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BEAST



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THE BAD TIME MACHINE

***Pelosi to Stop
Armenian
Genocide!***

***Native Americans,
Africans, Kurds
"Still Fair Game"***

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Separated at birth?



Iranian-hating
Pentagon hag
Debra Cagan...



...and Dick Tracy
Villain Big
Boy Caprice?



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Your Friendly Neighborhood
Wiretap Man

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S NOT FREEDOM!

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NO PROBLEM!"

UNCLE SAM'S
SNOOPERS

FREE!
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of SURVEILLANCE

JUST SURRENDER THIS COUPON ALONG
WITH YOUR 4th AMENDMENT RIGHTS

THAT DREAMBOAT
CAN INFRINGE
ON MY PRIVACY
ANY DAY!

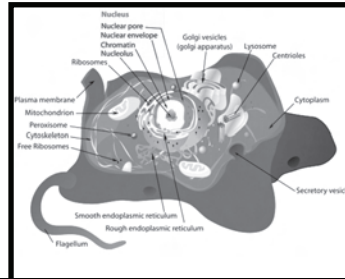


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BEAST-O-SCOPES

GHOSTBUSTERS

Dems cross streams in Turkey

By Allan Uthman

You've really got to hand it to the Democrats. With Republicans registering somewhere between Carrot Top and the Ebola virus on the popularity scale, the Democrats are still finding new, more confusing ways to appear clueless and irresponsible on the world stage.

In a move that has caused Turkey to pull its ambassador out of the US and threaten a severe curtailment in cooperation with the US war effort, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs approved a bill condemning a terrible act of genocide—the killing of a million Armenians—which occurred 92 years ago. Of course, it *was* genocide, and it's asinine that Turkey continues to deny it to this day. But now, with the Turks acting as a base of operations for the Iraq war, it's pretty damn stupid to be pissing them off. Still, it's not the strategic advantage our alliance with Turkey affords our current idiot war that I'm most concerned about. It's the fact that Turkey, which has been consistently threatening to invade Kurdish Northern Iraq, will be much more likely to disregard our protestations if the bill gets congressional approval.

It's well-known that Turkey is dead set against Iraqi Kurds acquiring an independent state of their own, for the two main reasons that it gives the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), a rebel movement that both the US and Turkey classify as a terrorist group, a safe haven, but also because it may encourage similar hopes of an independent state for Turkish Kurds, who are the victims of a fairly deranged program of intense cultural suppression. It was illegal in the '80s to even speak Kurdish in Turkey, and in 1994, the first Kurdish woman elected to Parliament in Turkey was sentenced to 15 years in jail for speaking Kurdish at her

inauguration. Similarly, Turkey has jailed its own journalists for referring to the Armenian genocide. It is the same intense Turkish cultural fascism that makes the genocide resolution such a touchy subject and creates this kind of suppression of Kurdish identity.

The Turks are already firing on PKK encampments across the border in Iraq, but it's probable that they might launch a more aggressive invasion, as Iraqi Kurds take further steps toward independence—making their own oil deals without central government approval, for instance—and the US congress considers a soft partition strategy to redistribute political power. The chances that American forces would move to defend Iraqi Kurdistan from Turkish attacks are slim to none. The situation is likely to explode at any moment.

A lot of people are scratching their heads about this. Why are the Democrats pushing this thing, and why now? Sadly, the answer appears to be not high-minded idealism, but mundane district politics. Both Pelosi and Adam Schiff, another House proponent of the genocide resolution, have thousands of Armenian constituents.

There's another interestingly appalling facet to this story, one no mainstream news outlet has touched, and that's the real reason why repugnant oaf and former House Speaker Dennis Hastert withdrew the same resolution in 2000.

Hastert, whose district also is flush with Armenians, pushed the resolution through the International Relations Committee and scheduled it for a full House vote, but then quietly pulled it at the last minute. This switcheroo has been explained as a strangely bipartisan acquiescence to the wishes of president Clinton, who opposed the resolution, but there's another angle

to the story.

Sibel Edmonds is one of a string of federal whistleblowers to be fired during the Bush regime, as reported in *Vanity Fair* in 2005. A naturalized American of Turkish descent, Edmonds became a translator for the FBI after 9/11. Edmonds became suspicious of a fellow Turkish translator, Melek Can Dickerson, who had marked as “not pertinent” calls that were decidedly pertinent—including details of a \$7,000 cash handout to a State Department staffer, a payment to a Pentagon official, information, drug money-laundering, and sales of classified military technology.

Edmonds was eventually fired for her efforts. Her attempts at legal recourse were stymied by then Attorney General John Ashcroft, who claimed the very subject of Edmonds' lawsuit violated the state secrets privilege without explanation.

But why did Edmonds attract attention from Ashcroft? Around the same time in 2001 that Edmonds' coworker aroused her suspicion, a Chicago agent asked her to listen to some old wiretaps, dating back to '97, from the ATC, Chicago's Turkish consulate, and another Turkish organization, the ATAA. Some calls seemed to be about large scale drug smuggling and other criminal activity. But, according to David Rose in *Vanity Fair*:

“One name, however, apparently stood out... Republican congressman from Illinois and Speaker of the House, Dennis Hastert. According to some of the wiretaps, the F.B.I.'s targets had arranged for tens of thousands of dollars to be paid to Hastert's campaign funds in small checks.”

There was no hard proof, but Hastert's unitemized donations of under \$200 from '96 to 2002 were \$483,000,

nearly five times those of Tom Delay, for instance. Coincidentally, “a senior official at the Turkish Consulate is said to have claimed in one recording that the price for Hastert to withdraw the resolution would have been at least \$500,000.” Edmonds also said in court that the calls “contained repeated references” to Hastert’s mysterious reversal on the genocide resolution in 2000.


Hastert has said that he will retire from congress, possibly before the end of his term, making him one of many GOP House members who won’t run again.

The Republican exodus has been reported as a result of the Party’s diminishing stature, but remember, incumbents are reelected in America at a rate of 99%. Another possible motive for these exits may be that they are the results of a deal with the Democrats—don’t investigate us and we’ll go quietly. With Denny and the Republican majority out of the way, the resolution breathes anew.

But Hastert’s status as a bribe-taking scumbag aside, it’s Pelosi whose inadequacies are at the fore today. If this is truly just a move to help secure her own

reelection in a race where she’ll be facing antiwar icon Cindy Sheehan in the leftest city in the country, then Pelosi is not only stupid; she’s dangerously stupid, and her statements on the matter prove it. “This isn’t about the present Turkey, this is about the Ottoman Empire,” she said recently, further reinforcing the irrelevant nature of the bill. Yeah, stick it to that long-dead empire! And even worse: “While that may have been a long time ago, genocide is taking place now in Darfur, it did within recent memory in Rwanda, so as long as there is genocide there is need to speak out against it.”

But that’s exactly the problem here. “As long as there is genocide,” she says, but what she means is, we must speak out against genocide...once there’s not a damn thing anyone can do about it. The only reason the Democrats are pushing this bill is that it is a hollow, meaningless gesture, a false display of righteousness, the very easiest thing they can do to act as though they give a damn about the unjust killing of hordes of the oppressed. I mean, look around: The horrendous persecution and murder in Sudan has been well-known and relatively well-publicized for years now, and we’re doing nothing. And our government shies away from officially labeling it genocide, because then they might have to do... something. And, as regards historical crimes, I don’t see any congressmen drafting bills to condemn the truly epic American atrocities of slavery and the extermination of Native Americans, which can’t honestly be called anything *other* than genocide. But a bill like that might actually mean something, might require actual courage.

Call it genocide, or ethnic cleansing, or massacre, or “mass killing;” I really don’t care. The fact is that *it is happening now*—right now, in more places than most people know, and it’s on the verge of happening in many others, including Kurdistan. If we’re not going to do anything about it today, it’s completely pointless and nauseously hypocritical to risk triggering another genocidal episode involving people who are still alive, just to make a show of condemning century-old atrocities. The message is clear: the time to care about such unimaginable horrors is not when they are ongoing, but long after condemning them would require any sort of action on our part. 

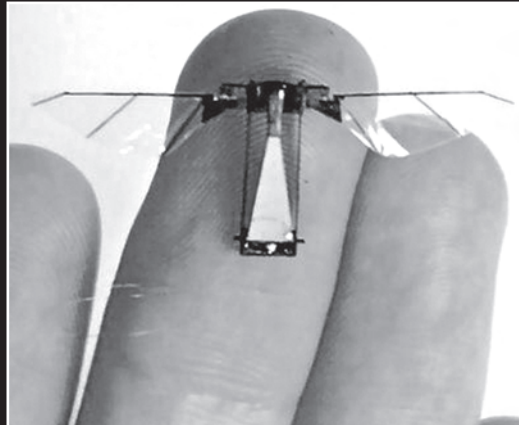
THE BEAST PAGE 5

Freaky Sci-Fi Reality

Name: Robotic insect spy

Turn-ons: Arthropods, winged flight, the war on terror, warrantless surveillance, Asimov’s laws of robotics, freaking out peace activists and the iPod Mini.

Turn-offs: The conspicuously large vintage microphones Glenn Beck hides behind on TV, fly swatters, DDT, analog, and pre-9/11 thinking.



