but to be the man, you need at least two.

WHO'S DOWN



ARIZONA We picked the Cardinals to make the playoffs as a Cinderella team the past two years. What the hell were we thinking? With a rookie head coach (Ken Whisenant), Arizona's fourth coach since 2000, the Cards are entering what will be their ninth season without a playoff berth.



ATLANTA New head coach Bobby Petrino becomes the latest to attempt the leap from college to the pros. But he enters a maelstrom created by quarterback Michael Vick's off-field issues, which will make his first year a forgettable one.

BUFFALO No team was hit harder during the off-season than the Bills, who said good-bye to their leading rusher (Willis McGahee), leading tackler (London Fletcher) and veteran Pro Bowl defenders Takeo Spikes and Nate Clements. And this from a 7-9 squad.

CHICAGO We don't see Rex Grossman (pictured top) as the man who can lead this team to the top for a second straight season. The Bears will win their weak division—barely.

CLEVELAND The Browns need rookie quarterback Brady Quinn on the field this fall. But even Otto Graham would struggle behind this offensive line. First-round pick Joe Thomas, an offensive tackle, should be able to plug a leak, but it

won't be enough to save this sinking ship.

HOUSTON The offense may improve with new QB Matt Schaub, who'd backed up Michael Vick in Atlanta since 2004. But it won't matter in a division that houses Super Bowl champ Indianapolis and two playoff contenders, Jacksonville and Tennessee.

INDIANAPOLIS

Seven players who started a combined 84 games in 2006 are gone from the Super Bowl champ's roster, including Pro Bowl linebacker Cato June and both starting cornerbacks. Don't get us wrong: Manning and friends will still contend for the AFC title.

KANSAS CITY The Chiefs have fielded one of the oldest starting lineups in the NFL this decade and have zero playoff victories to show for it. So coach Herman Edwards is embarking on a youth movement. Look out for those Chiefs in 2010.

MIAMI The Dolphins have a new coach (Cam Cameron) and a new quarterback (Trent Green). Said QB is 37 years old, and many starting defenders are also over the hill. We don't feel the magic in Miami.

MINNESOTA The Vikings added supertalented running back Adrian Peterson (the team's top draft pick), but with a new and inexperienced quarterback in Tarvaris Jackson, he won't be enough. This squad will need (another) rebuilding year.

NEW YORK GIANTS Coach Tom Coughlin's job security is

in the shaky hands of quarterback Eli Manning. With Tiki Barber gone, the Giants may be without hope.

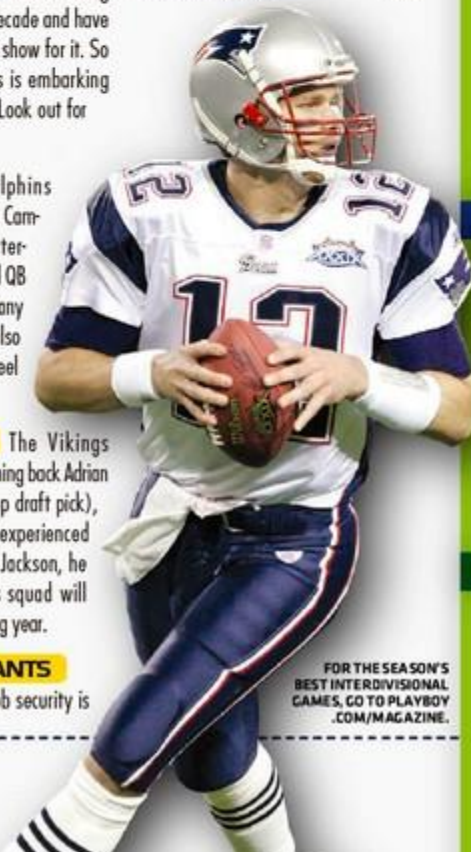
OAKLAND The youngest head coach in the NFL (Lane Kiffin, 32) plus the youngest franchise quarterback (JaMarcus Russell, 22) equals a steep learning curve.

PITTSBURGH For the first time in 15 seasons Bill Cowher won't be pacing the Pittsburgh sideline. Cowher won eight division titles and a Super Bowl as head Steeler. His handsome mug will surely be missed.

TAMPA BAY Coach Jon Gruden is on the hot seat. Hired for his offensive expertise, he has fielded punchless offenses for three seasons. He's looking for a spark from a 37-year-old quarterback (Jeff Garcia). Good luck.

TENNESSEE The Titans were playoff contenders in 2006 with NFL Rookie of the Year Vince Young under center. But his top rusher (Travis Henry) and two top receivers (Drew Bennett and Bobby Wade) are gone. Tennessee also lost its best defender, cornerback Pacman Jones, who was suspended for the season following troubles with Johnny Law.

WASHINGTON A 21-27 record for Joe Gibbs's second stint as coach of the Redskins may cause the Pro Football Hall of Fame to reconsider his bust in Canton. —R.G.



FOR THE SEASON'S BEST INTERDIVISIONAL GAMES, GO TO PLAYBOY.COM/MAGAZINE.

Tom Brady (right) has three Super Bowl rings. Only Terry Bradshaw and Joe Montana have four.

NFL GRUDGE MATCHES

1 PATRIOTS VS. COLTS

NOVEMBER 4 in Indianapolis: The day the Pats take on the Colts should be a national holiday. The NFL's Yankees-Red Sox/Celtics-Lakers/Frazier-Alli equivalent



is simply riveting. In the past six years these two juggernauts have won four Super Bowls.

2 TEXANS VS. FALCONS

SEPTEMBER 30 in Atlanta: Quarterback Matt Schaub returns and goes head-to-head with his old team. (He backed up Michael Vick for three years.) Despite the fact that Schaub would have been a better fit for Bobby Petrino's new offense, the Falcons traded him away simply because Vick makes so much money. Schaub will show the Falcons what they're missing. Or not.

3 COWBOYS VS. EAGLES

NOVEMBER 4 in Philly: The Cowboys vs. Eagles rivalry has gotten ugly. When Terrell Owens and Wade Phillips travel to Lincoln Financial Field, the medical staff will get a workout. The Eagles won the past two meetings by a combined 61-31.



4 CHARGERS VS. PATRIOTS

SEPTEMBER 16 in New England: When San Diego arrives for this must-see Sunday-night game in week two, the club will be seething for vengeance. Who could forget last year's divisional playoff game in January, when some of the Pats stomped all over the Chargers' lightning-rod logo in front of San Diego's home crowd? Certainly not anyone wearing a Chargers uniform.

5 BENGALS VS. GOODELL



As of press time 10 Bengals have been arrested in 14 months. Commish Goodell isn't having any shenanigans. Pictured: Chris Henry, suspended for eight games.



"That should go on one of those football blooper shows."

Centerfolds On **SEX**



AND...ACTION

Guys shouldn't be afraid to tell their girlfriends or wives about their fantasies. Men are worried a woman will think, Oh my God, that's disgusting! It's okay to tell your woman. "I want to watch porn and come on your face." You'll probably be surprised by her reaction. She'll most likely prefer to try something kinky rather than have you stray and cheat. Recently I acted out one of my man's fantasies. He handed me a script and told me to read it and meet him at a bar later that night. The script detailed what he wanted me to wear and my character's name. I walked into the pool hall, sat down and had a drink by myself. Then I pretended to recognize him—as a porn star, of course! We started talking and playing pool and continued the act. Then he kissed me over the pool table, and it felt as if I'd never been kissed before. We called each other by our characters' names, and when we were done we finally broke out laughing. I said, "That was so much fun."

POP-UP VIDEO

The next time we role-play, I'm going to dress up in the red bathing suit I used to wear on *Baywatch*. I'll pretend he's drowning and pull him out of the water. When the mouth-to-mouth doesn't work, I'll realize that the only way to resuscitate him will be to jump on and ride him. If you live far away from your lover, you should buy her a video camera. That way she can make sexy tapes of herself and mail them to you, and when you visit her, you can shoot yourselves having sex and then watch it when you're alone. Just make sure she's not the type of person who would post videos on the Internet if you broke up. Phone sex is great too. Sometimes women feel more comfortable saying dirty things to you over the phone than they would in person.

↓
READ THE CENTERFOLDS ON SEX ARCHIVE AT PLAYBOY.COM/CDS





Taylor Lynn, Briffanie Knight and Ally Ling—GEORGIA



GIRLS of the SEC

These hot young coeds are all class

The SEC is the hottest conference in America by a long shot. In the past year alone its teams have won national championships in football (University of Florida), men's basketball (ditto), women's gymnastics (University of Georgia), women's basketball (University of Tennessee), both men's and women's swimming and diving (Auburn University), men's tennis (University of Georgia) and, perhaps most coveted of all, women's bowling (Vanderbilt University). We decided the time was right to send our crew of photographers to the schools of the Southeastern Conference to scope out some talent of a different variety. Consider this our term paper on the subject. You'd better believe we did our homework.



Julianne Hansen—ARKANSAS

Left: The proof is in the panties. These three beauties are SEC all-stars. Taylor counts lawn-mower racing as a favorite hobby; maybe someday she'll turn pro. Brittanie is studying to become a forensic psychiatrist, and Ally a homicide detective. Above: Julianne goes to the University of Arkansas, but she's no razorback.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEORGE GEORGIU, MIZUNO
AND DAVID RAMS



Angela James—MISSISSIPPI STATE

Clockwise from above: Angela is a member of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. That's fitting; she has quite the heavenly body. Lauren is a journalism major, and Missy is studying studio art. We'll bet that together they could publish a pretty steamy magazine. Lauren Lee has never left the South or even been to a big city other than Atlanta. If you think you're the guy who can take her places, make sure you get in good with her main squeeze—her Pomeranian puppy, Gizmo. Jayme is a premed student who wants to be a plastic surgeon. It certainly doesn't look as if she'll have to practice on herself. Watch for her at every Gamecocks football game, proudly wearing her cocks shirt. Erin is a party girl—dance party, frat party, hunting party. Her weapon of choice is a compound bow. Paul "Bear" Bryant's houndstooth hat has been a fine symbol of the University of Alabama, but maybe it's time to replace it with Cameron's argyle socks. Sorry, Bear. She's cuter.



Lauren Cheryl and Missy Masters—MISSISSIPPI



Cameron Irons—ALABAMA





Lauren Lee—AUBURN



Jayme Knightly—SOUTH CAROLINA



Erin Childs—TENNESSEE



Natasha Combs—FLORIDA



Terri Lynn Farrow—LSU



Ally Ramirez—VANDERBILT



Maria Mills—MISSISSIPPI



Arkasha Ames—KENTUCKY

Clockwise from top left: Natasha likes go-go dancing. And by the way, shut up! Her biggest pet peeve is being interrupted when she's talking. Golden-tressed Terri Lynn says she loves poker, good food and football. Atta girl. We're in love. Don't mess around with Maria. She's on the University of Mississippi rifle team. She is also the proud owner of two 30DDs. Arkasha can handle herself on either side of the camera. Not only is she a knockout, she's a budding photographer who aims to be the next Richard Avedon. Group shot, back row from left: Anita wants to get modeling work after she graduates. How's this for a start? Jessica plans on becoming a surgeon someday; if posing for PLAYBOY doesn't get her into a top med school, what good will studying do? Allison is a beautiful Jersey girl who loves animals, particularly rabbits. Front row from left: Magnificent Monique digs her boyfriend, large families and big dogs. Among her major dislikes: "Sticking my hand into a potato-chip or popcorn bag unless the sides are folded down into the bag." Got it—we'll make a note of that. Cameron's idea of a good time: "I love Friday nights on University Avenue in Gainesville, starting out at Grog for quarter pitchers and ending at Club XS for 1980s night, where I can dance cheesy." Left: Ally brings up the rear. The San Diego-born vixen is a workout queen, and it shows.



Anita Mae Rose, Jessica Macbeth, Allison Creamer, Monique Omura and Cameron Lynch—FLORIDA





Lauren Mitchel—MISSISSIPPI



Brooke Taylor—SOUTH CAROLINA



Andi Dandridge
MISSISSIPPI STATE

Clockwise from bottom left: Want to take Andi out? You'll have to do better than the school cafeteria. She doesn't like any food that isn't steak (but if you're nice, she'll settle for a hamburger). Lauren may be only five-foot-two, but she claims to be the world's biggest St. Louis Cardinals fan. Brooke decided to come to our casting after some urging from her roommate. Gamecock students shouldn't be shocked that we selected her: She has won two wet T-shirt contests at local bars. So, boys, here's what lies beneath the wet tee. Here are two Wildcats in their natural habitat: Kylie aspires to be a veterinarian, and Lauren claims her first love is animals. Go get 'em, tigers. Debbie proudly wears Alabama's crimson and white just off the shoulder...or would you consider her top salmon? Tera aims to be a sports journalist; we see sideline reporting in her future. Though quite comfortable in the buff, Melani spends her free time sketching her own line of clothes. She's not quite prepared for graduation next spring, as she admits she is still learning how to sew. In the meantime, she says, she's looking for a sugar daddy.





Kylie Mae and Lauren Jane
KENTUCKY



Debbie Stevens—**ALABAMA**



Melani Chase—**GEORGIA**



Tera Elizabeth—**TENNESSEE**



Chanel Nielson—AUBURN



Neenah Dreslin—FLORIDA



Mackenzie Taylor—KENTUCKY

This page, clockwise from top left: Chanel was born in Germany but now calls Alabama home. Her life's ambition: "To become a Playmate!" Sun-kissed Neenah means business; she's finishing up her MBA. We like her getup—nothing but net. Mackenzie is a wild blossom. She loves the outdoors, so we photographed her getting some grass stains. Talk about an all-American beauty. Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Wow. Stephanie is a gifted young woman. They're real, and they're spectacular. Thank you for sharing. Whitney is a Louisiana lovely who likes honest guys who can make her laugh. Jordan and Danielle make quite a couple. Both Georgia peaches have a bit of a shopping addiction. Danielle likes "all things sexy—lingerie, fake eyelashes, high heels, makeup, etc." Beauties Britni and Brittney are both from Birmingham. Together they make for some serious confusion. Britni is part Choctaw Indian, and she waitresses at a Hooters. Brittney is a movie buff. And...action!





Stephanie Schaffer
ARKANSAS



Britni Leigh and
Brittney Brookwood—AUBURN



Jordan Schell and Danielle
Malone—GEORGIA



See more girls of the SEC at cyber.playboy.com.

Whitney Leigh—LSU

LIZARD MAN (continued from page 76)

The fingers moved, but without purpose, the hand spasming from fist to open palm.

the car. Lynn opened the hatchback. We laid Jack in the back and covered him with a blanket. It seemed like the right thing, what you see on TV.

A few neighbors had come outside to watch. We ignored them.