How I got to be The BEAST Page 5 Freaky Sci-Fi Reality: Nobody’s sure really. No government agency has owned up to my existence, but I’ve been spotted recently haunting the skies above peace protests in DC and New York. The CIA started with dragonfly prototypes in the ‘70s, and since then, I can neither confirm, nor deny the freaky-ass evolution of robotic insect surveillance.

Future plans: Well, the sky’s the limit for me, so to speak. I plan on a long career of automated snooping for the Department of Homeland Security, both at home and abroad. After that I’ll probably retire to Boca, maybe do some consulting with the New England Patriots.

How I’d like to be remembered: As the proud ancestor of a distant race of Christian cyborgs which enslave humanity, and increase the global standard of living. That, and as one of freakiest things you’ve ever seen.



Year of The Rat:

A Campaign 2008 Diary

Covering the Uncoverable; Council Bluffs Likes Fred Thompson

By Matt Taibbi

ACCORDING TO CONVENTIONAL wisdom the 2008 presidential race is already widely considered to be a “very interesting” contest. The ostensible reason for that is that the actual winner, not only of the general election but of the respective nomination processes, will not be known long before 250 million people have two long years of their lives wasted through a relentless barrage of meaningless, masturbatory, spirit-sucking campaign muck. The press corps will therefore be relieved this time around to have something like real suspense attached to the dreary assignment of finding meaning/drama in all of this vacuous bullshit; instead of having to invent controversies and scandals out of thin air, people like me will have real ones (real at least in the context of the campaign) that they can sit back and confidently misreport as they come.

Looking at the field now, it appears that in the end the horse race will come down to three viable candidates on each side – Giuliani, Thompson and Romney on the Republican docket and Hillary, Obama and the tireless John Edwards among the Democrats. Perhaps also squeezing their way into the viewfinder before this is over will be a smattering of minor figures not yet mathematically eliminated, in particular the Christian bassist Mike Huckabee lurking behind the Republican field and,

who knows, maybe Bill Richardson on the other side.

Sticking around for comic relief, at least for a little while, will be stunned-by-misfortune Arizona Senator John McCain, whose job it will be to be whaled upon mercilessly by a press corps that is always courageous and exacting when dealing with a candidate who has no chance at victory. There are similar figures on the Democratic side who could play the same role – Joe Biden comes to mind – but because the press this time around will be anxious to punish the Republicans for a disastrous Iraq war these same reporters mostly all thought was such a good idea not long ago, Democrats like Biden (who incidentally also heartily supported this war) will likely be exempted from the bulk of the gratuitous pol-bashing this time around.

Last but not least, there are parallel irritant figures on both sides in Ron Paul and Dennis Kucinich, whose jobs it will be to be roundly pilloried for wasting valuable air time (especially in debates) via their embarrassingly dead-on, pain-in-the-ass candidacies. Since neither candidate is a worn-out whore and neither candidate has cast a single vote for any of the numerous completely avoidable political catastrophes that befell the country in the last four-plus years, both will be described as “fringe” and “unserious” figures who should rightfully be assigned to the “second tier” of presidential hopefuls. Meanwhile,

the press will line up to laud as exciting breaths of political fresh air a one-note B-list character actor, a southern governor who believes the earth is 6000 years old, and a hack plagiarist from Delaware with a head full of hair plugs who offers a “statesmanlike presence” and “raises the level of discourse” as he campaigns shamelessly for the Secretary of State job.

There is a dark irony waiting to announce itself as a factor in this campaign – a trap that our press corps was almost certain to fall into from the moment the Bush presidency exploded in a nightmare of incompetence and horrifying corruption. Having observed all the awful missteps of the last seven years, missteps that came as a result of having indulged and enabled a preposterous figure like George W. Bush, the national press ought naturally to have learned a whole host of painful lessons.

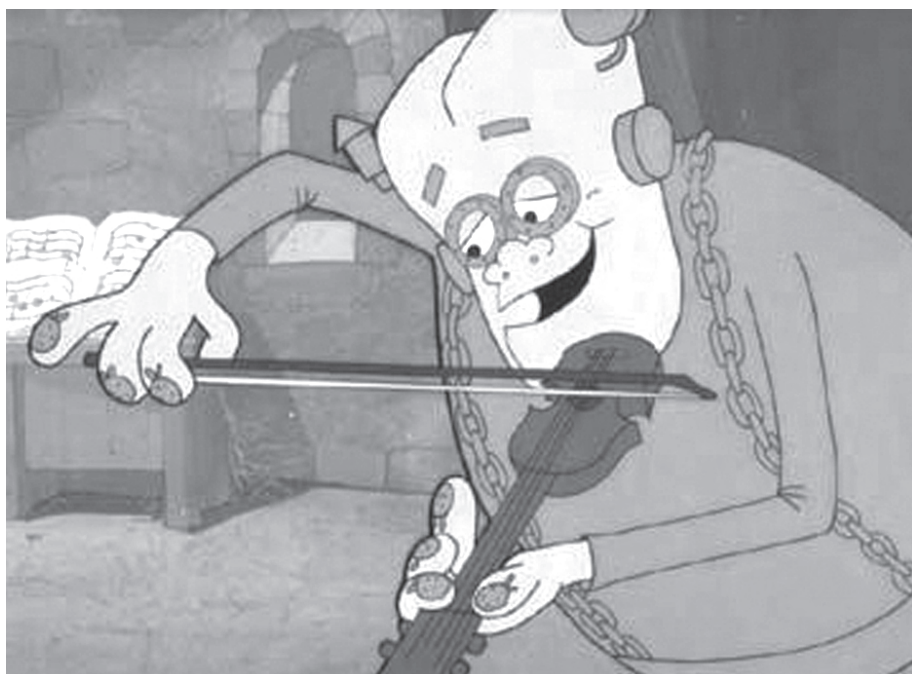
Questioning the logic of viciously attacking too-intellectual fringe candidates while simultaneously lionizing a baldly incurious flag-waving moron like Bush is only the most obvious; there is also the matter of mistaking meanness for substance, and falling under the spell of candidate access, and routinely blaming a dearth of issue politics on voter preference when in fact it's the news organizations themselves that more love (and, more to the point, need) the mudslinging and the horse race.

The press should have looked at the rise of

blogs and the angry momentum of blog-powered insurgent candidacies like that of Paul and Ned Lamont and recognized that the mainstream political press has become, in some circles, as much of a villain as the establishment candidates themselves. It should have seen this and made changes, if only out of pure self-interest, in an effort to retain both its political power and its market share. But it didn't. Instead, the big press seems to have mainly concluded that voter discontent toward the media is based upon its having been too friendly to George Bush in particular.

There is a vibe that can already be detected in campaign coverage that suggests that the media thinks that if it disavows Bush and in particular Bush's war, all will be forgiven. We journalists seem to be in a state of half-apology for having overstepped our traditional role as ideologically promiscuous ass-kissers and briefly gone over, after 9/11, into a dark side of frank and open cheerleading for Extreme Measures and Total War. We're apologizing for that, but only that; the attitude is not much different from a high schooler from the OC who thinks that if he just promises to never again get into Daddy's Porsche at 3 in the morning, it's still okay if he goes to keggers on school nights.

That's why you might notice, in campaign coverage, something that feels a little bit like nostalgia for the Clinton years, when the national political press behaved not like fascist henchmen but merely like a group of starfucking, hyperadolescent groupies.



Thompson, seen here rousing an Iowa crowd with some old-timey fiddle

According to the curious moral calculus of this professional community, the best way to make up for being willing political accomplices to George Bush is to return to the cheerfully slavish celebrity journalism of the Clinton years. Here's the lede to an account of a recent Bill Clinton campaign appearance for Hillary by Stephen Collison of the AFP:

DES MOINES, Iowa, Sept 3, 2007 (AFP) - Bill Clinton had a weekend campaign

party like it was 1992, wading through crowds and backslapping his way around the US electoral heartland, boosting wife Hillary's 2008 presidential race ...

"I love not running for anything, I can say everything I want and nobody cares any more," Clinton said, with a hint of false modesty, to union workers in Iowa for whom he remains a hero...

In his element, dusting off his legendary campaign skills, Clinton marveled at a 1,000 pound pumpkin which won a contest at a country fair in New Hampshire, treating reporters to a lecture about how it got its "steroid" style girth...

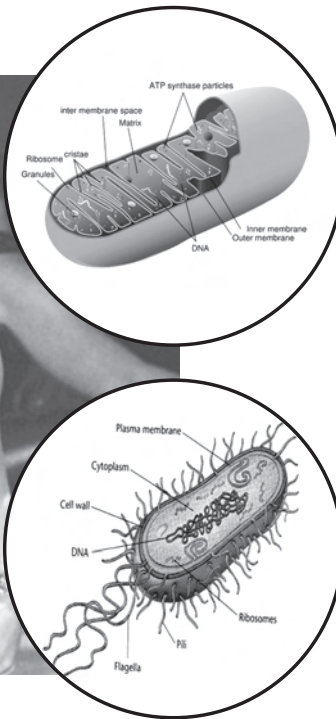
That is the kind of political journalism you see on the trail now, among reporters trying to repent for the Bush years; grown men and women cooing over a mutant pumpkin with Bill Clinton, whose attention is a "treat." As for Clinton being a hero to union workers, why wouldn't he be? After NAFTA and all.

WHEN I FOUND out that I was going to be sent out on the campaign trail for another election season, I found myself struggling once again with the question of how to cover in a substantive way a story that is essentially uncoverable on its own terms. In my last book, *Spanking the Donkey*, I spent nearly 300 miserable pages groping around for an angle from within the self-contained, stage-managed pseudo-reality of the campaign trail, settling eventually



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**BEAST
Celebrity
Shocker!**



Spears' Mitochondria Descended from Bacteria

Hollywood, CA—Sources close to Britney Spears' inner circle have confirmed reports that some components of the fallen diva's cellular structure may have once lived freely as bacteria. Mitochondria, known as the "powerhouse of the cell," provides Spears' cells with much needed oxygen. According to *OK!* Magazine, the relationship between Spear's mitochondrial organelles and her eukaryotic animal cells is thought to have evolved approximately 1.6 - 2.1 billion years ago through symbiosis.

It is estimated by scientists that Spears has upwards of a trillion individual cells, each containing the bacteria-descended mitochondria. "That's, like, gross," says long-time fan Jennifer Wilkes. "After all she's gone through lately with the VMA melt-down and the loss of her children that I felt sorry for her, but now, I don't know if I can ever look at her the same way again, knowing that she's genetically related to early bacterial life forms."

Senator Sam Brownback has echoed this popular concern and plans to move for Spears' impeachment. "We will not tolerate celebrities who

harbor bacteria!—especially fatties!" Brownback spoke passionately to a group of delighted supporters on Friday.

Hearings are scheduled for early November.



Dan Jumbo a Threat to Local Wildlife

Buffalo, NY—Celebrity carpenter of the TLC home makeover series "While You Were Out" Andrew Dan Jumbo has struck again. In June—some may remember—the Buffalo resident was detained at an American Red Cross charity event for belligerent disruption. The charges were dropped. Now, The BEAST has learned that Dan Jumbo is engaged in something far more sinister.

"I've seen him in Delaware Park," says an unnamed source, "force-feeding cocaine to squirrels." Dan Jumbo reportedly lures the squirrels with cashews into a finely crafted oak trap with Celtic patterned inlay. Once captured, Dan Jumbo pries open their mouths and spits a mixture of milk and cocaine down their gullets, which he has lovingly prepared in his own mouth. "Then he shouts," adds the eyewitness, "Me Dan Jumbo! Lord of all squirrel-kind!"

Frenetic and disoriented, the squirrels then bolt up the closest tree. Many succumb to heart failure just a few feet up the trunk. "It's really demented," says our source. Dan Jumbo then collects the small corpses in a burlap sac, and uses them to make a "magic stew" that is said to enhance his "carpentry skills."

*Dan Jumbo, below, has
outraged many squirrels, left*



for the not-exactly-brilliant insight that the campaign is basically a rolling bourgeois television entertainment that has as one of its chief purposes the projection of a weirdly fictional vision of American political reality – clean, healthy, positively engaged, and so bereft of real problems that it can afford to choose leaders on the strength of such questions as who looks better in a duck-hunting costume, or who can more charmingly engage an MSNBC morning anchor in a discussion about “traditional values” while squeezing a cow’s teat in Wisconsin via a 5 a.m. satellite feed.

The more than half of the country that does not vote is scrupulously excluded from the picture, as are scenes of real, depressing poverty (as opposed to stylized, photo-ready poverty, the poverty implied by Howard Dean’s fake graffiti backgrounds or the dreary working-class “rags” section of John Edwards’s rags-to-riches “typically American” inspirational stump story), political alienation (your man on the street is either a liberal or a conservative; those who don’t fit the red/blue requirement, who are too disgusted to endorse either party, are not seen), social disenfranchisement (as experienced, say, by ex-cons, illegals and prisoners), or just the general fucked-up-ness of our weirdly paranoid, atomized, media-obsessed consumer culture. Our whole reality is instead defined by a narrow series of binary political issues: abortion, gay marriage, the war, health care, immigration, on which an endless series of credulous and interested “men on

the street” cast their vote in one direction or another.

The campaign therefore becomes mainly a story about the interplay, or non-interplay as it were, between two worlds: the absurd fake world inside the campaign bubble, in which 250 million adults are depicted as gravely caring about such concepts as “likeability,” and the much weirder real world outside the bubble where the rest of us actually live. This schizophrenic national self-image has become an even bigger issue in the years since the last campaign, especially since the country is now engaged in an overseas war where the schism is physically visible; in Iraq we actually built a vast archipelago of walled-off Americana in which one media-ready reality is visible inside the base walls while another, far less palatable reality rages out of control outside the gates of those bases.

Going into 2008, the American electorate is now divided along a clear fault line. One side, the side that believes the Iraq war is a cruel and unwinnable mess, recognizes the outside-the-walls reality as the truth. The other side, meanwhile, chooses instead to recognize the artificial inside-the-base reality as gospel; it listens to the pronouncements of the likes of General Petraeus and to the tales of returning wounded who want only to go back to the front because “they know we’re making progress.”

The campaign, to me, is sort of the same thing. There’s the on-TV world that rolls into towns for a mechanized stump speech, plunges into a roped-off hand-picked audience zone for a half-hour,

and then races away with tales of having visited “Des Moines” or “Council Bluffs” or “Nashua.” On the other hand, there are actually those places: Des Moines, Council Bluffs, Nashua. My idea going into the campaign was to do a running diary from both worlds, checking in regularly with fixed sets of characters from both settings – the candidates on one side, and some campaign-excluded ordinary human beings on the other. I wasn’t sure what that would accomplish, but it would be a hell of a lot more interesting than sitting on that goddamn bus and listening to those same goddamn speeches for 400 days or whatever.

WHEN THE BUS got into Sioux City that night I immediately turned around drove back to Council Bluffs in a rental car, where I found Dot and Jamie sitting at Mohm’s, a private soup kitchen located on Creektop road and near a highway underpass, where the city’s 150-odd strong community of homeless visits once a day for a free meal. Jamie, who smokes little mini-cigars when he can get them, was sitting on a curb on the side of the building and seemed stoked to tell me something when I got there.

“Hey,” he said. “Remember that kid Blakeman you were talking to?”

“Yeah,” I said.

“I got back to Mohm’s after the event and I saw his face on a missing juvenile poster. We just got done calling his parents. Guess that’s all settled. Weird, huh?”

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Pastor John Hagee Launched on Iranian Nuclear Facility

PERSIAN GULF—Texan evangelical preacher John Hagee was fired from a custom-made missile battery on the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz early Tuesday morning, according to French and Russian intelligence agencies. The bloated Christian Zionist leader and author of *Jerusalem Countdown* was aimed at the Natanz Uranium Enrichment Facility, two hundred miles south of Tehran. The preemptive strike is thought to be part of a joint venture by US and Israeli forces to “decapitate” Iranian nuclear capabilities and hasten the coming apocalypse, weather permitting.


Neither the US nor Israel have confirmed the attack, but French sources claim Hagee was fitted with a high-tech satellite positioning unit to ensure accuracy. The Iranian nuclear plant is located nearly a hundred feet underground in a concrete bunker, estimated to be at least ten feet thick. Hagee was chosen for the mission over conventional weaponry for the ability of his greasy hair and ultra-dense skull to penetrate and destroy the underground facility.

Iran has yet to comment on or retaliate to the reported strike. According to biblical scholar Glenn Beck, who refers to Hagee as “the Lord’s bunker buster,” the spirit of Hagee is “prophesied to be reincarnated




Photo provided by the Associated Press

in the body of a mouse, gerbil, shrew or similar vermin, at which point he’ll board an oil tanker and return to his Houston area ministry to await the end times,”

which Beck insists will come “any minute now,” adding that he looked forward to the rapture, because he is “absolutely not gay at all.” 

L O R É A L PARIS



Stupid is Sexy

Colour Riche

Now with Lead





It's all about the beans.



Coffee so fresh, we post the roasting date right in our cafe!

Delaware at Chippewa | Elmwood at Cleveland
and in the lobby of Sheridan Meadows North at Sheridan and Transit
200 East Avenue @ Matthews in Rochester

I agreed, it was weird. He and Dot then asked me what the hell I was doing back in Council Bluffs. I explained that it was either this or listen to the same candidate's speech five or six more times.

"Who is that guy, anyway?" asked Dot. "The one running for president I mean."

I explained that he was an actor who played on a TV show called Law and Order. The two both frowned at that, not impressed with the show's title.

"Does he know what it's like to live on the street?" Dot asked. "What it's like to eat just once a day?"

"I doubt it," I said, adding nonsensically: "He was in a movie with Alec Baldwin once."

"I been on the street three and a half years," she said, not listening to me. Then she went into her story. This crew of homeless people in Council Bluffs doesn't have much in the way of material possessions – at least not that they have access to – but they all have stories and you get them pretty fast. Dot, who's Native American and a member of a local tribe, had been put out on the street back in 2004, when her husband took to beating her past the limit of tolerability. She walked out the door, and, not having family around to take her in, ended up on the street. She's been there ever since,

winters and all. At least that was the version I heard.