"I'll need you with me," I said to the boy. "When we're done, I'll take you home." The boy was wringing the hem of his shirt in both hands. His eyes brimmed with tears. "I won't hurt you, if that's what you think."

We set off for the hospital, Lynn following in my pickup. The boy sat beside me in the passenger seat, his body pressed to the door, face against the window, the seat-belt strap clenched in one hand at his waist. With each bump in the road, he turned to look at Jack.

"What's your name?" I asked.

"Alan," he said.

"How old are you, Alan?"

"Seventeen."

"Seventeen. Seventeen. And have you ever been with a woman, Alan?"

Alan looked at me. His face drained of color. His hand tightened on the seat belt.

"It's a simple question, Alan. I'm asking you: Have you been with a woman?"

"No," Alan said. "No, sir."

"Then how do you know you're gay?"

In back, Jack began to stir. He moaned, then grew silent. Alan watched him.

"Look at me, Alan," I said. "I asked you a question. If you've never been with a woman, then how do you know you're gay?"

"I don't know," Alan said.

"You mean you don't know that you're gay, or you don't know how you know?"

"I don't know how I know," Alan said. "I just do."

We passed the bakery, the Laundromat, the supermarket and entered the city limits. In the distance, the silhouette of the helicopter on the hospital's roof. Behind us, the steady pursuit of the pickup truck.

"And your parents, do they know about this?" I asked.

"Yes," Alan said.

"And do they approve?"

"Not really."

"No. I bet they don't, Alan. I'll bet they do not."

I glanced in the rearview mirror. Jack had not opened his eyes, but he had a hand to his temple. The other hand, the one attached to the broken arm, lay at his side. The fingers moved, but without purpose, the hand spas-

ming from fist to open palm.

"I just have one more question for you, Alan," I said.

Alan looked like he might be sick. He watched the road unfurl before us. He was afraid of me, afraid to look at Jack.

"What right do you have teaching my son to be gay?"

"I didn't!" Alan said. "I'm not!"

"You're not? Then what do you call that? Back there? That business on the couch?"

"Mr. Lawson," Alan said, and here the tone of his voice changed and I felt as though I were speaking to another man. "With all due respect, sir, Jack came on to me."

"Jack is not gay."

"He is. I know it. Jack knows it. Your wife knows it. I don't know how you couldn't know it. I don't see how you've missed the signals."

I tried to imagine what signals, but I couldn't. I couldn't recall a thing that would have signaled that I'd wind up here, delivering my son to the hospital with a concussion and a broken arm. What signal might have foretold that, following this day, after two months spent in a motel and two months in prison, my wife of 20 years would divorce me because, as she put it, I was full of hate?

I pulled up to the emergency room's entryway, and Alan helped me pull Jack from the car. A nurse with a wheelchair ran out to meet us. We settled Jack into the chair, and she wheeled him away.

I pulled the car into a parking spot and walked back to the entrance. Alan stood on the curb where I had left him.

"Where's Lynn?" I said.

"Inside," Alan said. "Jack's awake."

"All right, I'm going in. I suggest you get out of here."

"But you said you'd drive me home."

"Sorry," I said. "I changed my mind."

Alan stared at me, dumbfounded. His hands groped the air.

"Hey," I said, "I got a signal for you."

I gave him a hitchhiker's thumbs-up and cast it over my shoulder as I entered the hospital.

I wake and Cam's making his way down back roads, their surfaces cratered with potholes.

"Rise and shine," he says, "and welcome to Lee."

It's nearly noon. The sun is bright,

and the cab is hot. I wipe gunk from my eyes and drool from the corner of my mouth. Cam watches the road with one eye and studies directions he's scrawled in black ink across the back of a cereal box. He's never seen the house where his father spent his last 20 years.

We turn onto a dirt road. The truck lurches into and then out of an enormous waterlogged hole. Pines line the road. Their needles shiver as we go by. We pass turn after turn, but only half of the roads are marked. Every few miles we pass a driveway, the house deep in the trees and out of sight. It's a haunted place, and I'm already ready to leave.

Cam says, "I don't know where the fuck we are."

We drive some more. I think about Bobby home alone, how Cam gave him six VHS tapes. "By the time you watch all of these," he said, "I'll be back." Then he put in the first movie, something Disney, and we left. "He'll be fine," Cam said. "He'll never even know we're gone."

"We could bring him with us," I said, but Cam refused.

"There's no telling what we'll find there," he said.

Ahead, a child stands beside the road. Cam slows the truck to a halt and rolls down the window. The girl steps forward. She looks over her shoulder, then back at us. She is barefoot, and her face is smeared with dirt. She wears a brown dress and a green bow in her hair. A string is looped around her wrist, and from the end of the string floats a blue balloon.

"Hi, there," Cam says. He leans out the window, his hand extended, but the child does not take it. Instead, she stares at his arms, the coiled dragons. She takes a step back.

"You're scaring her," I say.

Cam glares at me, but he returns his head to the cab and his hand to the wheel and gives the girl his warmest smile. "Do you know where we could find Cherry Road?" he says.

"Sure," the girl says. She pumps her arm and the balloon bobs in response. "It's that way," she says, pointing in the direction from which we've come.

"About how far?" Cam asks.

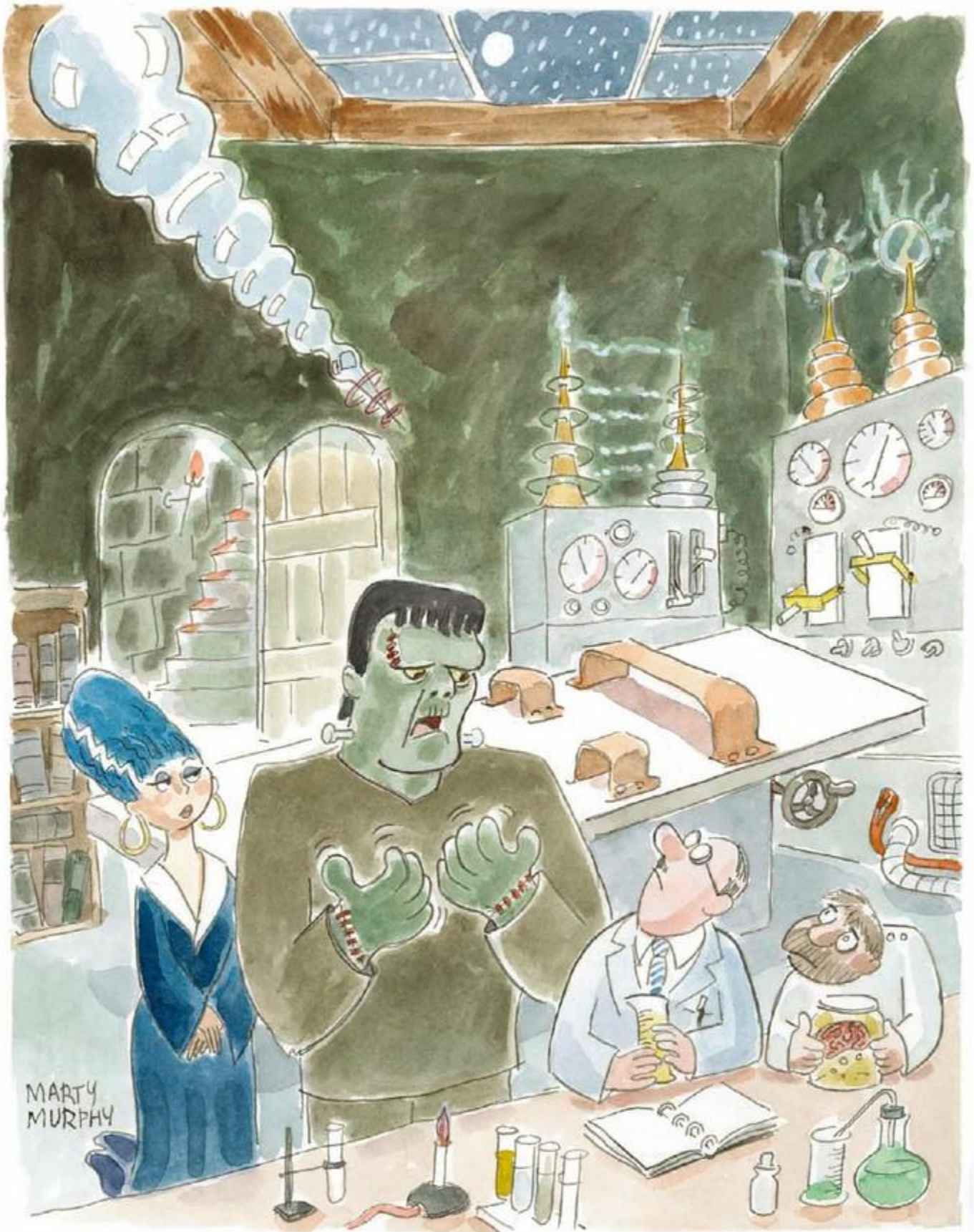
"Not the next road but the next. But it's a dead end. There's only one house." She flails her wrist and the balloon thunks against her fist.

Cam glances at the cereal box. "That's the one," he says.

"Oh," the girl says, and for a moment she is silent. "You're going to visit the Lizard Man. I seen him. I seen him once."

Cam looks at me. I shrug. We look at the girl.

"Well, thank you," Cam says. The girl



"Never mind about the new brain. What she wants is a boob job...!"

gives the balloon a good shake. Cam turns the truck around, and the girl waves good-bye.

"Cute kid," I say. We turn onto Cherry.
"Creepy little fucker," Cam says.

The house is hidden in pines, and the yard is overgrown with knee-high weeds. Tire tracks mark where the driveway used to be. Plastic flamingos dot the yard, their curved beaks peeking out of the weeds, wire legs rusted, bodies bleached a light pink.

The roof of the house is littered with pine needles and piles of shingles where someone abandoned a roofing project. The porch has buckled, and the siding is rotten, the planks loose. I press a fingernail to the soft wood and it slides in.

Our mission is unclear. There's no body to ID or papers to sign. Nothing to inherit and there will be no funeral. But I know why we're here. This is how Cam will say good-bye.

The front door is locked but gives with two kicks. "Right here," Cam says. He taps the wood a foot above the lock before slamming the heel of his boot through the door.

Inside, the house waits for its owner's return. The hallway light is on. The AC unit shakes in the window over the kitchen sink. Tan wallpaper curls away from the cabinets like birch bark, exposing thin ribbons of yellow glue on the walls.

We hear voices. Cam puts a hand to my chest and a finger to his lips. He brings a hand to his waist and feels for a gun that is not there. Neither of us moves for a full minute, then Cam laughs.

"Fuck!" he says. "That's a TV." He hoots. He runs a hand through his hair. "About scared the shit out of me."

We move to the main room. It too is in disarray, the lamp shades thick with dust, a coffee table awash in a sea of newspapers and unopened mail. There is an old and scary-looking couch, its arms held to its sides with duct tape. A pair of springs pokes through the cushion, ripe with tetanus.

The exception is the television. It is beautiful. It is six feet of widescreen glory. "Look at that picture," I say, and Cam and I step back to take it in. The TV's tuned to the Military Channel, some cable extravagance. B-2 bombers streak the sky in black and white, pro-

pellers the size of my head. On top of the set sits a bottle of Windex and a filthy washcloth, along with several many-buttoned remote controls. Cam grabs one, fondles it, holds down a button, and the sound swells. The drone of plane engines and firefights tears across the room from one speaker to another. I jump. Cam grins.

"We're taking it," he says. "We are so taking this shit."

He pushes another button and the picture blips to a single point of white at the center of the screen. The point fades and dies.

"No!" Cam says. "No!"

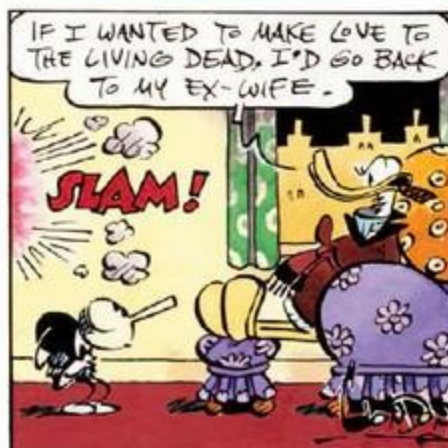
"What did you do?" I say.

"I don't know. I don't know!"

Cam shakes the remote, picks up another, punches more buttons, picks up a third, presses its buttons. The television hums, and the picture shimmers back to life.

"Ahhh," Cam says. We sit, careful to avoid the springs. While we watch, the beaches at Normandy are stormed, two bombs are dropped, and the war is won. We're halfway into Vietnam when Cam says, "I'm going to check out his room." It is not an invitation.

Dirty Duck[®] by Bobby London



Cam's gone for half an hour. When he returns, he looks terrible. The color is gone from his face, and his eyes are red-rimmed. He carries a shoe box under one arm. I don't ask, and he doesn't offer.

"Let's load up the set and get out of here," Cam says. "I'll pull the truck around."

I hear a glass door slide open then shut behind me. I hear something like a scream. Then the door slides open again. I turn around to see Cam. If he looked bad before, now he looks downright awful.

"What is it?" I say.

"Big," Cam says. "In the backyard."

"What? What's big in the backyard?"

"Big. Fucking. Alligator."

It is a big fucking alligator. I've seen alligators before, in movies, at zoos, but never this big and never so close. We stare at him. We don't know it's a him, but we decide it's a him. He is big. It's insane.

It's also the saddest fucking thing I have ever seen. In the backyard is a makeshift cage, an oval of chain-link fence with a chicken-wire roof. Inside, the alligator straddles an old kiddie pool. The pool's cracked plastic lip strains with the alligator's weight. His middle fills the pool, his belly submerged in a few inches of syrupy brown water, legs hanging out.

His tail, the span of a man, curls against a length of chain link.

When he sees us, the alligator hisses and paddles his front feet in the air. He opens his jaws, baring yellow teeth and white fleshy gums. Everywhere there are flies and gnats. They fly into his open mouth and land on his teeth. Others swarm open wounds along his back.

"What is he doing here?" Cam asks.

"Red was the Lizard Man," I say. "Apparently."

We stare at the alligator. He stares back. I consider the cage and wonder whether the alligator can turn around.

"He looks bored," Cam says. And it's true. He looks bored, and sick. He shuts his mouth, and his open eyes are the only thing reminding me he's alive.

"We can't leave him here," Cam says.

"We should call someone," I say. But who would we call? The authorities? Animal control?

"We can't," Cam says. "They'll kill him."

Cam is right. I've seen it before, on the news. Some jackass raises a gator. The gator gets loose. It's been handfed and knows no fear of man. The segments always end the same way: *Sadly, the alligator had to be destroyed.*

"I don't see that we have a choice," I say.

"We have the pickup," Cam says.

My mouth says no, but my eyes must

say yes, because before I know what's happening, we're in the front yard, examining the bed of the truck, Cam measuring the length with his open arms.

"This won't work," I say. Cam ignores me. He pulls a blue tarp from the backseat and unrolls it on the ground beside the truck.

"He'll never fit," I say.

"He'll fit. It'll be close, but he'll fit."

"Cam," I say. "Wait. Stop." Cam leans against the truck. He looks right at me. "Say we get the alligator out of the cage and into the truck. Say we manage to do this and keep all of our fingers. Where do we take him? I mean, what the hell, Cam? What the hell do you do with 12 feet of living, breathing alligator? And what about the TV? I thought you wanted to take the TV."

"Shit. I forgot about the TV."

We stare at the truck. I look up. The sky has turned from bright to light blue, and the sun has disappeared behind a scatter of clouds. On the ground, one corner of the tarp flaps in the breeze, winking its gold eyelet.

Cam bows his head as if in mourning. "Maybe if we stand the set up on its end."

"Cam," I say. "We can take the alligator or we can take the television, but we can't take both."

Electric-taping the snout, Cam decides, will be the hard part.

"All of it's the hard part," I say, but Cam's not listening.

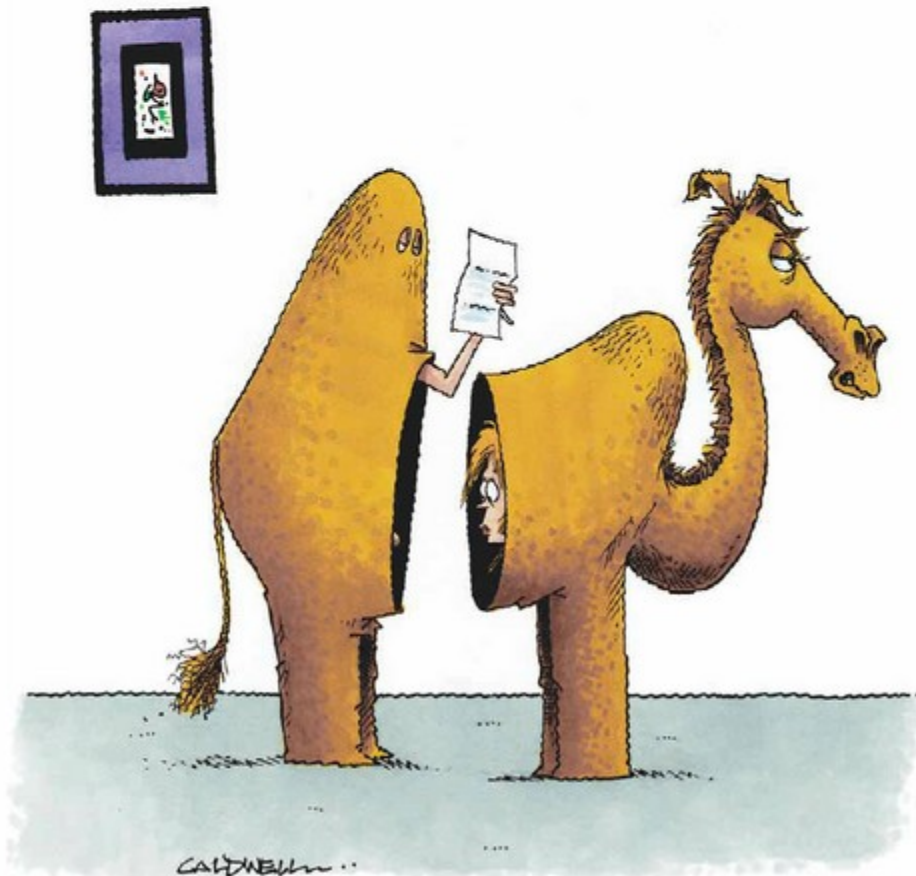
Cam finds a T-bone in Red's refrigerator. It's spoiled, but the alligator doesn't seem to mind. Cam sets the steak near the cage and the alligator waddles out of the pool. He presses his nostrils to the fence. The thick musk of alligator and reek of rotten meat turn my stomach and I retch.

"You puke, I kick your ass," Cam says.

We've raided Red's garage for supplies. Lying scattered at our feet are bolt cutters, a roll of electric tape, a spool of twine, bungee cords, a dozen two-by-fours, my tarp and, for no reason I'm immediately able to ascertain, a chain saw.

"Protection," Cam says, nudging the old Sears model with his toe. The chain is rusted and hangs loose from the blade. I imagine Cam starting the chain saw, the chain snapping, flying, landing far away in the tall grass. I try to picture the struggle between man and beast, Cam pinned beneath 500 pounds of alligator, Cam's head in the gator's mouth, Cam dragged in circles around the yard, a tangle of limbs and screams. Throughout each scenario, the chain saw offers little assistance.

Cam's hands are sheathed in oven mitts, a compromise he accepted begrudgingly when the boxing gloves he found, while offering superior protection,



"Nope. According to the instructions, you have it on the right way. Now come on, honey. We'll be late for the party."

failed to provide him the ability to grip, pick up or hold.

"This is stupid," I say. "Are we really doing this?"

"We're doing this," Cam says. He swats a fly from his face with one pot-holdered hand.

There is a clatter of chain link. We turn to see the alligator nudging the fence with his snout. He snorts, eyes the T-bone, opens and shuts his mouth. He really is surprisingly large.

Cam's parked the pickup in the backyard. He pulls off his oven mitts, lowers the gate, exposing the wide, bare bed of the truck, and we set to work angling the two-by-fours from gate to grass. We press the planks together, and Cam cinches them tight with the bungee cords. The boards are long, 10 or 12 feet, so physics is on our side. We should be able to drag him up the incline.

We return our attention to the alliga-

tor, who is sort of throwing himself against the fence, except that he can only back up a few feet and therefore build very little momentum. Above his head, at knee level, is a hand-size wire mesh door held shut by a combination lock. With each lunge, the lock jumps, then clatters against the door. With each charge, I jump too.

"He can't break out," Cam says. He picks up the bolt cutters.

"You don't know that," I say.

"If he could, don't you think he'd have done it by now?" Cam positions the bolt cutters on the loop of the lock, bows his legs and squats. He squeezes, and his face reddens. He grunts, there's a snap, and the lock falls away, followed by a flash of movement. Cam howls and falls. The alligator's open jaws stretch halfway through the hole. All I see is teeth.

"Motherfucker!" Cam yells.

"You okay?" I say.

Cam holds up his hands, wiggles 10 fingers.

"Okay," Cam says. "Okay." He picks up the T-bone and throws it at the alligator. The steak lands on his nose, hangs there, then slides off.

"It's not a dog," I say. "This isn't catch."

Cam puts on the oven mitts and slowly reaches for the meat resting in the grass just a few feet beneath all those teeth. Suddenly, the pen looks less sturdy, less like a thing the alligator could never escape.

The cage shakes, but this time it's the wind, which has really picked up. I wonder whether it's storming in St. Petersburg. Cam should be at home with Bobby, and I almost say as much. But Cam's eyes are wild. He's dead set on doing this.

Cam says, "I'm going to put the steak into his mouth, and when I do, I want you to tape the jaws shut."

"No way," I say. "No way am I putting my hand in range of that thing." And then this happens: My son walks out of my memory and into my thoughts, his arm hanging loose at the elbow. The nurse asks what happened, and he looks up, ready to lie for me. There is something beautiful in the pause between this question and the one to come. Then there's the officer's hand on my shoulder, the "Would you mind stepping out with me, please?" Oh, I've heard it a hundred times. It never leaves me. It is a whisper. It is a prison sentence.

I want to put the elbow back into the socket myself. I want to turn back time. I want Jack at five or 10. I want him curled in my lap like a dog. I want him writing on the walls with an orange crayon and blaming the angels that live in the attic. I want him before his voice plummeted two octaves, before he learned to stand with a hand on one hip, before he grew confused. I want my boy back.

"Come on!" Cam shouts. "Don't puss out on me now. As soon as he bites down, just wrap the tape around it."

"Give me your oven mitts," I say.

"No!"

"Give me the mitts and I'll do it."

"But you won't be able to handle the tape."

"Trust me," I say. "I'll find a way."

We do it. Cam waves the cut of meat at the snout until it smacks teeth. The jaws grab. There's an unnatural crunch as the T in the T-bone becomes two Is and then a pile of periods. I drape a length of tape over the nose, fasten the ends beneath the jaws, then run my gloved hands up both strands of tape, sealing them. Then I start wrapping like crazy. I wind the roll of tape around and around the jaws. The tape unspools from the roll and coils in a flat black worm around the snout.



"Halloween's next week, buddy."

When I step back, the alligator's jaws are shut tight and my hands shake.

"I can't believe it," Cam says. "I can't believe you actually did that shit."

The alligator's one heavy son of a bitch. We hold him in a kind of headlock, arms cradling his neck and front legs, fingers gripping his scaly hide. It's a good 20 feet from cage to truck. We sidestep toward the pickup, the alligator's back end and tail tracing a path through the grass. Every few feet we stop to rest.

When we drag, the alligator's back feet scramble and claw at the ground, but he doesn't writhe or thrash. He is not a healthy alligator. I stop.

"C'mon," Cam says. "Almost there."

"What are we doing?" I say.

"We're putting an alligator into your truck," Cam says. "C'mon."

"But look at him," I say. Cam looks down, examines the alligator's wide green head, his wet Ping-Pong ball eyes. He looks up.

"No," I say. "Really look."

"What?" Cam's impatient. He shifts his weight, gets a better grip on the gator. "I don't know what you want me to see."

"He's not even fighting us. He's too sick. Even if we set him free, how do we know he'll make it?"

"We don't."

"No, we don't. We don't know where he came from. We don't know where

to take him. And what if Red raised him? How will he survive in the wild? How will he learn to hunt and catch fish and stuff?"

Cam shrugs, shakes his head.

"So why?" I ask. "Why are we doing this?"

Cam locks eyes with me. After a minute I look away. My arms are weak with the weight of alligator. My legs quiver. We shuffle forward.

I didn't give Jack the chance to lie. I admitted guilt to second-degree battery and kept everyone out of court. I got four months and served two, plus fines, plus community service. Had that been the end of it, I'd have gotten off easy. Instead, I lost my family.

The last time I saw Jack he stood beside his mother's car, showing Alan his new driver's license. They reclined like girls against the hood but laughed like men at something on the license: a typo. "Weight: 1500." I watched them from the doorway. Jack kept his distance, flinched when I came close.

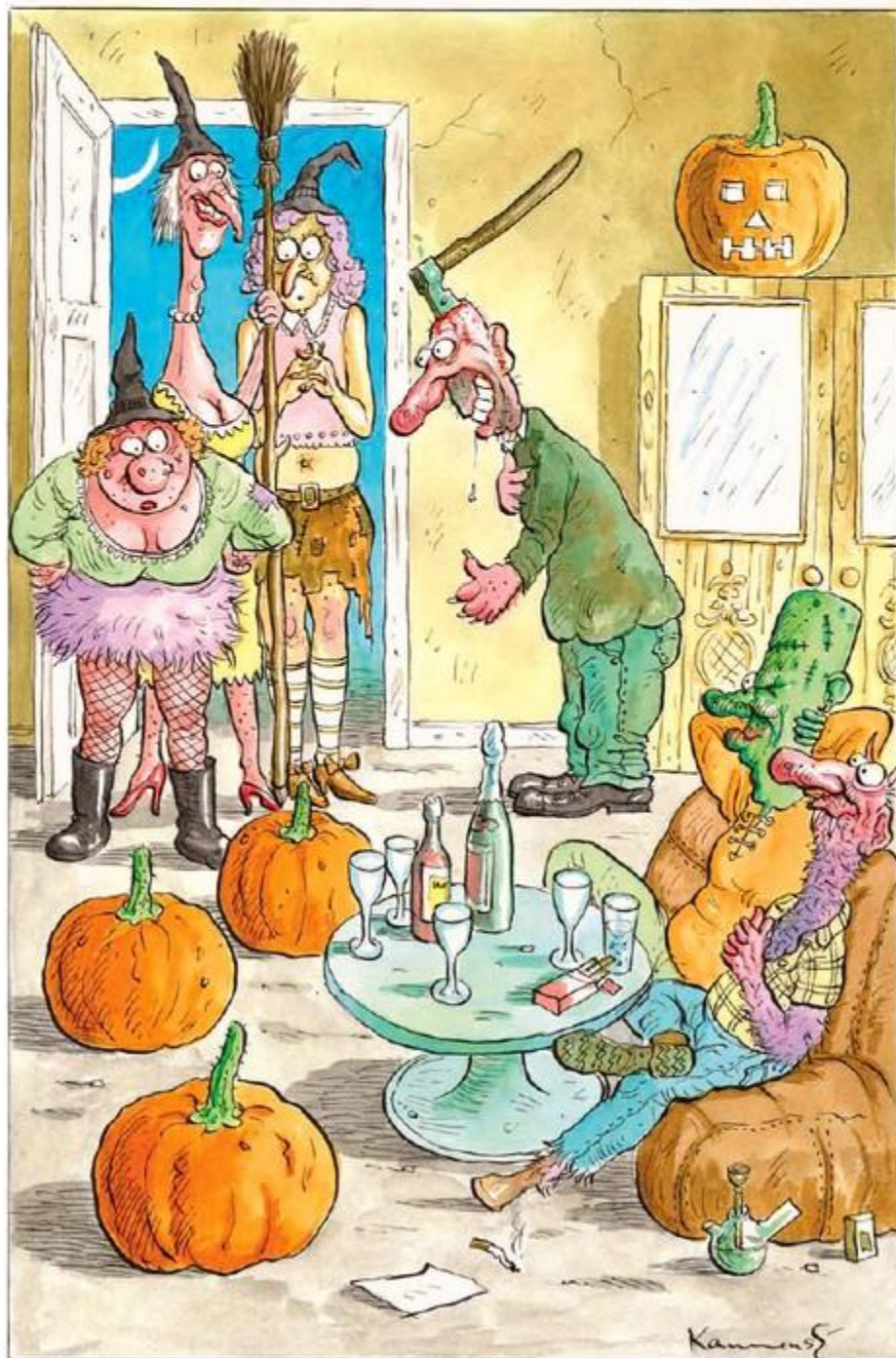
Alan had helped me load the furniture. With each piece, I thought of Jack's body. How it hung between us that afternoon, how it swayed, how much like a game wherein you and a friend grab another boy by ankles and wrists and throw him off a dock and into a lake.

Everything Jack and Lynn owned we'd packed into a U-Haul truck. I was not meant to know where they were going. I was not meant to see them again, but I'd found maps and directions in a pile of Lynn's things and had written down the address of their new place in Baton Rouge. I could forgive Lynn not wanting to see me, but taking my son away was a thing I could not abide.