Her tenure without a roof over her head is longer than just about everyone else's among those who frequented Mohm's, and that status has allowed her to take up a sort of unofficial role as the community historian. Dot's thing is giving nicknames to all the homeless. Impressively, everyone seems to use the nicknames she gives. There is, for instance, a black guy she calls Three Blind Mice, because he walks around with sunglasses and a cane. Then there's Marky Mark, who got his name after Dot thought she caught him eating some pills she had given him to hold. She ran after him and whacked him on the ribs with Three Blind Mice's cane. His sides were all marked up from the cane lashes after that – hence the name Marky Mark.

The big hulking Doomsday got his name for being a rough dude – he was currently on the lam for breaking his brother's jaw a few days before, and with a warrant out on him was set to go to jail for real time as soon as the cops caught up to him. He walked right by us and on past some nearby train tracks later that night, as a bunch of us sat squatting in the dark in some high weeds drinking Budweiser. Dot's own nickname for herself was Smally Parton.

"Guess why?" chuckled Jamie, reaching over and grabbing one of her tits demonstratively.

"I ain't got no tits," laughed Dot. "So I'm Smally Parton."

As it got dark the three of us walked away from Mohm's and set up shop in the unmowed lawn of a local male nurse who had made a deal with Jamie to let him hang out there at night. When we got there Dot started telling me her plan. All of the members of this crew seemed monomaniacally focused on that one Next Move they all planned on making real soon that was going to solve all their problems. Most of those stories involved reclaiming something that had been wrongfully taken away from them.

Jamie, for instance, had had his family home taken away by eminent domain when the town decided to build an overpass over his neighborhood. They'd offered his father \$25,000 for the place, but they waited too long and when his father passed away, the offer suddenly went down to \$8000. He'd taken that offer only to find himself subsequently fined nearly six grand for having fire damage on the house's exterior,

leaving him with a little over two thousand for the whole nut. The story didn't make a whole lot of sense to me, but it seemed like it was true somewhere underneath there, with a lot of other missing facts left out, of course. Jamie was now trying to get back on his feet by doing occasional construction work, but "there isn't much of it. Not so it's more than four or five days here and there."

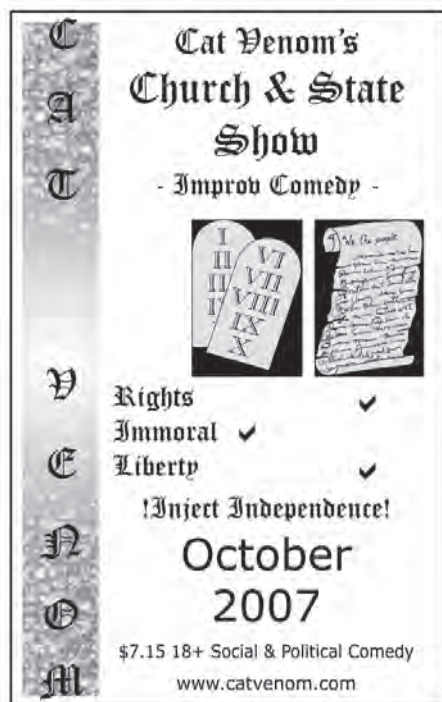
Dot, meanwhile, claimed she had a parcel of tribal land up north she wasn't allowed to sell but was allowed to lease for commercial purposes. "It's worth ten thousand to me," she said. "I've just got to get a ride up north to the tribal office." She insisted that all she needed to get that ten grand was one one-hour ride, and she hadn't been able to get that ride for three and a half years.

I had gone out earlier in the evening and bought both of them new ten-buck Champion sweatshirts and a big bag of fast food. I also bought a case of beer and left it in the car, not wanting to be caught assuming right from the start that they wanted to get drunk. So as night fell the three of us sat in the weeds in the nurse's backyard, covering our ears every eight or nine minutes as enormous cargo trains rolled along the tracks nearby. Dot and Jamie picked at their food and it was just about an hour after dusk – halfway down the large order of fries in McDonald's time – that they started wondering aloud about where they might get beer.

So I went off and got the case, then came back and listened as they traded stories about the various nightmares they'd been involved in, just in the last 36 hours or so. We were soon after joined by an older bearded guy in faded jeans, with no shirt on over his lean body; his name was Chuck, but everyone called him Rich. He looked a little like Willie Nelson and talked in a wind-blown twang tinged with theatrical slowness, mostly telling stories about being forced against his will to hit people with bricks and hammers. Like Dot and Jamie, he was the owner of lost treasure, hence the nickname. Chuck was "Rich" because he had an occasionally-functioning credit card (just two days before he had successfully bought eighteen beers with it) and a bank account that, legend had it, had over \$4700 in it.

"But I can't get the fucking money," he said. "Because I don't have any ID. I go to the bank and they say, you can't have that money without photo identification. My girlfriend, she did this to me, the bitch..."

Rich's girlfriend story was a doozy,



something about her coming home with another guy and him eventually trying to hit the guy with a hammer – except he missed, and his girl ended up with the hammer, and she took a swing at him and got him on the leg.

I kept trying to interrupt to ask if he had been concerned at all about killing someone with that hammer, but he wasn't having any of it and switched gears to another story, this one about how he'd almost scored some beer from a local pervert who had recruited him earlier that day to find a couple of homeless men who would be willing to take a bath together in his house while he (the pervert) watched. "He wanted to get a couple of boys to take a bath up there," he said. "And he wasn't going to join in, although he wanted to, you know, soap up his dick a little."

"That's fucking disgusting," I said.

"Yeah, and hard. I couldn't find anyone," he said.

"I know what you mean," Dot nodded, and launched into a story about how she had just spent the morning trying to find, for a \$40 fee, a 24 year-old girl who would be willing to give a blowjob to another local guy she knew. The guy was some kind of respectable citizen. She found the girl, but somehow the deal fell apart and she didn't get the forty bucks.

"I wasted all morning," she said, shaking

her head.

"Jesus," I said.

"That's life out here," she said. "That's what it's like."

I looked down and noticed that the case of beer was almost gone – like instantaneously almost gone. Very soon after I was dispatched to get another one. By the time I got back, all three of them were deep into some reminiscences about mutual friends. The conversations seemed to go in three different directions at once and Jamie, for sure, was starting to fade. But they all rallied for one last discussion of someone they all knew intimately, a certain woman who had some kind of house on Creektop:

JAMIE He's trying to bone Joanie.

DOT And she's wacko.

MATT Who's Joanie?

DOT She's a mental case. Flippin flippin flippin fuckin flippin flippin flippin.

RICH Who?

DOT Joanie. That lives on Creektop. She's flippin flippin flippin flippin flippin. That's what she says all the time.

MATT (stupidly) What, is she British?

DOT No, she's just whacked.

JAMIE I slept at her house one night. Me and Mark. She wouldn't let me leave.

MATT Yeah?

JAMIE She locked the door. And then she sneaks into the bathroom. And I'm trying to get out, she runs back, locks the door.

MATT (Naively) What did she want from

you?

DOT To screw.

RICH I stayed at her place one night. She goes Chuck, you can sleep on the couch. I go, okay.

JAMIE Who, Joanie?

RICH No, I don't know who the fuck this bitch was. She goes, you can stay here...

DOT The blonde? Who volunteers down at Mohm's?

RICH She's a dark-haired girl. Didn't have a bad build on her. But the fucker was like nuttier n' that tire on that bike.

JAMIE That's Joanie.

DOT That's Joanie!

RICH Anyway, I'm sitting on her couch.

DOT She's flippin, flippin, flippin.

RICH She goes to the bathroom. She comes out, stark-ass fuckin' naked. I'm laying there on the couch, she comes right up to me and says, do you see anything that you like?

JAMIE That's Joanie.

DOT That's Joanie.

RICH I go, you know what, I have not seen nothing that I like, and I'm still not seeing anything that I like.

DOT Oh, God.

A few minutes later Jamie semi-passed out. He'd been looking depressed. Towards the end of the night he'd been telling me about his baseball trophies from high school. He was really proud of those trophies. Didn't have them anymore, though. Then I offered to drive him and Dot up to the

Continues on page 14



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reservation to get the missing ten grand next time I came through Council Bluffs. He liked that idea a lot and wanted to get started on the plans right away. But he couldn't really stay awake and when he tried to stand up to get on his bicycle, he kept falling over. The other two of us helped him on his bike finally, and he rode away all wobbly-like, apparently to go to an empty apartment someone had found a few blocks away. "I'll be alright," he said, to no one in particular.

Dot and Rich, meanwhile, started talking about politics, specifically about the presidency. But the candidate they were interested in wasn't Fred Thompson but Will Deport. Both decided that he would make a lousy president, mainly because he spent too much of his time getting baked and "smoking the bubble."

"Motherfucker doesn't even have frames on one whole side of his glasses," complained Rich. "A guy like that, he can't be president. Motherfucker'll be like reaching for the button and fucking missing."

"Plus, you can't win just by buying beer for the homeless," added Dot sagely. "That's no way to do things. As a strategy."

"Fuck him, let him try," said Rich. "I can

think of at least twelve votes he'd get."

"Twelve won't do it," Dot added quickly.

I tried to get them to talk about the real candidates, but they were really far from being the least bit interested. They were more interested in explaining how Union-Pacific had their own police who wouldn't let you walk across the train tracks even though that made it hard to search for empty cans on the other side of town. Someone should do something about that, they decided.