I decided I would go there one day, a day that seems more distant with each passing afternoon. And what would Jack do when he opened the door? In my dreams, it was always Jack who opened the door. I would open my arms in invitation. I would say what I had not said.

But that afternoon it was Alan who sent Jack to me. Lynn waited in the U-Haul, ready to drive away. Alan gestured in my direction. He and Jack argued in hushed voices. And finally, remarkably, Jack moved toward me. I did not leave the doorway, and Jack stopped just short of the stoop.

What can I tell you about my son? He had been a beautiful boy, and standing before me I saw that he had become something different: a man I did not understand. His T-shirt was too tight for him, and the hem rode just above his navel. A trail of light brown hair led from there and disappeared behind a silver belt buckle. His fingernails were



painted black. The cast had come off, and his right arm was a nest of curly, dark hair.

I wanted to say, "I want to understand you."

I wanted to say, "I will do whatever it takes to earn your trust."

I wanted to say "I love you," but I had never said it, not to Jack—yes, I am one of those men—and I could not bear the thought of speaking these words to my son for the first time and not hearing them spoken in return.

Instead, I said nothing.

Jack held out his hand, and we shook like strangers.

I still feel it, the infinity of Jack's handshake: the nod of pressed palms, flesh of my flesh.

The rain arrives in sheets, and the windshield wipers can hardly keep up. I drive. Cam sits beside me. He's placed the shoe box on the seat between us. His arm rests protectively against the lid. The alligator slides around with the two-by-fours in the back. We fastened the tarp over the bed of the truck to conceal our cargo, but we didn't pull it taut. The tarp sags with water, threatening to smother the animal underneath.

Cam flips on the radio and we catch snippets of the weather before the speakers turn to static.

"...upgraded to a tropical storm... usually signals the formation of a hurricane... storm will pick up speed as it makes its way across the Gulf... expected to come ashore as far north as the panhandle... far south as St. Petersburg..."

Cam turns the radio off. We watch rain pelt the windshield, the black flash of wipers pushing water.

I don't ask whether Bobby is afraid of storms. As a boy, I'd been frightened, but not Jack. During storms Jack had stood at the window and watched as branches skittered down the street and power lines unraveled onto the sidewalks. He smiled and stared until Lynn pulled him away from the glass and we moved to the bathroom with our blankets and flashlights. It was only then,

huddled in the dark, that Jack sometimes cried.

"We should go back," I say. "The power could be out."

"Bobby's a tough kid," Cam says. "He'll be fine."

"Cam," I say.

"In case you've forgotten, there's a fucking alligator in the back of your truck."

I say nothing. Whatever happens is Cam's responsibility. This, I tell myself, is not your fault.

Thunder shakes the truck. Not far ahead a cell tower ignites with lightning. A shower of sparks waterfalls onto the highway. Cars and trucks are dusted with fire. Everyone drives on.

I don't know where we're headed, but

tle out of my hand.

"Take this exit," Cam says. "At the bottom, turn right."

I guide the truck down the ramp toward Grove Street. The water in back sloshes forward and unloads the tarp. Alligator feet scratch for purchase on the truck bed's corrugated plastic lining.

"Where are you taking us?" I ask.

"Havenbrook," he says. I wait for Cam to say he's kidding. But Cam isn't kidding.

The largest of the lakes cradles the 17th green. Cam's seen gators there before, big bastards who come ashore to sun themselves and scare off golf-

ers. I've never golfed in my life and neither has he, but Cam led the team that patched the clubhouse roof following last year's hurricane season. He remembers the five-digit code, and it still works. The security gate slides open, and we head down the paved drive reserved for maintenance.

No one's on the course. Fallen limbs litter the greens. An abandoned white cart lies turned on its side where the golf-cart path rounds the 15th hole.

Lightning streaks the sky. The rain has turned the windshield to water, and sudden gusts of wind jostle the truck from every direction. I fight the steering wheel to stay on the

asphalt. Even Cam is wide-eyed, his fingers buried in the seat cushion. The shoe box bounces between us.

We reach the lake, but the shore is half a football field away. The green is soggy, thick with water, and already the lake is flooding its banks. The first tire that leaves the road, I know, will sink into the mud, and we'll never get the truck out.

"I can't drive out there," I tell Cam. I have to yell over the wind and rain, the deafening thunder. It's like the world is pulling apart. "This is the closest I can get us."

Cam says something I can't hear, and then he's out of the truck, the door 127

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Cam says we're close.

Cam, I think, after this, I owe you nothing. Once this is over, we're even.

"If it's work you're worried about," Cam says, "I'll talk to Mickey. I'll tell him about Red. He'll understand if you're a little late."

"It's not Mickey I'm worried about," I say. I don't say, *Mickey can kiss my ass*. I don't say, *You and Mickey can go to hell*.

"Look," Cam says, "I know why you're pulling the graveyard shift. Mickey told me what you did. But this is different. This he'll understand."

I recognize the ache at the back of my throat immediately. The second I'm alone it will take a miracle to keep a bot-

slamming behind him. I jump out, and the wet cold slaps me. Within seconds I'm drenched, my clothes heavy. All I hear is the wind. I move as if underwater.

As soon as Cam gets the tarp off, the storm catches it and it billows into the sky like a flaming blue parachute, up into the trees overhead. It tangles itself into the branches, and then there is only the *smack-smack* of the tarp's uncaught corners pummeled by gusts.

Cam screams at me. His teeth flash in bursts of lightning, but his words are choked by wind. I tap my ear and he nods. He motions toward the alligator. We approach it slowly. I expect the animal to charge, but he lies motionless. I check the jaws. They're still wrapped tight. This, I realize, will be our last challenge. If he gets away from us before we remove the tape, he's doomed.

I'm wondering which of us will climb into the bed of the truck when the gator starts scuttling forward. We leap out of the way as hundreds of pounds of reptile spill from the truck and onto the green. The gate cracks under the weight and swings loose like a trapdoor in mid-air, the hinges busted. Then the alligator is free on the grass. We don't move, and neither does he.

Cam approaches me. He makes a megaphone of his cupped hands and mouth and leans in close to my ear. His hot breath on my face is startling and sudden and wonderful in all that fierce cold and rain.

"I think he's stunned," Cam yells. "We've got to get the tape off, now."

I nod. I am exhausted and anxious, and I know there's no way we'll be able to lug the alligator to the water's

edge. I wonder whether he'll make it, if he'll find his way to the water, or if this fall from the truck is the final blow, if tomorrow the groundskeepers will find an alligator carcass 50 yards from the lake. It would make the *St. Petersburg Times* front page. A giant alligator killed in the hurricane. Officials would be baffled.

"I want you to straddle its neck," Cam yells. "Keep its head pressed to the ground. I'll try to get the tape off."

"No," I say. I point to my chest. I circle my hand through the air, pantomiming the unraveling. Cam looks surprised, but he nods.

Cam brings his hands to my face again and yells his hot words into my ear. "On my signal," he screams, but I push him away.

I don't wait for a signal. Before I know it, I'm on the ground, my side hugging mud, and I'm digging my nails into the tape. My eye is inches from the alligator's eye. He blinks without blinking, a thin, clear membrane sliding over his eyeball, then up and under his eyelid. It is a thing to see. It is a knowing wink. I see this and I feel safe.

The tape is harder to unwrap than it was to wrap. The rain has made it soft, the glue goopy. Every few turns, I lose my grip. Finally, I let the tape coil around my hand like a snake. It unwinds and soon my fist is a ball of dark, sticky fruit. The last of the tape pulls cleanly from the snout, and I roll away from the alligator. I stand, and Cam pulls me back. He holds me up. The alligator flexes his jaws. His mouth opens wide, then slams shut. And then he's off, zig-zagging toward the water.

He is swift and strong, and I'm glad it is cold and raining so Cam can't see the tears streaking my cheeks and won't know that my shivering is from sobbing. Cam lets go of me and I think I will fall, but instead I am running. Running! And I'm laughing and hollering and leaping. I'm pumping my fist into the air. I'm screaming, "Go! Go!" And just before the alligator reaches the water, I lunge and my fingertips trace the last ridges and scales of tail whipping their way ahead of me. The sky is alive with lightning, and I see the hulking body, so awkward and graceless on land, slide into the water as it was meant to do. That great body cuts the water fast and sleek, and the alligator dives out of sight, at home in the world where he belongs, safe in the warm quiet of mud and fish and unseen things that thrive in deep green darkness.

Cam and I don't say much on the ride home. The rain has slowed to an even, steady downpour. The truck's cab has grown cold. Cam holds his hands close to the vents to catch whatever weak streams of heat trickle out. "We have

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done a good thing," Cam says, and I agree, but I worry at what cost. We listen to the radio, but the storm has headed north. The reporters have moved on to new cities: Clearwater, Crystal Springs, Ocala.

"There was this one time," Cam says at last. "About five years back. I spoke up to Red."

This is news to me. This, I know, is no small revelation.

"I called him," Cam says. "I called him up, and I said, 'Dad? I just want you to know that you have a grandson and that his name is Robert and that I think he should know his grandfather.' And you know what that prick did? He hung up. The only thing Red said to me in 20 years was 'Hello' when he picked up the phone."

"I'm sorry," I say.

"If he'd even once told me he was sorry, I'd have forgiven him anything. I'd have forgiven him my own murder. He was my father. I would have forgiven everything."

"Do you know why I got all these fucking tattoos? To hide the fucking scars from the night Red cut me with a fillet

knife, and I'd have forgiven that if he'd just said something, anything, when he answered the phone."

Cam doesn't shake or sob or bang a fist on the dashboard, but when I look away, I catch his reflection in the window, a knuckle in each eye socket, and I'm suddenly sorry for my impatience, the grudge I've carried all afternoon.

"But you tried," I say. "At least you won't spend your life wondering."

We sit in silence for a while. The rain on the roof beats a cadence into the cab and it soothes me.

"You know, I served with gay guys in the Gulf," Cam says, and I almost drive the truck off the road. A tire slips over the lip of asphalt and my side mirror nearly catches a guardrail before I bring the truck back to the center of the lane.

"Jesus!" Cam says. "I'm just saying they were okay guys, and if Jack's gay, it's not the end of the world."

"Jack's confused," I say. "He isn't gay." "Well, either he is or he isn't, and what you think or want or say won't change it."

"Cam," I say, "all due respect. This doesn't concern you."

"I know," Cam says. He sits up

straighter in his seat and grips the door handle as we pull onto our block. "I'm just saying it isn't too late."

We pull into the driveway. Cam jumps out of the truck before it's in park. The yard is a mess of fallen limbs and garbage. Two shutters have been torn from the front of the house. The mailbox is on its side. Otherwise everything looks all right. I glance down the street and see that my house is still standing.

When I turn back to Cam's house, what I see breaks my heart in 10 places. I see Cam running across the lawn. I see Bobby, his hands pressed to the big bay window. His face is puffy and red. Cam disappears into the house, and then he is there with the boy, he is there on his knees, and he pulls Bobby to him. He mouths the words *I'm sorry, I'm sorry* over and over again, and Bobby collapses into him, buries his head in Cam's chest, and my friend wraps his son in dragons.

I watch them. They stay like that for minutes, framed by window and house and darkening sky. I watch, and then I open the shoe box and look inside.

I don't know what I was expecting, but it wasn't this. What I find are letters, over 100 of them. About a letter a month for roughly 10 years, all of them unopened. Each has been dated and stamped RETURN TO SENDER, the last one sent back just a week ago. Each is marked by the same shaky handwriting. Each is addressed to a single recipient, Mr. Cameron Starnes, from a single sender, Red.

And I know then that there was no phone call, no forgiveness on Cam's part, that Cam never came close until after the monster was safely out of reach.

I stare at the letters, and I know who it is Cam wants to keep me from becoming.

I pull out of Cam's driveway. I stop to right Cam's mailbox, then I tuck the shoe box safely inside. I follow the street to the end of the block. At the stop sign, I pause. I don't know whether to turn right or left. Finally, I head for the interstate. There's a spare uniform at the diner, clean and dry, and if I hurry, I won't be late for work.

But I'm not going to work.

It's a 10-hour drive to Baton Rouge, but I will make it in eight. I will make it before morning. I will drive north, following the storm. I will drive through the wind and the rain. I will drive all night.

Second prize in this year's competition goes to James Harris, 29, a Ph.D. student at the University of Alaska at Fairbanks, for "Fishing the Punchbowl." The two third-place winners are "Love Is Like a Rock," by Amber Nicole Brooks, 26, an MFA student at Georgia State University, and "Here on the Ground," by Jarret Haley, 26, of the University of Notre Dame.



"You said you didn't mind that I had cats."



ALI LARTER

(continued from page 73)

LARTER: The older I get, the more I like it. I had a harder time when I was younger and fighting to be taken more seriously. I was in a lot of teen genre movies as the blonde character, and I wanted to be this dark, intellectual, brooding character instead. But that wasn't me. Once you stop trying to be someone else, once you give up—and for me it was giving up—you can have anything you want. They think I'm a dumb blonde? *C'est la vie.*

Q7

PLAYBOY: About your movie *3-Way*, an Internet critic wrote, "The girl you want to see with her shirt off never takes it off. Where is the justice?" Why not give your fans what they want?

LARTER: I don't do nudity. I'm not saying I never will, but what's under my clothes is mine and my lover's. In the right hands nudity can be beautiful and provocative. It has to mean something, not just showing your boobs. There are certainly times when nudity can accentuate a scene. Take Kate Winslet in *Little Children*. How brave and beautiful was she?

Q8

PLAYBOY: How does a real-chested gal of average proportions make it in the land of silicone and surgery? Are you pressured to enhance?

LARTER: Average? I'd say a little smaller than average. [laughs] I have little boobs. I embrace my chest bone, right here [points]. If surgery makes you feel better about your body, I don't judge it. But I would be uncomfortable if I had made that decision. Surgery isn't who I am. It's not what I believe in and not how I want to be in bed.

Q9

PLAYBOY: What part of your body do you love more than any other?

LARTER: I have a little belly, and I'm learning to love it. I can't lay a ruler flat from hip bone to hip bone anymore. I definitely have a soft little area. I also have a bit of a bubble butt.

Q10

PLAYBOY: We read that Niki was originally envisioned as a showgirl but was changed to an Internet stripper because of your physique. How does a serious actress prepare for a stripper role?

LARTER: I did some research. I went online. What struck me most was the blankness in most of their eyes. That was what I wanted to show. I thought it was sad, but my boyfriend thought it was thrilling. He'd call while I was researching and say, "Hey, what are you doing?" "I'm online, watching some girls stripping." He was like, "On my way!" In a recent episode I play a pole dancer. I took private lessons for a week, a couple

of hours a day. I have a newfound respect for those women. It's harder than you imagine, but I made it look good.

Q11

PLAYBOY: How tough was it to flip your hyphenate from model-actress to actress-model?

LARTER: I did a ton of commercials, teen stuff. I spent time in Milan when I turned 18 and met my best friend there, the actress Amy Smart. It was an opportunity to travel the world and experience different cultures. It wasn't about "Oh, I want to be a supermodel!" When I was 19, I deferred going to NYU and moved to Los Angeles, planning to stay for a year and then come back. I really thought I'd return. I wanted to be a news broadcaster; my goals began and ended with Diane Sawyer. But then I got into acting. I did a couple of TV guest shots but passed on pilot season because I didn't like the idea of being told what to do for the next six years of my life—that is, had I gotten a show. I was a very strong-willed girl from New Jersey who wanted to make it come hell or high water, and I was naive enough to believe I could do it at 20. When I went to Austin, Texas to film *Varsity Blues*, my first movie role, I felt I was in over my head.

Q12

PLAYBOY: So you soured on Hollywood?

LARTER: Yes. Eventually I picked up and moved to New York to find myself. I thought I could build on my early success, but instead I made it go away. So I ran around the world: I went boar hunting in Germany, to a grand prix, to Shanghai and Poland. I read *A Moveable Feast* in Parisian cafes. Eventually I realized that acting is what I want to do, so I came back to Los Angeles. It wasn't easy. I wasn't fresh anymore. I wasn't the new girl in town. I hadn't done a movie in a while. Getting *Heroes* was definitely a second rite of passage. This time I was ready to put down roots.

Q13

PLAYBOY: You once wrote a magazine article in which you say you are on a "quest for truth." Can you handle the truth?

LARTER: I spent a month writing it, probably about 40 pages. It was so precious. At the time, I was searching—questioning the business, the foundations of Hollywood, what it meant to be an actor, my responsibilities versus how I felt creatively. I had picked up suddenly and moved from Hollywood to New York, hoping to be around different kinds of people. I read lots of essays and articles to prepare for writing it. I can handle the truth now, the truth being that every day I wake up and do my best to be who I want to be.

Q14

PLAYBOY: Of all the character plotlines on *Heroes*, which is your favorite guilty pleasure?

LARTER: I love Sylar. I love the bad guys. I

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always have. But then you grow up and think, Well, is he going to be there teaching my son Little League? No. My idea of the guy for me was wrong for a long while, but that's not saying I didn't have a great time. I've always loved and I've always gotten crushed, but in some amazing way I never got hardened in my heart.

Q15

PLAYBOY: You've admitted to having a crush on Rob Lowe in the 1986 movie *About Last Night*.... How many times did you watch the scene with him and Demi Moore naked in the kitchen?

LARTER: Oh my God, so many. And the bathtub scene! I love the scene when Demi Moore walks in, turns on the light and says, "I think we've been in the dark long enough."

Q16

PLAYBOY: When you cook to seduce, what do you prepare?

LARTER: I'm a huge fan of finger foods: cheese and charcuterie plates. I love starting with champagne and moving to a deep red wine. I will definitely end up with some kind of fillet or heavy meat. You would think, Heavy? Well, we might not get to the fillet until after—and God, it's gonna taste good at three A.M.!

Q17

PLAYBOY: What's better than a cigarette after sex?

LARTER: Nothing.

Q18

PLAYBOY: Describe the delights of growing up in New Jersey.

LARTER: My dog. Walking to and from ele-

mentary school with my sister. Playing jailbreak with all the kids in the neighborhood. Riding my bike to the swim club and eating lots of Swedish Fish. Lightning bugs. Freshly mowed grass. My dad having an orangeade after he mowed the grass, all sweaty. I loved going to the shore, spending summers at the beach. I loved growing up there. I also had the accent, though it seems to have naturally faded away. But give me a glass of wine and it may come back. My boyfriend says it reappears when I get angry.

Q19

PLAYBOY: Can you respect a man who isn't into sports?

LARTER: No. I've tried. I've really tried. I've dated these poetic, dark types, but the truth is, I watched the Eagles, the Phillies and the Flyers, growing up with my father. He coached my softball team, my soccer team, my swim team. It's so who I am. I love sports, and it's definitely part of what makes a man sexy to me.

Q20

PLAYBOY: What interview question do you never want to hear again?

LARTER: "So how was that whipped-cream bikini put on in *Varsity Blues*?" I love the movie now, but I didn't five years ago. I was a little girl. I felt emotionally naked as well. It was my first scene in my first movie, and it was the first day of work. It actually worked for the scene, though, because I had to cry. I cried for seven hours because I was so scared that if I stopped I wouldn't be able to start again.

Read the 21st question at playboy.com/21q.



"Common, Carol—it's my turn to be on top!"

THE RANCH

(continued from page 94)

workshop, a barn, a Quonset hut. At the other end of the property was a school. It was publicly funded." Around 50 children from the area—which included other communes and communities—attended the school. It has since closed.

Schneider drives me to Bolinas, California, a town that prizes its privacy so much, its citizens frequently take down road signs so outsiders won't find it. All along the coastal range Spanish moss hangs on live oak like tattered political banners. When he was not on the Ranch, Schneider lived on a back road with RubyLee, a woman he met on the commune who had moved out to pursue her art. "There wasn't much for me to do up there," RubyLee says.

She is an exotic, serene woman who seems to flow with her robes through her beautiful, austere light-filled wood house, which is heated by a wood stove. The place is simple, elegant, well-built—not merely a shelter. A model counterculture home, although a house like this is no longer a sign of radical departure from the norm; it would be equally suited for a yuppie investment banker or a crunchy conservative.

RubyLee's place is so idiosyncratically, so individually stamped by her personality, it is readily apparent how it might have been difficult for her to subsume her unique style in a communal identity. "There were a lot of strong women at the Ranch," RubyLee says. "A lot of interpersonal conflict. The woman who taught the school tended to be divisive and difficult. She had favorites, which wasn't always good for the children."

In the spare room where I spend the night I find an old *Whole Earth Catalog*. Opening it is like opening a door onto the past, onto a more hopeful time when the earth seemed friendlier—or we seemed friendlier to the earth. Technology was going to save us. Solar heat. Better compost. Better diets. Better drugs.

In the *Whole Earth Catalog* we could learn about eternal forms from D'Arcy Thompson and about the myth of the eternal return from Joseph Campbell. We'd build geodesic domes according to specifications laid out for us by Buckminster Fuller, who taught us to think of our planet as Spaceship Earth. We'd learn better modes of consciousness from counterculture gurus: Richard Alpert, Leary's psychedelic partner at Harvard, who had become Baba Ram Dass; John Lilly, who studied dolphin communication at the Communication Research Institute and later, through psychotropic chemicals and sensory deprivation, would claim to have broken through to another dimension (apparently the same place people go who today take DMT); Robert Anton Wilson, possibly the sanest man in America until his recent death, a combination of the "happy philosopher" David Hume, William Blake and Lenny Bruce; and, of course, Leary.

The *Whole Earth Catalog* told us where to buy 35-millimeter film in bulk (we were

a long way from the digital age), how to care for LPs (and a long way from the era of music downloads and the Internet) and how to use the Tandy desktop computer, one of the first personal computers, which was the size of a large microwave oven (although back then microwave ovens were rare) and, with a top memory of 128k, could save as much as 30 pages of manuscript. A revolution in word processing! I went to sleep dreaming of Wendell Depot, ice cream churns and skinny-dipping.

"All the kids from the Ranch—Willow, Windspirit, Ishvi, Blue Jay, Raincrow—have a bond," Noah Sheppard says. "When my commune brothers introduce me, they describe me as, well, their brother."

Clean-cut in his white T-shirt, pull-over, jeans and Nikes, Sheppard, 34, could have stepped out of an Orvis ad: the well-dressed, informal businessman, which is what he is. Sheppard, who was on the local chamber of commerce board of directors, owns and runs MacCallum House, an impeccably renovated Victorian estate promising "luxury accommodations and fine dining in the heart of Mendocino Village." It also includes the MacCallum Suites, the Mendocino Village Inn and the Mendo Wine Tours & Limousine Service, which offers the "Equine & Wine" package, featuring horseback-riding adventures at Ricochet Ridge Ranch and trail rides on the beach, through a redwood forest and on a cattle ranch. "I've got 85 to 90 employees," Sheppard says.

Halfway through the three-hour trip to Mendocino, I had suggested that when we arrive in the area we go immediately to the commune site. "We don't have time," Schneider had said. "Noah'll be waiting for us at his hotel."

We had stopped at a big-box store, a Costco, to use the bathroom and grab some lunch. The car that pulled in beside us had an I MISS RONALD REAGAN bumper sticker. Inside, people were lined up with two or three shopping carts crammed high with flat-screen televisions, supersize boxes of dried apricots, gallons of laundry soap—an abundance unimagined during the 1960s

era of abundance when, some thought, the booming economy was responsible for the development of communes.

The baby boomers were the first generation to grow up out of the shadow of the Depression. Since they had no fear of going without, they embraced voluntary poverty. Today this concept has metamorphosed in our new overheated economy into "voluntary simplicity," a trend bearing a hint of the you-can't-fire-me-I-quit mentality: I'll reduce my expectations before the bubble pops and we're all left with enforced simplicity, which used to be called poverty.

A different world from the dream of the 1960s.

"We move on," Schneider says philosophically. "I recently saw Ram Dass, hadn't seen

lore, India. When he was eight months old he came down with severe dysentery, and his parents decided it would be prudent to leave. After spending time in London they returned to the States. After a year or so in San Francisco, they decided city life was not for them, so they headed up the coast. In Mendocino they discovered the Ranch and settled down.

"About the same time, they separated," he says.

We are sitting in the MacCallum House's Grey Whale Bar. The sound system plays Dean Martin and an easy-listening lounge version of the Beatles' "Got to Get You Into My Life." The bar is stocked with top-of-the-line liquor: Knob Creek bourbon, single-malt scotches, specialty vodkas.

A young crowd of drinkers sits at the small, widely spaced tables, intimately leaning into each other and laughing low.

Like Bolinas, Mendocino has protected itself from some of the worst of the wider culture. Along with the expensive wine-tourist trade—Mendocino County offers art galleries, hot springs, cafes, yarn shops, a full-production opera company, one ballet troupe, two premier theater companies and two orchestras—the area still reflects its counter-culture past.

At Headroom you can buy incense, tie-dyed clothing and hemp goods. Hemp Connection is a purveyor of fine hemp products. Alternate Energy Engineering's motto is "Power to the people."

The local alternative tabloid, *Greenfuse*, published by the Waking Dog Collective, is filled with articles that, with few changes, could have been found in the 1960s *East Village Rat*. A recent issue ran a story called "A Life for the Cause of Peace," along with an article on South American grassroots democracy, the complaints of a disgruntled staff sergeant about the unpopular war in Iraq—"The enemy is not who the government or the media says it is," he notes—and a piece on a possible conspiracy in the Robert Kennedy murder, headlined WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS...HAVE THE CIA KILL THE REFORMER.

"In the 1990s I went back to India to see where I was born," Sheppard says. 133

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him in a long time. He was in a wheelchair. He gave the best advice I've ever gotten."

About psychedelia?

About the cosmic order?

About archetypal eruptions into our consensus reality?

"No," Schneider says. "He told me to take my blood-pressure medicine. He didn't and had a stroke."

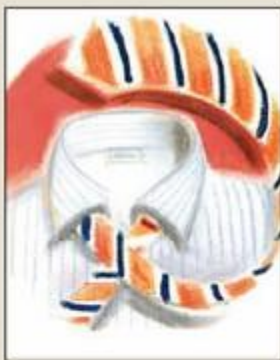
"My dad was older than most of the others who came to the Ranch," Sheppard says. Like Schneider, Sheppard's parents were not boomers but war babies. "They were travelers," he says.

Sheppard was born in 1972 in Banga-

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 32, 35-36, 96-101 and 146-147, check the listings below to find the stores nearest you.



INC International Concepts, available at Macy's locations nationwide. *Leather Island* by Bill Lavin, available at Scoop Men, NYC. *Lenor Romano*, available at select Nordstrom locations nationwide. *Mark Nason*, available at select Bloomingdale's locations. *Modern Amusement*, modernamusement.com. *Mossimo*, target.com. *Nike*, niketown.com. *Original Penguin*, originalpenguin.com.

GAMES

Page 32: *BlackSite: Area 51*, midway.com. *Clive Barker's Jericho*, codemasters.com. *Grand Theft Auto IV*, rockstargames.com. *Heavenly Sword*, playstation.com. *John Woo Presents Stranglehold*, midway.com. *Project Gotham Racing 4*, xbox.com. *Sherlock Holmes: The Awakened*, cdv.com. *Skate*, ea.com.

MANTRACK

Pages 35-36: *Accutron*, bulova.com. *Mitsubishi*, mitsubishi-tv.com. *Nautor*, nautorgroup.com. *Peugeot*, broadwayhandler.com.

BEST-DRESSED MAN ON CAMPUS

Pages 96-101: *American Apparel*, americanapparel.net. *Boss Orange*, hugoboss.com. *Brooks*, brooksrunning.com. *Camper*, www.camper.com. *Canterbury of New Zealand*, canterburynzusa.com. *Catherine Angiel*, catherineangiel.com. *Converse(Product)Red*, converse.com. *Corpus Christi*, nexusshowroom.com. *C.P. Company*, cpccompany.com. *DSquared*, dsquared2.com. *Etnies*, etnies.com. *Hickey*, hickeystyle.com. *Hugo*, hugoboss.com.

Penfield, 212-722-8203. *PF Flyers*, pfflyers.com. *Porsche Design*, 212-308-1786. *Post Vegas*, loungesoho.com. *Replay*, 888-REPLAY8. *Richmond X*, available at Chasalla in Chicago and Lounge in NYC. *Rodo*, available at Heel Shoe Lounge, 866-540-4335. *7 for All Mankind*, 7forallmankind.com. *Sisley*, 800-535-4491. *Sperry Top-Sider*, sperrytopsider.com. *Staple*, available at Reed Space, NYC. *Stitch's*, atriumnyc.com. *Swag*, atriumnyc.com. *Threadless*, threadless.com. *Triple 5 Soul*, triple5soul.com. *Vintage Red*, available at Macy's and Nordstrom locations nationwide. *Wearfirst*, available at Bloomingdale's and Macy's locations nationwide.

POTPOURRI

Pages 146-147: *Ace*, aceformen.com. *Ambient*, ambientdevices.com. *DirecTV*, directv.com. *Lomographic*, lomography.com. *Pan Am*, panamone.com. *Playboy guitars*, guitarcenter.com/playboy. *R2-D2*, nikkor2d2.com. *Tuthilltown Spirits*, tuthilltown.com. *Zonbu*, zonbu.com.