"There's only two places you can cross," Dot said, "unless you have a car. Do I look like I have a car?"

"No," I said.

"I tell you, I've jumped between train cars. I've jumped under cars," she said.

"I done that, too," said Rich.


"Ain't no other way to get over there," she said, shaking her head. "It's dangerous, but there ain't no other way."

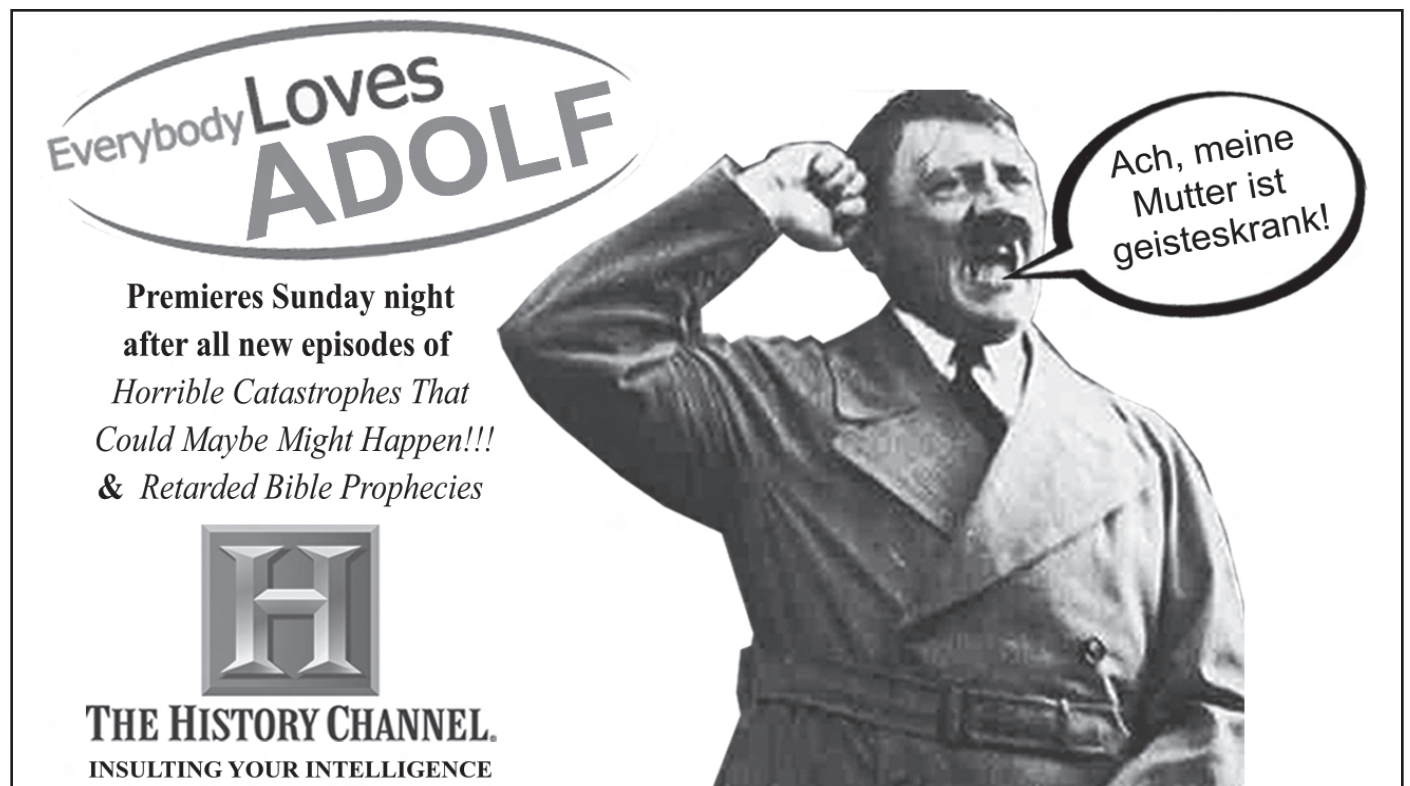
Finally I offered to go "canning" with Dot the next morning. This was her full-time job; she sometimes cleared eight bucks a day. She seemed excited to take me on a tour and told me to meet her in a few hours, at 5:30 a.m., at the intersection of 8th and 2nd, where she planned to be sleeping on

a recliner chair some guy she knew kept on his porch. I agreed and disappeared for a little while to take a nap in my car.

At the appointed time I got up, got coffee at a convenience store, and looked for Dot at the agreed-upon spot. But she wasn't there or anywhere nearby; and in fact there was some other scary-looking guy with a black beard sleeping in "her" recliner. I cruised the streets looking for her, but she was gone. Rich too. So I drank the coffee and drove back to Sioux City, just in time to hear Thompson make a joke about those durned New Yorkers in for a tightly-wound convention center crowd of middle-class white Iowans. All the Republican candidates pick on New York in red-state stumps, even Giuliani. It's the easiest hit there is. John McCain, in South Carolina, started off one section of his speech by saying, "I'm sure most of you don't read the New York Times..." and then smiling and waiting for the hisses. It's cookie-cutter campaigning; the jokes come with your conservative campaign kit. Thompson's riff was about having to work with all them Yankees on Law and Order.

"My mama always wonders why I'm the only one in the show who talks normal," he said, to cheerful applause.

"I like him," an older woman named Rita said afterwards. "He's a straight shooter." 



All About the Benjamin

Canada to US peace activist: "AND STAY OOT!"

By Ian Murphy

Great; another assignment covering the peace movement. Medea Benjamin, CODEPINK cofounder and notorious congress-interrupter is in town. She's small with big eyes, a pointy nose and protruding ears. Very mousy.

"Why'd you change your name to Medea?" I ask her as we approach the Rainbow Bridge conjoining Niagara Fall, New York and Niagara Falls, Ontario. "Were you scorned?"

"I was eighteen, a freshman in college, and I was studying Greek mythology," she trails off and vacantly sings along to "Your Mother Should Know" by the Beatles, which is being pumped through speakers in the adjacent parking lot, ostensibly to facilitate a sense of existentialism.

"Oh," I say to myself, as she stares ahead purposefully. In Euripides' ancient tragedy, the character Medea brutally slays her two children to spite her unfaithful husband Jason. A charming literary namesake.

Nothing as newsworthy as infanticide is going on, unfortunately. It seems Medea and her CODEPINK posse are having trouble entering Canada. They've found themselves on an FBI list of criminals. They've been arrested numerous times, after all. But not to worry! For the low, low price of two hundred dollars, the Canadian government will let the two troublemakers in for "criminal rehabilitation." No joke.

On the steel span between nations walks Medea, fellow activist and former army colonel Ann Wright, a single AP reporter, BEAST publisher Paul Fallon, a father/daughter peacenik team and myself. This is a non-story. "I'm surprised there aren't more reporters here," remarks the regional AP woman. She and I are the only press, and I hardly count.

The CODEPINK press release says Benjamin and Wright are attempting to



Professional protestor Medea Benjamin enjoys a few spare moments in between arrests

attend a Toronto peace conference. In reality, they have a 5:30 flight to DC. They know they're not getting in. This is public relations, and it's boring. Ann and Medea unfurl their "We come in peace" banner. A stiff breeze kicks up. "The wind may take them over, I'm afraid," facetiously remarks the AP woman. "Now that's a story!"

The FBI says this list contains the names of people who've broken the law. Medea says their inclusion on the National Crime Information Center list is politically motivated, as all their lawbreaking has taken the form of nonviolent protest. The Canadian government says it has always barred the entrance of people on the NCIC list regardless of the crime committed. Wright says this isn't true. Wright's right.

"What's your business in Canada, sir?" the border guard asks Fallon, once he's directed the two criminal-activists to a building across the street for detention.

"We're just going to stick around to see if they get into the country," Fallon replies collecting his ID. Fallon is acting as their temporary legal representation on behalf of the NYCLU.

"Oh, they're not getting in," the officer

shoots back glibly.

And they didn't. We stand around for a few hours wondering why the Canadian side of The Falls is commercially prosperous while the US side smells of urine. Benjamin and Wright missed their plane to DC. The AP reporter is long gone to file her story. Fallon has to go pick up his kid from school. We jet.

Back on the American side of the bridge, Fallon and I wait to check in at the customs desk. There's a large contingent of Asian people already waiting. The next two in line walk up to the desk. "Get back! Get back!" shouts a furious American officer. The two girls freeze in their tracks and affect a frightened expression. "Americans first!" he yells at them with disdain, waving us toward the desk. I apologize as we pass them.

Americans truly are an ugly people on the whole: ignorant, authoritarian and exceedingly temperamental. I've always taken heart that if the shit got too thick here, I could just take the short walk from Buffalo to Canada and find me some socialized sanity.

Those days are over. 

Critical Massimo



Massimo Pigliucci, Ph D., is a professor of evolution and of philosophy at SUNY Stony Brook. He has three doctorates - in genetics, botany, and philosophy. He contributes to Skeptical Inquirer and Philosophy Now, and his musings can be found at www.rationallyspeaking.org. We wrote to him and he wrote back.

BEAST: It seems that people who are secular and/or have an understanding of evolution tend to procreate less. Does knowledge about evolution demystify the “miracle of birth,” and if so, doesn’t that indicate natural selection working against itself?

Dr. Pigliucci: No, I don’t think demystification or natural selection have much to do with it. Certainly a naturalistic understanding of human reproduction does make one disinclined to think of life as a “miracle,” but that doesn’t mean it has less value, or that procreation becomes less of a strong instinct and a source of joy (and plenty of pain, of course).

I think the reason so many secular people have fewer children is the same that so many people in modern open societies have fewer children: education. Education means that one realizes that there is a limit to population growth, and that there are many other fulfilling things to do in life, besides just raising children.

As for natural selection, that was the old eugenics argument, but it fails because there is little if any link between being secular and having a certain type of genes (nobody has discovered -- nor is likely to discover -- the “gene for atheism”). Secularism is something that is acquired culturally, not transmitted by sperms and eggs.

Have any of your colleagues tried to persuade you to not debate with creationists?

Plenty. I don’t do debates very often, it depends on who the opponent is and what the circumstances and rules of the debate are. The thing to understand about debates is that your target is neither your opponent, not his die-hard fans. You aim at the fence sitters, the people who are genuinely curious and come to really learn something.

But it is also true that many scientists don’t feel comfortable doing debates because the outcome depends much more on one’s rhetorical skills than on who is right or wrong -- just like in Presidential debates at election time. It helps is you are good looking, smartly dressed, and especially funny.

Still, the argument often advanced by my colleagues that by debating one “legitimizes” the opponent and offers him a platform strikes me as obnoxiously snob. It’s time for scientists to come out of the ivory tower and get their hands dirty by explaining to the public what they are doing and why taxpayers should keep funding their research.

What is the funniest argument you’ve heard from a creationist?

Kent “Dr. Dino” Hovind, who I have debated several times (and who is now serving time in federal prison for tax evasion), once kept saying that evolution is that insane theory that says that people come from bananas. I don’t know what perverse sexual fantasy Hovind had about people and bananas, but what evolutionary theory actually says is that

people and bananas share a (very remote) common ancestor, many hundreds of million years ago -- just like all other species on earth. That ancestor looked nothing like either a human being or a banana. Then again, Hovind believes the earth is only 6,000 years old. I wonder whether I could interest him into buying a bridge I happen to own in Brooklyn...

Do you ever get the feeling that those who try to present ridiculous pseudoscience as legitimate science (the Flat Earth Society, for example) are just being contrary for its own sake?

Perhaps, but more often they are actually convinced of what they are saying, and they can marshal an impressive array of (bogus) arguments in support of their positions. Excluding those who do it for money (and there are several), most of these people either defend a particular religious ideology no matter what (you know, faith means believing something *in spite* of evidence to the contrary), or they take pleasure in arguing that the “official” position maintained by all those stuffed PhDs is in fact wrong. The latter case is often justified by phrases like “They laughed at the Wright brothers.” Well, yes, but they also laughed at the Marx brothers, and for good reasons!

Tell us about your criticisms of Richard Dawkins.


I tend to agree with Dawkins’ view on religion, and I certainly am with him

when it comes to defending science from irrationalism. However, I think that in "The God Delusion" Dawkins makes the common mistake of crossing the line into scientism -- the attitude that attributes to science more power and fewer limits than it actually has.

In particular, Dawkins' main weapon against what he calls "the God hypothesis" is his "argument from improbability." This simply says that one should not invoke the (unexplained) existence of a highly complex entity (such as God presumably

is) to explain the origin of a simpler one (the universe), considering that science offers perfectly valid natural explanations instead. This argument, contra Dawkins, is **not** a scientific but a philosophical one, otherwise known as Occam's razor. Dawkins takes for science the credit that rightly belongs to philosophy, and I suspect he does so because -- like many scientists -- he is simply contemptuous of what he sees as the "armchair speculation" that philosophers typically engage in (never mind that any theoretical scientist, including Dawkins, also engages in "armchair speculation").

Why are you making God cry all the time by figuring stuff out?

It's nothing personal, but if God were to stop telling his followers to use the Bible or the Quran as if it were a science textbook (or a manual of moral philosophy, for that matter), we would all get along so much better. 

Dr. Pigliucci's newest book is *Making Sense of Evolution*, co-written with Jonathan Kaplan.

Interview conducted by Josh Bunting

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PARTY POOPER

Rehab for conservative perverts

By Rich Herschlag

First he pleads guilty, then he takes it back. Senator Larry Craig wants it both ways, and it's not the first time. But the problem isn't one lone senator looking for kicks in a Twin Cities airport men's room. Ted Haggard, David Vitter, Jeff Gannon, Mark Foley, and now not-quite-former Senator Larry Craig share more than a permanent spot on the living room couch. They are part of a greater problem in this country, an epidemic of sorts. They are right wing hypocrite perverts.

The number of right wing hypocrite perverts is growing every day. It seems there's one every time you turn around, especially in a stall. It is estimated that there are as many as eleven million right wing hypocrite perverts (RWHPs) in the United States. The exact number is not known, because most of them are afraid to come forward, though several have come backward. Employers are reluctant to turn them in due to their own culpability and the limited pool of sincere right-wingers. Particularly hard hit are political offices, as right-wing non-perverts are increasingly opting for legitimate employment in business, agriculture, education, and Formula One racing.

Before we become the laughing stock of the French—or perhaps after—it is time to reform our entire approach to RWHPs. First, we must recognize their personal hell. Sex with your significant other in a private setting is, of course, unspeakably boring. Days filled with speeches at Bob Jones University followed by nights packed with surfing the net for kiddie porn is a cross no Chamber of Commerce member should be asked to bear. And there is a special burden that comes with personifying the law while trying to keep it real in the bedroom. Just ask J. Edgar Hoover. Abu Ghraib, after all, was nothing if not a closet right wing perv fantasy acted out by POWs.

We must make the workplace more RWHP-friendly. We need designated bathroom stalls—safe, clean, soundproof, and equipped with a condom dispenser—

for controlled, scandal-free political hook-ups. We need designated interns, whose sole purpose is as a ready, safe, HIV-free concubine for their potential employer. Even the campaign trail is a minefield for right wing hypocrite perverts. How many babies can you kiss before you finally give in to temptation and use your tongue?

We must end sting operations and commence fling operations. RWHPs need to find more than just random partners. They need to find each other. There is no safer bet for a stable, meaningful relationship between uber-moral posers



Mark Foley receives the Presidential Medal of Creepiness

than that between two RWHPs. Planning is already underway for a dedicated website for right wing stall perverts: pHarmony.com.

Prison, though it may be a hell of a lot of fun, is the wrong place for RWHPs. They require rehabilitation in a positive environment. We must offer amnesty to all closet perv Republican senators and congressmen. Come out now with your studded collars and leather cowls or we'll see you later on "To Catch a Predator." Come clean and we will work with you. You will be issued a two-year guest perv pass and fined five thousand dollars.


Before applying for permanent non-perv

status, RWHPs will be required to return to their native country. However, most RWHPs were born right here in the USA. Such perverts will be deported to their home towns, where they will undergo extensive regression therapy in the locker room at the Y.

The RWHP twelve-step recovery program will include apologizing to all wrongfully impeached Democratic rivals and making a list of all stalls you neglected to fumigate. The program will strongly encourage appeal to a power higher than oneself—the Senate Ethics Committee.

Upon reentering society, RWHPs may seek gainful employment as porn webmasters, sex shop clerks, and skin flick best boys. Unfortunately, complete rehabilitation of an RWHP is not a reasonable medical possibility. That is why, using Megan's Law as a model, legislation to enact a federal Foley's Law is now being drafted. Foley's Law would provide a national database of all right wing perv elected officials within a one-mile radius of each and every constituent and a list of John Birch Society members to prank on Halloween.

Many of these services must extend not only to RWHPs themselves but to their non-RWHP peers as well. Middle-of-the-road and left wing perverts are often the primary victims of RWHPs. Perhaps more embarrassing than a Republican learning his peer is a perv is a perv learning his peer is a Republican. For any fellow perv, the notion of having been lied to for so many years during bathroom rendezvous and steam room trysts is a real party pooper.

More study of these issues is still required. For instance, it has not yet been determined whether leaning right causes perversion or perversion causes one to lean right. It may be a little of both. What is apparent, however, is that all too often self-hatred better serves the self when packaged as hatred of others and used as a fundraising tool. Clearly, it's time to turn the page. 