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"It was just what I'd expected." What he expected did not charm him.

"On my second birthday," he says about one of his earliest memories, "all the kids from the Ranch were there. We always had whole-wheat carob cake on birthdays, made with goat's milk from our own goats." He couldn't wait to grow up and have a real chocolate cake.

Sheppard and his brothers grew up without electricity. They used kerosene lamps and candles. No daily newspaper. No radio—at first. (Willow Aum sneaked in the first one.) No TV. "Except," Sheppard says, "when we visited our grandparents. But none of us really got into it." Instead of watching TV during the long evenings, Sheppard listened to his parents read aloud to him. "We all ate together every night at the big house," he says. They were vegetarians, though, he admits, "as soon as I could, I became a carnivore. Our parents were quite honest with us. They didn't hide much at all. By the mid-1980s even they became more tuned into assimilating back into regular society." After he left the Ranch, Sheppard says, he realized that "most of the people I met didn't have some kind of experience growing up with so many people."

Possibly because he wasn't born on the commune, he kept the surname Sheppard; many other kids from the Ranch use the last name Aum. Sheppard also left the commune early. "When I was 10," he says, "I moved down the road to Riverdale, another community. I had some resentment about the education we were getting. Pam, the teacher at the Ranch, was a tyrant. She chose to educate some kids and not others. I said I wanted to go to the straight school so I could learn to read."

Sheppard worked all summer to buy a pair of Sperry Top-Siders, and although a lot of the other kids his age at the Mendocino Middle School were from hippie families like his, he at first felt like an outsider. "I was way behind," he says. "I was in sixth grade, but I read at a third-grade level. I had to spend several years working very hard to catch up." He went to Cabrillo College for a few years but quit because "I was too eager to start working." Growing up in the counterculture seems to have sharpened Sheppard's appetite for traditional-culture success. But even if he has found a place for himself in the country's common capitalistic culture, he has chosen to live close to the Ranch, just four miles away along the ridge. "I keep in touch with all of them," he says of his brothers.

Ishvi Aum, who owns a successful local construction company, and Windspirit Aum still live near the Ranch. Blue Jay Aum moved to the Bay Area, and River Aum lives in Arizona. "He actually does my credit-card transactions at his firm down there," Sheppard says. Only Willow, who lives on the Ranch, still maintains a hippie lifestyle, but they all retain

many of the values they grew up with. Ishvi, for example, refuses to use indoor plumbing. They all live close to the land, many of them growing some of their own food. "We learned something from the previous generation," Sheppard says, "but by not doing one thing, by all doing something different, we're more effective. We're even more effective gardeners."

The commune continues to cast a centripetal force on those who lived there and their families. Sheppard enjoys this. "I'm happy my parents were here and not in suburbia," he says. Not long ago his grandparents moved from Anaheim, in Orange County, to an area near the Ranch. "We had four generations living on the same property, and they live close by now," Sheppard says proudly. "Innkeeping is like having an ideal commune—lots of people in one place. But I'm in control. No shared anything!"

"My earliest memory," Ishvi says, "is of watching Willow being born in a big barn filled with light." Ishvi, Willow, Schneider and Marshall McNeil sit at a long table in the MacCallum House. Ishvi wears a green T-shirt, a cap, a beard and glasses. Intense, sharp and funny, he misses nothing. Willow is quiet, almost withdrawn, and speaks thoughtfully but rarely. McNeil, one of the elders, arrived at the Ranch in 1968. "My wife and I found some LSD through an Alan Watts seminar in Sausalito," he says. "We left Marin for New York and spent a year and a half at Millbrook. I was there at the end and made my way here." Like Schneider, McNeil is tall, rangy and as weather-seamed as oak bark, with somewhat wary outlaw eyes. He speaks even less than Willow.

Sheppard comes and goes, sitting with us when not being interrupted by his duties managing the inn and planning for a trip to Buenos Aires. Lavender Grace Kent—funny, lovely and worldly-wise—is our waitress. She grew up in a community down the road from the Ranch and spent seven years in New York City as a jazz vocalist. In between taking care of the tables around us, she finds time to comment on the story of the Ranch and the kids who grew up there.

"They learned important things," Kent says. "Basic skills. Practical things. Topography, how to find your way around with a compass. Welding. My first welding project was to make a cradle for my stuffed bear out of an old water heater. Marshall taught woodworking."

"How to make a skunk-skin hat," Sheppard says.

It all sounds like the Lost Boys in Neverland. "We learned how to survive," Kent says.

"The best part was the holidays," Willow says. "Thanksgiving with everyone there. Christmas. Passover. Every time we had

a celebration, everyone came together."

"Real good for us kids," Ishvi says. "Then I think about how my kids grow up. It's not nearly as exciting a life. A nuclear family is a confining way to live. We weren't aware enough of the outside world, except for sports. We liked to watch football. After all, we were 10 guys."

When the kids got older, the no-television rule was broken for football. Willow's dad hooked up a four-inch black-and-white TV that ran off a car battery so they could follow games. The elders, says Ishvi, "could rig that if they wanted to, but meanwhile the houses were sliding off their foundations."

"They had a problem doing any kind of project," Willow says. "Some people did the work, and others just talked about it—what to build, how to build, where to build, what color to paint it."

"Entropy made itself felt," Ishvi says. "We had to have some guidelines," McNeil says, "for everyone who wanted to visit, as well as for everyone who stayed. Anyone who stayed had to agree to certain obligations: help with the work, agree to cooperate."

Any other rules? "You couldn't go outside of a fixed area," Willow says.

"A rule I liked," Ishvi says, "was if you were going to fight, fight outside."

"To protect the kerosene lamps," Willow adds.

"Willow had to wear shoes," McNeil says.

"No," Schneider says, "it was clothes."

"That was only a rule at school," says Willow.

"Willow still doesn't wear shoes," Schneider says.

"We did a thing called thought-up theater," Ishvi says. "Every year a couple of shows. The kids would write them. They were always political in nature."

"They did theater at political protests," Willow says.

They played war games and adventure games like Robin Hood. But the violence tended to be less physical and more verbal. "In general," Willow explains, "we were pretty peaceful."

"Even when we played with the red-neck kids," Ishvi says, "there were no real problems."

The kids on the Ranch were poor but didn't think of themselves as poor kids like some of the locals down the ridge. They were aware their parents had other options and had chosen this way of life. They were essentially isolated from the consumerism and cultural references—from pop songs to brand names—of the rest of their generation, but what truly separated them from other kids their age was their extended family, which created strong ties among them.

"My mother was the head schoolteacher," Ishvi says. "I grew tired of that by fifth grade." Like Sheppard, Ishvi decided he wanted a traditional

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education. He says, "I went to three colleges in four years"—Berklee School of Music in Boston (he plays alto sax), Emerson and Hampshire. At each place, he had trouble adjusting, especially to the administration, and he felt contempt for what he calls the trustafarians, rich kids in hippie clothing who didn't have to work for a living. He also lacked the common frame of reference for popular music, TV shows and suburban rituals.

"One kid asked me if I knew *The Brady Bunch*," Ishvi says. "No way." He left school a semester shy of graduation. He didn't get a diploma, but he did get a wife—he married another student he'd met at Hampshire.

Willow decided not to go to college. "He had too much sense to get into debt," Ishvi says.

Ishvi's construction company employs a number of Mexican workers, whom Ishvi feels responsible for in an old-fashioned, paternalistic way and tries to protect—as he protects himself—from what he calls the straight world's stress culture, "which always wants to sell you something." He explains, "I don't live communally now. I share some property with land partners. I live simply. I still live off the land. We still have an out-house. But we have separate houses."

Willow, who is 32, still lives on the Ranch, along with Schneider. Like Ishvi, Willow says, "I live as simply as possible." He has few needs: a small generator and counterculture principles.

"It's about people taking care of people," Willow says, "being kind to each other." He speaks softly, gently, almost to himself, as if he were expressing thoughts that come from very deep and far away—nothing surprising or new but true. There is magic about him.

Would he live communally now?

Willow smiles. "If someone wants to do it, good luck," he says. Like Sheppard and Ishvi, he "believes in community, not sharing."

Eventually life at the Ranch devolved into endless meetings and arguments.

"People's relationships became a big problem," Willow says. "This person with that person. That person with this person."

"Staying in a family relationship takes enormous energy," Ishvi says. "With a group of people, trying to stay together is like trying to keep hold of a smoke ring, especially when you live in the country and the infrastructure breaks down, like when the water tower fell over."

"Every six months people said, 'I'm getting out,' because people weren't living up to the agreement," McNeil says. "No one was doing the cooking, the cleaning, the chores. It always came down to who would dump the garbage."

"The Ranch became a negative-energy dump," Schneider says.

"Alan Watts's daughter was trying to form a commune," Schneider says. "Twenty people. Most of them college people. I was invited out there to talk about communes." He told them, "On a commune, you need people who know how to do things."

"And the problem is the ones who are not competent always take charge," Ishvi says.

It's an old problem for communes, even for the famous ones, those formed in the 19th century in Massachusetts by the Transcendentalists—Brook Farm and Fruitlands—where everyone wanted to sit around thinking great thoughts but no one wanted to work. It was even a problem for the apostle of the back-to-the-land movement, Henry David Thoreau, who couldn't drive a nail into a board without bending it.

But despite the odds against making a commune work, people are still drawn to the dream. "What makes people come together," McNeil says, "is a crisis. A commune has a better chance of surviving if it's built around a creed, a business concept or a belief." The Ranch was "built around personal growth," he explains, which became a problem. People outgrew the commune—or didn't grow. In

either case the sense of community and commitment weakened.

When did the commune end?

"Depends on who you ask," Willow says at last. "I'm still there."

"It was active for 22 years," McNeil says.

"It went on longer than that," Ishvi says.

"There was a sort of rebirth about 10 years ago," Schneider says. "Ishvi and Willow tried to reenergize it."

"I'm for indoor plumbing," Willow says, "but people who used to live there give you opposition to changing any of the old ways."

The older generation "is going out like the dinosaurs," Ishvi says. "What they did and what they had was a very short moment in history, but so is the way everyone lives now—consuming, a short moment in history. So maybe keeping the old ways—knowing how to live simply and off the land—is important."

One seemingly trivial fact becomes increasingly significant to me the more I think about it and the more I compare these guys with kids their age who didn't grow up in their circumstances: Not one of them owns an iPod.

"I'd like to see all the people who were involved come back and retire there," Ishvi says. "Have younger people join them. Do it again but with what we've all learned." Willow nods. "Living together," Willow says, "but separately."

The kids wouldn't live communally as their parents did but would build on what their parents had created. "Most of the kids who grew up on the Ranch," McNeil points out, "never changed their last name."

After dinner I suggest to Schneider that we visit the Ranch. "Oh, it's too late," he says.

"Maybe he didn't want you to see how it's all fallen apart," Willow's mother, Leslie Campbell, says.

Campbell was, at 19, one of the youngest of the first generation to join the commune. Most of the others were 10 years



older and, unlike her, had gone to college. "They had an intellectual basis for wanting to be there," she says. "I didn't have that at all. I wasn't a hippie. I was just experimenting."

She left Santa Clara, California, where she'd been raised, and in the late 1960s went to San Francisco for a few weeks. At a Berkeley love-in she found herself in a group hug and went home with a guy who invited her to move up to the Mendocino area, which she did on a whim.

"It was like summer camp," Campbell says. "We fooled around in the woods all day." She met Willow's father and fell in love. When he invited her to move to the Ranch, she didn't hesitate. "I did that on a lark, too," she says. "Figured I might as well try it out. You never know...."

She stayed for 12 years.

"I developed their ideas," she says, showing them that they could live better by cooperating than by themselves. "And I became a convert." Campbell repaired the cars and trucks and gardened, both of which she loved doing, neither of which she figures she would have done if she hadn't gone to the Ranch. She found communal living to be great for the mothers, especially the single ones. It was perfect day care—more than day care.

"We thought of the kids as children of the commune," she says. "I still consider them all my kids."

They all watch out and care for one another.

"A couple of years ago," Campbell says, "Willow took some bad drugs and had a psychotic break for a month, really bad. Scared the shit out of me. And all the boys—his brothers—stood up for him. He came out of it. Whether it's genetic or not, they have a real bond." A stronger bond than the adults had with one another.

"Most of the men had given over to the whole feminist thing," Campbell says. "Nice guys but not strong, masculine men." The boys, however, reacted to the matriarchy with cynicism. "Watching couples switching from one to another had a real effect on the boys," she says. "There was a lot of pain among the women. Women can be brutal to one another."

None of the boys grew up wanting to live with a group of women. "They're all happy in monogamous relationships," Campbell says. "The girls are not as close to one another or to the boys." Campbell raised Ishvi's sister. "Her mother had a big anger problem," Campbell says, "and the girl needed a safer place to be."

Three of the four girls raised at the Ranch "married and have traditional families," Campbell says, more traditional than the boys'. "They're not about to repeat the experiment. I don't blame them. It wasn't healthy. We preached one thing, but the reality was different."

The focus was on raising children, not on free love. But Campbell says one of the women "used to put out the red

light, and anybody was welcome. She made a point of manipulating people with her sexuality. She seduced the men and most of the women, too."

But money, not sex, became the biggest problem. "The shared money," Campbell says, "became a farce."

At first, when no one had any money except for what they could scrounge or get from government assistance, it was easier to share. But when people got jobs and began to inherit property, it became harder. People hung on to what they had, which created resentment among the others. "It was similar to what a husband and wife go through," Campbell says, "but multiplied by a factor of 12 or 15." The more demanding members got more, which was the real beginning of the end. "You go up there now," Campbell says, "and there isn't much left."

Photographs of the brothers when they were children reveal a paradise of homebuilt, light-filled shacks in a wild garden: everyone holding hands in a circle—inside around the dinner table, outside dancing around a picnic table—a child, maybe two or three years old at the most, milking a goat.

Now most of the buildings have fallen, reduced to piles of rotting wood. "Yeah," Campbell says, "maybe Walter didn't take you to the Ranch because it's too hard to see—through your eyes—what's happened to it."

I have one interview left to do—with Ronnie Newsome, my old high school friend who was the spiritual center of the commune I lived on. Funny, fast-talking, reckless and zany, Ronnie was our Neal Cassady, our Dean Moriarty. In April of our senior year I told him I was quitting school and hitching to San Francisco. He marshaled all the arguments against dropping out and convinced me not to. When I went to school the next day, I learned that after he had left my house, he'd packed a small bag and stuck out his thumb on Route 91 South, toward New York.

I went to Amherst College. Ronnie joined the Navy. I joined the school theater group. Ronnie freaked out, stripped off his uniform and threw it, with his military ID, off a ship into the water. After a stint in St. Albans Hospital, he was discharged from the Navy. He showed up at my dorm, sat in on classes and did so well as an unofficial student that some official students protested.

Without a high school diploma, Ronnie got a scholarship to Brandeis University. Freshman year, in Ronnie's first class, the professor, discussing *Walden*, berated the students, telling them that if they had truly understood Thoreau's book, they wouldn't be in class. Ronnie agreed, walked out of the classroom, quit school and headed back to western Massachusetts, where we eventually

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Playboy, date of production: August 2007. Custodian of Records is Ben Taylor. All records required by law to be maintained by publisher are located at 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

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started our own commune. When I quit to go to New York and make my way as a writer, Ronnie stayed on as the commune guru, eventually blasting out his brains on acid. He was last seen standing on a highway, his thumb out, a pad of poems he was working on in the back pocket of his jeans, a Camel pack rolled up in the sleeve of his white T-shirt. The driver of the truck that killed him said he never saw Ronnie on the road.

Back then and today Ronnie has always represented my road not taken.

"You haven't thought of me in years," Ronnie's ghost says as he sits beside me on the steps of the MacCallum House in the breezy, briny-smelling dark.

"Haven't had reason to," I say.

"So you conjured me up because you couldn't figure out how to end your story on communes," he says. "You always used to come to me to solve your problems."

"Which you liked," I say. "Everyone on the commune assumed you knew what to do."

"About what?"

"About everything. Drugs. Sex. The first time I had a psychedelic—"

"In Boston. When was it?"

"1966."

"With that bald guy, the Wizard—"

"The East Coast version of Owsley."

"You ever hear the rumor that Owsley was supplied by the CIA?"

"I wouldn't be surprised. Leary, Alpert, Lilly—most of the psychedelic royalty had some contact with the CIA. In his autobiography Leary admitted it."

The postwar baby boom was a great experiment in social mobility; all those boomers went to college and were being

educated to become doctors, lawyers and engineers. But the culture couldn't absorb all those professionals. In a decade or so there would be a large, disappointed, frustrated and angry middle class. All the modern revolutions were started by a large, disappointed, frustrated and angry middle class.

How to reduce the pressure on society from this potentially angry cohort?

"Turn on, tune in, drop out," Ronnie says.

"The middle class and rich kids could always buy back in."

"Like Patty Hearst," Ronnie says, nodding. "But blue-collar guys like me end up out in the cold. Out of luck."

"You're not out of luck, Ronnie," I say. "You're dead."

"Yeah. How about that? There were five of us smart working-class kids in high school. You're the only one left alive."

"Isn't that a little paranoid?"

"You're the one imagining the words I'm saying."

"So, bottom line...?"

Before I get an answer Schneider drives up and Ronnie's ghost is gone.

When I get into the car I ask Schneider if we can stop at the Ranch. "No time," he says. "You'll miss your plane."

•

"So," I had asked the night before, "was the commune a success?"

"Look at these young ones," McNeil had said.

He gestured down the table at Ishvi, Willow, Sheppard and Kent, then nodded.

"Yes."



KEITH OLBERMANN

(continued from page 54)

address and purchase history, including a \$15 money order made out to Katherine Harris's congressional campaign.

PLAYBOY: Harris, the Republican who delivered Florida's disputed electoral votes to Bush in the 2000 election.

OLBERMANN: This guy saw Harris, Michelle Malkin, Ann Coulter and Laura Ingraham as the hottest women in America. To please them, he tried to scare me. It wasn't political for him; it was sexual. He was like John Hinckley trying to impress Jodie Foster. He had no job, lived in his mother's basement.

PLAYBOY: Chad Castagna was arrested for sending fake-anthrax envelopes to you, David Letterman, Jon Stewart and others.

OLBERMANN: And he got the wrong Jon Stewart. That envelope went to a Manhattan lawyer named Jon Stewart, poor guy.

PLAYBOY: Two days after your trip to the hospital, you turned up in the *New York Post's* "Page Six" gossip column.

OLBERMANN: Somebody from the hospital or the NYPD tipped off the *Post*—

PLAYBOY: Murdoch's paper.

OLBERMANN: "Page Six" reported I insisted on being taken to the hospital, which is false. It reported that "preliminary tests came back negative" for anthrax, and the doctors sent me home: "It is not known if they gave him a lollipop."

PLAYBOY: "Page Six" had fun with your anthrax scare.

OLBERMANN: And reported it without calling me, without calling the FBI or MSNBC. The *Post*, in its zeal to mock me, took the side of this domestic terrorist. That's how it shows its true colors. The *New York Post* is in favor of terrorism, at least to the degree that it scares the *Post's* enemies and sells newspapers.

PLAYBOY: During your stint at Fox TV, you worked for Murdoch. Did you and he ever meet?

OLBERMANN: No, he was never around the office when I was. Rupert spends most of his time in hell, I believe, and gets out on a day pass.

PLAYBOY: Jump ahead to the year 2020. Will you still be doing *Countdown*?

OLBERMANN: Who could know? If you had told me this was how my career would spin out, two things would have surprised me: first, that I would be friendly with John Dean—

PLAYBOY: Who went from Nixon lawyer to frequent *Countdown* guest.

OLBERMANN: And second, the length of my résumé. So many jobs! In fact, most of the places I've worked didn't exist five or 10 years before I got there. You can't plan for that. One key to banishing whatever demons I had was to stop looking to the next job, the next improvement, and focus on the here and now.



"What an excellent party! Someone actually sucked on me."

PLAYMATE NEWS



A BANNER YEAR

Oregon State University students posted an unauthorized banner of PMOY Sara Jean Underwood.



she should be honored alongside the university's noted alumni. Seniors Carly Stoughton, Heather Lonsdale and Alex Polvi took it upon themselves to make a commemorative banner mock-up and hang it along Memorial Way outside Covell Hall. The three designed and constructed the banner as part of a broadly defined women's studies class assignment. "We recognize other achievements. Why not this?" Stoughton reasons.

At 7:30 A.M. on the day the project was due, the students mounted their creation atop a banner honoring Tim Leatherman, of Leatherman Pocket Tools fame. Some students were dismayed at the seemingly official addition to the walk and thought it was inappropriate. But others, like the PMOY herself, appreciated the gesture. "In my mind PLAYBOY is liberating for women, so I thought that was great," Sara says. After two hours, the administration had Facilities Services remove the poster and return it to Polvi to present in class. No charges were filed, Polvi got an A on the project, and the three graduating seniors received their diplomas the following week.

Distinguished students and alumni should be celebrated—it's good marketing. So when Oregon State University undergrad Sara Jean Underwood was named Playmate of the Year for 2007, three OSU students thought

20 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

Two passions found their way into **Brandi Brandt's** blood early on: PLAYBOY and rock and roll. When the future Miss October was still a young girl, her father predicted she was destined for the pages of PLAYBOY ("I guess father knows best," she said), while Mom used a bass drum as a cradle. Brandi landed an impressive three covers of the magazine and went on to wed rock royal Nikki Sixx of Motley Crue.



LOOSE LIPS

"Why do men find it difficult to make eye contact? Because breasts don't have eyes."

—**Kimberly Holland**



TENS DRESSED TO THE NINES



From far left: Tamara Witmer at the Bench Warner Gold Edition release party at the Cabana Club in Hollywood; Donna D'Errico at the Sammy Sideout Alzheimer's benefit at the Mansion; Tiffany Fallon at Smashbox Studios during L.A. Fashion Week; Irina Voronina at the Reno 911! Miami premiere; Colleen Shannon at the Leather and Laces party at Chakra in Miami Beach.



HOT SHOT



STEPHANIE GLASSON

MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

By Chris Nuñez

—of Miami Ink

"My favorite Playmate is Playmate of the Year 1996 Stacy Sanches. I didn't know who she was



until a client asked me to tattoo a picture of her on him. Over the years people have asked for tattoos of Playmates, but she's the one who really stands out."

POP QUESTIONS: JENNIFER WALCOTT

Q: We hear you've been working with the Ronald McDonald House Charities for children. What exactly do you do with the organization?

A: I help out in the office. I mostly answer phones and admit people. Sometimes I just listen to whoever needs an ear.

Q: What strikes you most about the work?

A: The people who stay with us have high spirits and are very optimistic.

Q: What got you interested in Ronald McDonald House?

A: I like working with animals and kids, and I had been looking for a char-

ity to get involved with when someone suggested it at a dinner I attended.

Q: Do you think it's important to pursue volunteer work?

A: The more I give the more I get. Many of us are so busy with the everyday aspects of life that we forget the meaning of it.

Q: Has becoming a Playmate made it possible for you to help others?

A: I've been able to make a name for myself, and

because of that I've been able to meet a lot of people. PLAYBOY has given me a great opportunity to network and make a difference.



HOT IN THE HAMPTONS



What did you do this summer? Miss April 2005 Courtney Culkin, Cyber Girl Jillian Beyor, Miss November 2001 Lindsey Vuolo, Miss July 2007 Tiffany Selby and Miss March 2006 Monica Leigh trekked out to the tony Hamptons on sandy Long Island. There they partied with July cover girl Amanda Beard at the dub Stereo by the Shore, an extension of the New York City nightclub. This just made the night hotter for everyone else.

PLAYMATE GOSSIP

Miss May 2006 Alison Waite and Miss August 2004 Pilar Lastra hosted supersexy stars including Gabrielle Union at the Discreet in the Suite event at the Hugh Hefner Sky Villa at the Palms. Oh, Gabrielle, call us.... The European unveiling of *The Playboy Legacy Collection* in Cannes had an amazing celebrity turnout that included Miss February 1990 Pamela Anderson, model May Andersen, Kid Rock and Playmate of the Year 1997 Victoria Silvstedt....

To Pam's sterling résumé add magician's assistant. She was featured in the smash Vegas show *Hans Klok's The Beauty of Magic* at the Planet



How suite it is: Alison and Pilar joined Union in the Sky Villa.

Hollywood Resort & Casino. The Centerfold traded her red *Baywatch* swimsuit for a sparkling one-piece in which she levitated and was sawed in two by the Dutch illusionist. Just leave her as you found her, okay, Hans?...

iPhone owners can now download iPlayboy, a package of Playmate wallpapers, photos, episodes of the *Playboy Hour* radio show and a Cyber Girl video....

Miss January 2004 Colleen Shannon was seen working the turntables at Pure in Las Vegas and Mansion in Miami. She recently signed a three-album deal with Thrive Records.... Look out for more Centerfolds from the Great White North. A bounty of Toronto-area Playmate hopefuls attended a casting in the city.



Ta-dal Pam guest-starred in Hans Klok's *The Beauty of Magic* on the Vegas Strip.

MORE PLAYMATES

See your favorite Playmate's pictorial in the Cyber Club at cyber.playboy.com or download her to your phone at playboymobile.com.

STUDENTS

(continued from page 60)

met many girls who'll tell you giving head is pleasurable for them.

KATE: Giving a blow job is a bit of a power trip for a lot of girls. But for a woman, receiving oral sex is too intimate and uncomfortable to enjoy with someone you're not really involved with.

CHRISTINE: Nothing's more intimate than anal sex. The pooper is a private place. I've been trying to peg my boyfriend for months.

KATE: Most of my peers have more oral sex, and much more casually, than they would ever have intercourse. It's a result of all the "education" we get that sex is bad and dangerous. So we don't do it; we do oral instead. It's not logical at all, but it's where we are.

GLORY: In Mississippi sex education is abstinence-only. Abstinence. Only. There is no discussion of condoms or STDs. The educators who are supposed to be teaching this are forbidden to discuss sex at all, even to give recommendations on where to get condoms.

NICOLE: Condoms are in fishbowls in bars everywhere in New Orleans, which is great, but you can't get them on the Loyola campus. There's a Rite Aid around the corner, of course. If you're a girl and go to the clinic with a cough or cold, the doctors will hound you: Are you pregnant? Are you sure? Are you sexually active? How many

partners have you had? It's like the freaking Inquisition.

ADVICE SQUAD

MARGO: For guys, my number one piece of advice is to use lube. I feel personally responsible for turning a lot of people on to this for vaginal sex. They're like, "Oh my God, it feels a lot better." I'm like, "Yeah, nobody likes a dry vagina. Tell all the girls you date from now on to thank me."

WES: My advice for a freshman girl would be to get on birth control, then have as much sex as possible.

JANET: I'd say to a freshman girl, "Don't be too nice." Don't be a bitch, but don't be too nice. At Carnegie Mellon there's a high incidence of Asperger's syndrome, a mild form of autism. Those who have it can function completely fine, but they don't understand social cues at all. They'll stand three inches from your face when they talk to you. I suffered through a lot of weird hugs and weird, awkward back rubs. People would walk up and just start rubbing my back. I would try to politely get out of it when I should have just turned around and said, "You're creeping me out. Get away!"

WES: I tell you, it's hard getting laid as a freshman guy. It's important for you to make a name for yourself early. If you fuck one girl, fuck her good because she's going to tell all her friends. Word of mouth is the best advertisement. Second thing is, don't piss them off. One mistake a lot of

freshman guys make is to date or have sex with one girl, then break up with her and piss her off. Then he'll never have sex with any of her friends.

THREE'S A CROWD

WES: I've had some girls' roommates get in the way a couple of times. But most of the time if a girl wants to have sex with you, it's going to happen.

CHRISTINE: I've definitely sexiled my roommate, but if you're dating someone, you tend to go over to the guy's place.

WES: Home-field advantage is a good thing to have. You control the setting. Do we watch TV in the living room or the bedroom? If you want to get her into bed, you could tell her the TV in the living room isn't working. With my roommates there's an unspoken agreement: If I bring a girl over, leave us alone.

CHRISTINE: When you're dating in college it's good to look out for someone who has a car and/or a single dorm room. A single is gold. It's not the first thing I look for in a guy, but if I find out he has a single, it's definitely bonus points.