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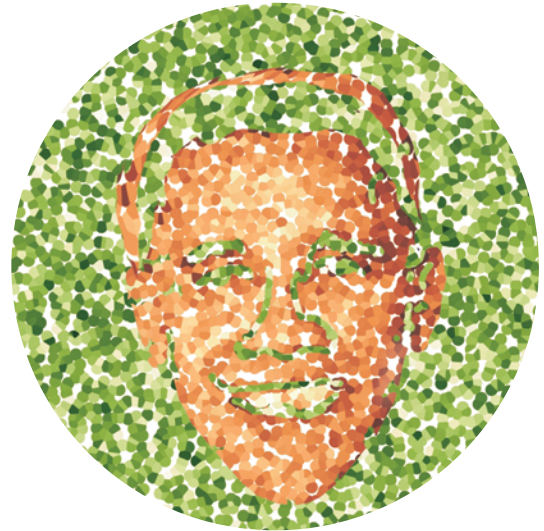
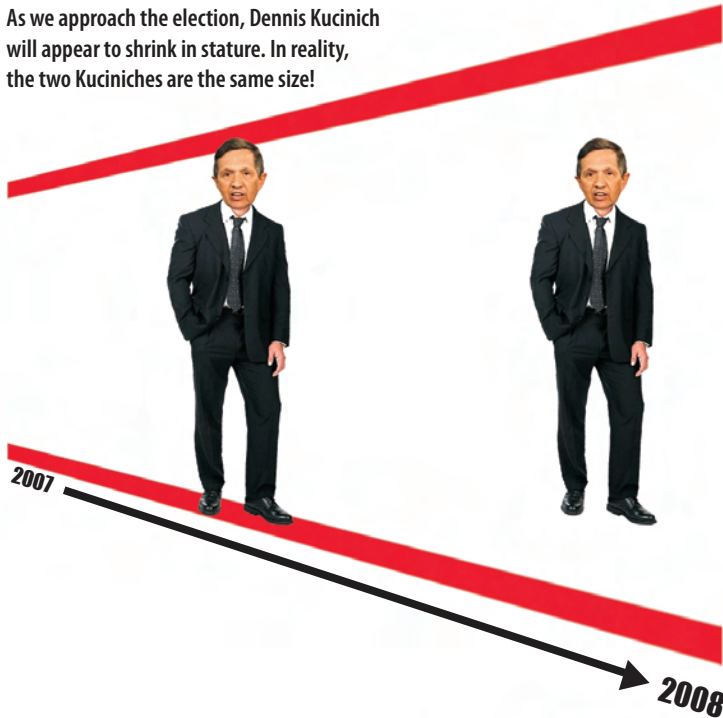
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THIS BEAST IN SCIENCE

The Perception of Presidential Politics!

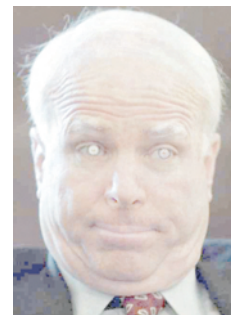
The Kucinich Effect

As we approach the election, Dennis Kucinich will appear to shrink in stature. In reality, the two Kuciniches are the same size!



The Color Barrier

Can you spot the viable presidential candidate from Illinois?

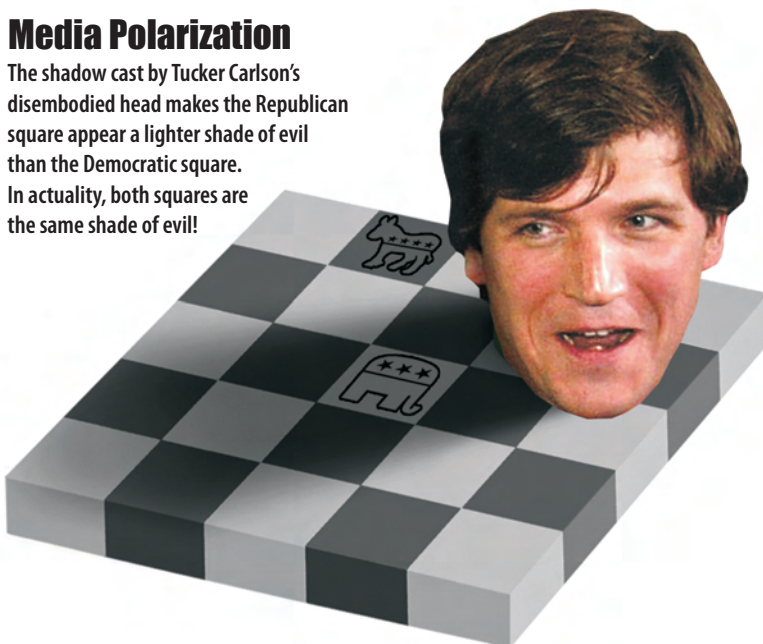


Going Negative

Focus your eyes on the center of this ghoulish photo-negative image for a full minute, look at any white surface and you will see the face of Alan Keyes!

Media Polarization

The shadow cast by Tucker Carlson's disembodied head makes the Republican square appear a lighter shade of evil than the Democratic square. In actuality, both squares are the same shade of evil!



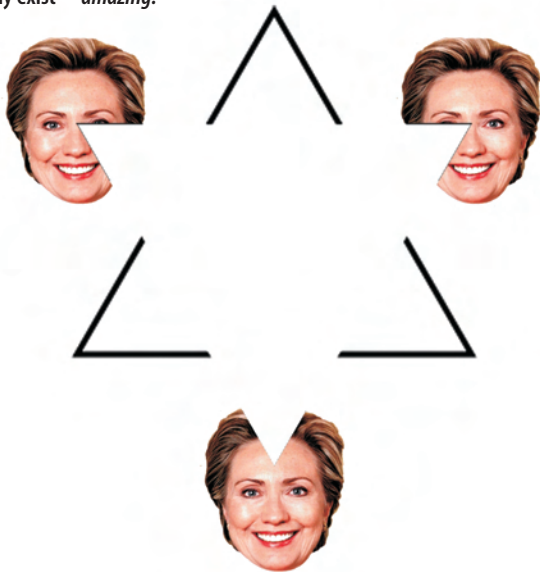
Exaggerated Toothiness

The arrows placed at the side of John Edwards' head creates the appearance that his smile extends beyond his face—and that's how he really looks.



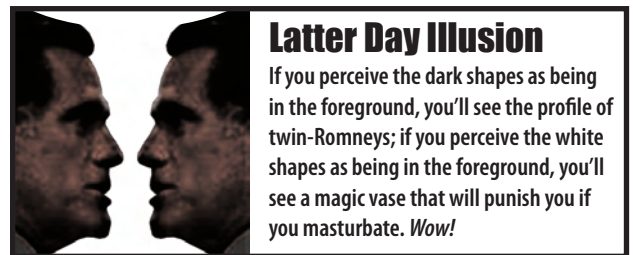
Clintonian Triangle

Stare at the center of the triangulated Hillaries; you will see the outline of an inverted triangle. The triangle, and Hillary's political principles, are constructed in your mind's eye and do not truly exist—*amazing!*



The Invisible Fajita

Cross your eyes until the two images of Bill Richardson overlap. Once the images are perfectly aligned, he will look astonishingly like a Mexican!



Latter Day Illusion

If you perceive the dark shapes as being in the foreground, you'll see the profile of twin-Romneys; if you perceive the white shapes as being in the foreground, you'll see a magic vase that will punish you if you masturbate. *Wow!*

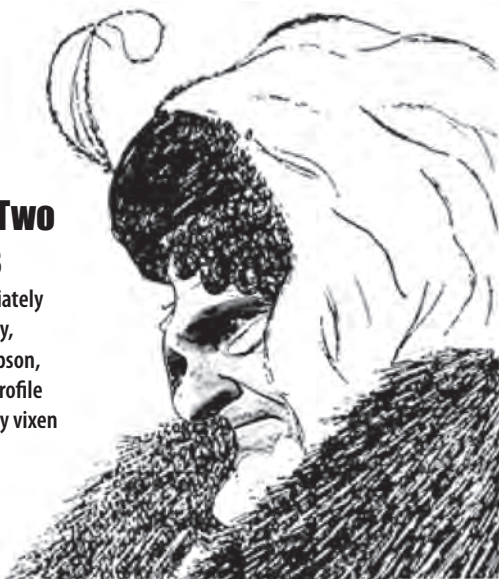
Evangelical Blindspot

Hold the paper a little over a foot away from your face (you may have to play with the distance a bit), close your right eye and focus on the center of the 9/11 crucifix. As if by magic, the immoral, pro-choice, cross-dressing, gun-control, failed-marriages Giuliani will disappear!



The Tale of Two Thompsons

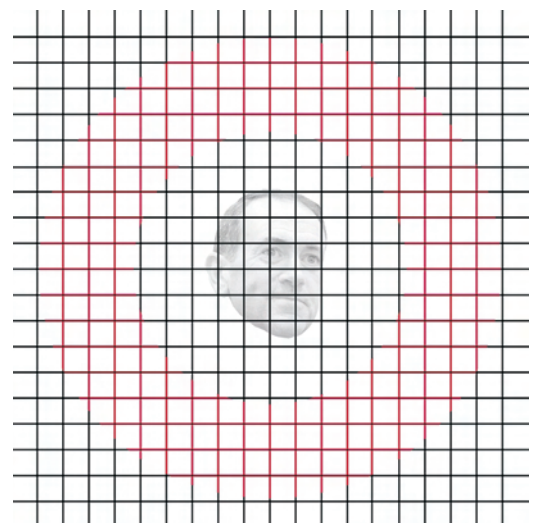
Sure, you can immediately recognize the old, lazy, curmudgeonly Thompson, but can you see the profile of an attractive, folksy vixen of the political right? *Keep trying!*



(This illusion may cause nausea for some.)

Huckabee's Halo

Keep your eyes focused on Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee; eventually, a glowing pink circle of Divinity will surround him. The pink you see in the white grid spaces is an illusion—and so is God!