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT YOU

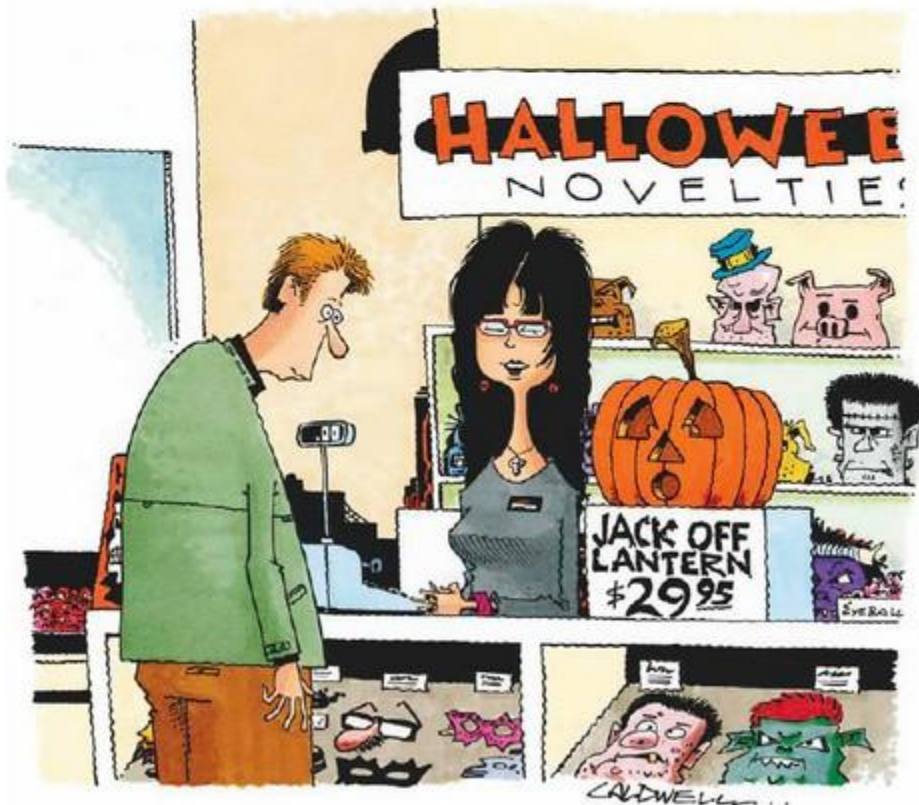
MARGO: I love men for so many reasons. The male body is the hottest thing on the planet. I've definitely freaked guys out by being like, "You have a fucking beautiful dick." They're like, "What?" and I'm like, "Your cock's gorgeous." A nice dick is a great turn-on. A lot of men aren't used to receiving compliments, and they're so wonderful when they do. They're taken aback, and they're like, Wow!

CHRISTINE: I like feeling support. Sometimes I like to play the submissive gender role, being the little spoon to the guy's big spoon. It's very comforting to be with someone different from you yet still find you fit together. I'm a bit of a princess, so I like being taken care of. A guy will put up with that a whole lot more than another girl will.

WES: I like everything about women—their bodies, that's number one. But they also have a certain naive mind-set I find attractive. Actually, sometimes that can be not such a good thing, too.

MARGO: Men are so passionate about the things they love. They can express passion in so many ways that women aren't allowed to in society, or maybe we just don't. Men get riled up about sports or politics or food. I think that's so sexy.

GLORY: I love men. The majority of my best friends have been men. I've always enjoyed the company of men. I love their sense of humor. I love reading sex columns in magazines like PLAYBOY. I care about penises. Penises can be your friends. Some of my best friends are penises, to paraphrase my mother and father.



"No. As a matter of fact, it's not a typo."



Tonight's Topless Story

Flash! There's a new newscaster on the scene, and her approval rating is already higher than Katie Couric's. Vancouverite **HOLLY EGLINTON** won the Raw Talent Search held by *Naked News*.



000 APT/ALAN/ALAN

Freed Paris

Mere weeks after getting out of jail, **PARIS HILTON** was back on the job. What job? Falling out of her clothes for the benefit of the American public, of course. The girl's a workaholic.



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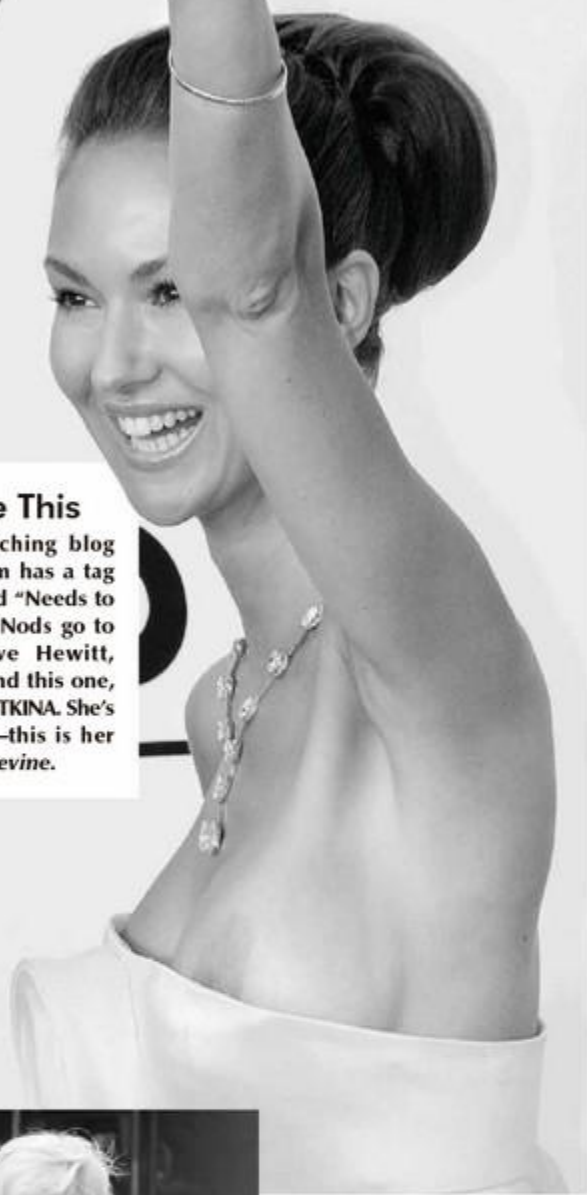
We're Here to Teach

Don't be so quick to call **RIHANNA** the most musically accomplished native Barbadian. Doug E. Fresh and Grandmaster Flash fans might object. Really.

Grapevine

Picture This

The girl-watching blog *Bastardly.com* has a tag we like called "Needs to do *PLAYBOY*." Nods go to Jennifer Love Hewitt, April Scott and this one, SVETLANA METKINA. She's on her way—this is her second *Grapevine*.



Mighty Aphrodite

How snooze-worthy would women's tennis be without Serena and VENUS WILLIAMS? (Answer: See men's game.) At the Wimbledon Champions Dinner, Venus put one just outside the line.



We'll Buy That for \$49.99

Vintner NATALIE OLIVEROS (whose nom de shag is SAVANNA SAMSON) hasn't overplayed the porn connection to promote her *Sogno Uno* wine. Until now.



Officer Dangle

Just which way does MAJA IVARSSON swing? Answer: Both of 'em. The enchanting lead singer for Swedish power-poppers the Sounds is on record saying she's bisexual. It may be a savvy career move. To paraphrase Woody Allen, it doubles your chances of getting a gig on a Saturday night.





LET US AX YOU SOMETHING

Rock music and **PLAYBOY** go together like, well, hot girls and guitars. Now we've teamed with Clayton to create a line of limited-edition electric guitars festooned with our signature visuals. Beyond looks, you'll find features fit for a rock god: mother-of-pearl inlays, Grover tuning keys, EMG-HZ pickups—the works. What's more, we're offering our first acoustic (not pictured) so you can take an invigorating run through the entire set of Nirvana's *MTV Unplugged in New York*. Priced from \$500; go to guitarcenter.com/playboy for details.

BRUSHING UP

The classic Ace comb has changed very little from the one your great-grandfather shared with his 14 siblings. But since you whipper-snappers are never satisfied, Ace now offers a full line of men's practical grooming gear, adding things like a copper-bristle brush for dandruff, facial-hair scissors, a nose- and ear-hair trimmer and a diabolical-looking nailbrush. Prices run from about \$4 for a basic comb to about \$32 for a Power Grooming Set. All are available at aceformen.com.



NATURAL ANTIDOTE

We have trouble seeing the greatness in the great outdoors if going there means missing a Jets game. If you're one of the higher beings who have evolved past feeling ashamed of their out-of-control TV habit, DirecTV would like a word. Pictured here in all its glory is the company's Sat-Go device (\$1,500, directv.com), a 27-pound briefcase containing a satellite dish, receiver and 17-inch screen. It runs off an internal battery for up to one hour, or you can plug it into your car for unlimited goggleboxing. Not only is it the ultimate tailgating accessory, you'll be amazed at how effectively 250 channels can distract you from the wonders of nature.

JUST ENOUGH

Most of our computer needs—e-mail, web browsing, image tweaking, word processing—don't require much power. Which is why we dig Zonbu (zonbu.com). This tiny PC comes without keyboard, monitor and mouse and costs \$100 plus \$13 to \$20 a month for two years. (The monthly fee is for support and online storage.) It runs Linux (which works just like Windows) and is loaded with most of what you use for everyday computing.



THE DROID YOU'RE LOOKING FOR

The Jedi may jump around with their flashy lightsabers, but everyone knows the true hero of *Star Wars* is the little astromech that could, R2-D2. This two-thirds-scale R2 (\$2,800, nikkor2d2.com) is nearly as useful as the original, with a built-in DVD player, photo-card readers, iPod dock and speakers, plus a video projector in his "eye." We say throw in *Episode IV*, mix up some blue milk and improvise your own cantina scene. Just remember, no blasters.



PICTURE PERFECT

Analog film isn't dead; it's just taking a disco nap. Lomographic's inexpensive single-purpose cameras put the whimsy back into capturing your life. We like the Fisheye No. 2 (right, \$70, lomography.com), which compresses nearly 180 degrees of visuals into a demented circle. Deeper-pocketed filmheads will love this Leica homage, the Yashara T981 range finder (left, \$700), complete with gold accents.

SUEDE-SHOE BLUES

We have a simple system for predicting the weather: If the sky is clear when we leave the house, we don't pack an umbrella. Turns out our system doesn't work. Develop your meteorological ESP with an Ambient Umbrella (\$125, ambientdevices.com), the smartest rain stopper we've seen. Not just a good gust-busting broly, it also receives wireless AccuWeather.com data, and its handle lights up when the forecast calls for precip. Keep one by the door and never ruin a nice pair of Ferragamo loafers again.



MILE-HIGH CLUB

There was a time when traveling by air meant getting dressed up. It meant your best double-knit poly-blend sky-blue slacks and a swell striped tie, wide as you please. Pan Am hasn't been running planes for 16 years, but its logo and baggage are timeless jet-age icons. Now Machine Project Inc. has revitalized them with 12 cabin bags (from \$52, panamone.com) that pay homage to a more civilized time. Because there's no better martini than the one you have at 20,000 feet.



SPIRITUAL HEALING

Before Prohibition, New York was known for its rye. After it ended, the distillers never returned. Until now. Tuthilltown Spirits (tuthilltown.com) in Gardiner, New York began making booze two years ago, including Government Warning Rye (\$40), whose spicy, peppery flavor says what an official name can't. Next to it you'll find its brother, Hudson Baby Bourbon (\$40), made from 100 percent New York corn and sporting fruit notes that aren't overly sweet.



Next Month



WE'RE HAPPY TO SERVE YOU.



HEY, RED.



THE ICEMAN'S WARMER SIDES



THE OTHER LINDSAY WAGNER, CLEARLY NOT BIONIC.

BUNNIES AT THE PALMS—THE PLAYBOY CLUB AT THE PALMS IS ENJOYING THE GLAMOROUS CACHET OF THE FABLED CLUBS OF AN EARLIER ERA. THAT'S DUE IN NO SMALL MEASURE TO THESE DELECTABLE BUNNIES, WHO DON EARS, BOW TIES AND LITTLE ELSE IN A PERFECTLY HOSPITABLE PICTORIAL.

CHILLING WITH THE ICEMAN—IN THE OCTAGON **CHUCK LIDDELL** IS ONE OF THE TOUGHEST AND MOST INTIMIDATING MIXED MARTIAL ARTISTS FIGHTING TODAY. YET WHEN **LUCIUS SHEPARD** VISITS LIDDELL'S CALIFORNIA STOMPING GROUNDS, HE FINDS A CONGENIAL DUDE STRUGGLING WITH A FLOATIE TOY.

ROBERT REDFORD—THE MAN WHO MADE UTAH A FILM CAPITAL REMAINS AMONG HOLLYWOOD'S MOST POWERFUL PLAYERS. ON THE EVE OF THE DEBUT OF *LIONS FOR LAMBS*, REDFORD'S LATEST DIRECTORIAL EFFORT, **DAVID HOCHMAN** LANDS A *PLAYBOY* INTERVIEW WITH AN ORIGINAL INDEPENDENT.

MATT LEINART—WITH A TOUGH ROOKIE SEASON BEHIND HIM, THE HEISMAN-WINNING QUARTERBACK IS HEALTHY AND EAGER TO PLAY. THE HARD PART, THOUGH, SEEMS TO BE NAVIGATING HIS NEWFOUND CELEBRITY. *20Q* BY **JASON BUHRMESTER**

FRED THOMPSON—THE LAWYER, LOBBYIST, ACTOR, SENATOR AND LIKELY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE SITS DOWN WITH POLITI-

CAL ANALYST **JEFF GREENFIELD** TO DISCUSS WHAT AMERICANS WANT IN A CANDIDATE AND WHY THEY'RE NOT GETTING IT.

THIS IS YOUR BRAIN ON...SEX—IN HIS THIRD REPORT ON THE SCIENCE OF MALE SEXUALITY, *PLAYBOY*'S **CHIP ROWE** SHOWS HOW SEX AND LOVE ARE ADDICTIVE DRUGS THAT CAUSE THE BRAIN TO SHORT-CIRCUIT. HOW SWEET.

THE GUNDERSON PROPHECY—PROMPTED BY VISITS FROM AN INTERGALACTIC GNOME, A RECENTLY DIVORCED GURU HUSTLES A MAKE-OR-BREAK TV DEAL TO SAVE THE WORLD, WHILE BEDDING EVERY ACOLYTE IN SIGHT. FICTION BY **SAM LIPSYTE**

GENIUSES AT PLAY—JUST AS THE NEW SEASON OF VIDEO GAMES IS ABOUT TO HIT, *PLAYBOY*'S **SCOTT ALEXANDER** TALKS TO THE BRAINS BEHIND THE GAMES ABOUT WHAT'S NEXT IN INTERACTIVE STORYTELLING AND DIGITAL DERRING-DO.

THE FALL OF PAUL WOLFOWITZ—*PLAYBOY* TAPS POLITICAL JOURNALIST **JAMES ROSEN** TO DELIVER THE STORY OF THE HIGH-LEVEL GAME OF PAYBACK THAT CAUSED THE POWERFUL WORLD BANK PRESIDENT'S DOWNFALL.

PLUS: BARRY BONDS'S FORMER PARAMOUR **KIMBERLY BELL**, MISS NOVEMBER **LINDSAY WAGNER** AND INTRODUCING OUR GLOBALLY MINDED INTERNATIONAL BEAUTY SPREAD. OOH LA LA.