(If you are having trouble seeing the glowing halo, jam out on your bass for best results.)

So Sleazy an Adman Can do it

The evolution of primetime product placement

By Steve Gordon

"No one ever went broke underestimating the taste of the American public."

— HL Mencken

Advertainment

Prime time television hit a confounding new low this season with the debut of "Cavemen" on ABC, a comedy series based on the, ahem, popular "so easy a caveman can do it" advertising campaign for GEICO car insurance.

Sure, the series is funny. Kind of. Well, not really. Actually, it's really, really bad. Just terrible. Most of the humor is based on pop culture references that any asshole with an iPod and who's ever read either *Wired* or *Paste* can grasp. Think of the lame yuppie-with-an-existential-crisis bullshit you had to sit through in *I Heart Huckabees*, then picture the irksome Jason Schwartzman character choking out his stilted dialogue through face putty, and then put it to the insipid *Garden State* soundtrack. To top it off, any joke in the show can be responded to with an unenthusiastic, "Aha... 'cause they're cavemen..."

Even though "Cavemen" seems like a regular television show, it's really not much more than a stealth infomercial. No matter how distracting the storylines and jokes might be, viewers will never be able to shake the association with GEICO. And the gross thing is the fact that this probably doesn't matter to a lot of people.

The campaign itself, drafted by the infallible ad men at the Martin Agency, quickly escalated from being a commercial to being a hallowed cultural artifact, not unlike so many other wildly successful ads before it. Here's the thing, though: when we were laughing maliciously at the "I've fallen and I can't get up" lady, we didn't offer her a pilot. We just laughed; some of us bought whatever it was she was selling; most didn't. In the end, she dissolved quietly somewhere in the back of our psyche, alongside CGI M&Ms and the brain-on-drugs egg, only to be dragged out for the occasional joke when appropriate,



"Hey, guess what? Tina and I are getting back together! Meaning, I've crushed her boyfriend's skull with a rock and brutally raped her a number of times. What? I'm a Neanderthal. That's kind of my thing."

like when Bob Dole fell off a stage in '96.

About a decade ago, an efflorescent age of heterogeneity and choice began to dawn on the privileged world. Thanks to Tivo and internet piracy, people started enjoying television on their own time, skipping the ads. Napster allowed everyone to get their music for free; blogs impaled the apparent sacrosanctity of mainstream news media; YouTube became the next-television-waiting-to-happen. Advertisers and top-down media hierarchies had no choice but to go stealth with their products and messages, inserting them into the collective unconscious in any way possible.

Somewhere in the late '90s, the 7-Up guy scored an inexplicable movie deal, marking the emergence of a new efficiency in advertising. Product placement in the media spiked in the ensuing years, with name brands etched subversively into our favorite films, programs, and even video

games. There were even a few films, like *Josie and the Pussycats* and *Fight Club*, which surreptitiously placed products while ostensibly disparaging the practice itself. "Friends" plotted an entire episode around a piece of furniture from Pottery Barn. In this era of nearly obscene levels of consumer choice, the entertainment industry is returning to its original business model—dancing cigarettes.

Of course, the Invisible Hand is already putting a squeeze on "Cavemen". A Reuters report pointed out that after two weeks, consumers had already given up on the half-baked premise, and that poor ratings are likely to ensure a swift cancellation. But come on, what did they expect? The next "M.A.S.H.?" Regardless, the writers and producers can still look forward to lucrative careers in advertising. After all, they got a product placed on prime time television without buying commercial time, or even mentioning the product.

And maybe that's what the whole thing was about. I mean, we knew this show would be canceled quickly when we first heard about it—maybe the producers did too. Maybe the whole point was that people would hear about it, be annoyed, tell their friends, talk about what a stupid idea it was, even write snotty essays about it(!), possibly watch it, celebrate it's swift demise—and all the while, they'd be thinking, at least peripherally, about GEICO.

When the consumers produce

Though the American public is generally retarded and easily spoon-fed the drabest, least inspired shit imaginable, traditional media organizations find themselves fighting tooth-and-nail for their dwindling attention. And it's getting harder and harder. People don't need "MSM" news: They can read blogs, and author their own blog. They don't need major label recording artists: They can make their own CD and upload it to Myspace. They don't need TV to tell them what's entertaining: They can film their

own podcast.

Of course, most people are either too busy or lazy to produce their own content, and many are too addicted to big budget production values to give up on TV. But these trends in consumer-empowerment lead to a major question: What happens when the public starts producing more media content than it consumes? Do media hierarchies and admen treat potential consumers with increased respect in order to keep their business? Or do they go lowbrow and lower brow to cater to the ADHD crisis? What do you think? I'm not sure how you go lower-brow than "Flavor of Love" or "Date my Mom," but I'm sure the cultural perverts at Viacom are busily working to break the retch barrier.

The mainstream news media has long since forsaken edifying content. Instead of racing for the scoop, you have outlets striving to present the sexiest anchor, the sexiest abductee, and the sexiest celebrity train wreck. Are our attention spans so shot that the only things television can

offer us are sexed-up news or an extended 30-second spot about Neanderthals text-messaging each other? Are we being underestimated, or are we really this stupid?

It's hard to just blame the media for anomalies like the popularity of the GEICO caveman campaign. With the infectiousness of bottom-up, consumer-generated media comes a loss of shared artifacts. There are so many options and avenues of entertainment that we wind through them like a labyrinth, relying on word-of-mouth, viral spread rather than having the tube tell us which single thing to think about. Perhaps the "Cavemen" phenomenon is the result of our collective "I-Love-the-80s"-esque nostalgia for cultural artifacts that are held in common by the majority of society. Maybe we miss being told what The Cool was, and worshiping it together. This tendency would sure make the public look like an

Continues on next page



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easier target market, like an amorphous entity that craves any trite or kitsch product as long as it can still be mass produced.

Another disturbing facet of the GEICO caveman's success is that the original series of commercial spots seemed to lampoon the anti-stereotyping efforts of minority groups. The cavemen are upset, because the "so easy a caveman can do it" slogan implies that they're stupid. They complain. On winds up on an O'Reilly-type political talk show, enduring further bigotry. In another spot, one is being criticized by his friends as a traitor to the cause for being a GEICO customer. It's mildly amusing, but the subtext seems tailored for people who are sick of these damn minority groups demanding special consideration. You can almost hear the lament: "First women and blacks, now Mexicans and gays; what's next, special rights for cavemen?" Ultimately, it's a joke about whiny liberals and the minorities they coddle.

An interview with Wikipedia

So, Wikipedia, tell me about the website created by GEICO to advertise their ad campaign.

"The site invites users to a hip penthouse party at the caveman's apartment. If users click "Prep & Party," they are transported to the "crib" with the party not yet underway. Max (Jeff Phillips from the Airport spot), is none too pleased with the early arrival. Roommate Marty (John Lehr from the Therapy spot), is stressing over the arrival of Tina. Users may interact with the GEICO cavemen as well as their clothing, electronics, books, magazines and appliances."

Fun Fact

Neanderthals were murdered to extinction approximately 30,000 years ago by the marauding Homo sapien horde -- and I just saved a bunch of money on my car insurance!



No fucking shit, Wiki. Is there a downside to all this delectable advertainment?

"There have been problems for some people that visit the site. After the first loading page, you are given certain selections to click on for the site on the flash PDA. For some people, after clicking a selection, it just reverts to the first loading page and the PDA."


So yeah, so there you go. There's your answer. That's what happens when the public starts producing more media content than it consumes. You get dipshit, bottom-up websites about websites advertising drab television programming based on dipshit, top-down advertisement campaigns. So yeah, there you go. Now if you don't mind, I am dizzy and going to go puke straight up into their air.

Learning to love yourself

Earlier this month, the snide British rock band Radiohead laid some heavy-duty marketing LSD on the music industry's tongue when they released an album direct to fans and let them choose the price per download. According to *The Chicago Tribune*, the new album sold about 1.2 million copies in the first two days it was

made available, with the average consumer choosing to shell out about eight bucks each. But you're not going to see the album chart at all, because the band put the record out sans major label and sans hard copy of the disc, effectively boycotting the RIAA's repressive stranglehold on the industry.

They treated their audience with respect and allowed individuals to decide what music is actually worth nowadays. Amazingly, it worked. People actually paid for the record, though they could have taken it for free. Now, other musicians have assumed this "anti-strategy," with groups like Jamiroquai and Nine Inch Nails announcing similar viral releases.

This is what the market looks like when it realistically responds to bottom-up demands. Right now, consumers have a massive say in how products will be made, promoted, and distributed. But while advertising companies and media outlets are going to be struggling to become compatible with the new consumer-driven viral market, they are still going to treat their consumers like idiots, because they know they have trained them to not respect themselves. 



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Some Brief Thoughts on Abortion

ABORTION—Americans confront the issue daily; the debate informs our politics, our religious beliefs, our very morality. The word warrants bold-faced capitalization on paper and despair in hearts. But do we understand it? The Oxford English Dictionary online defines abortion as:

noun **1** *the deliberate termination of a human pregnancy.* **2** *the natural expulsion of a fetus from the womb before it is able to survive independently.* **3** *(informal, derogatory) something imperfectly planned or made.*

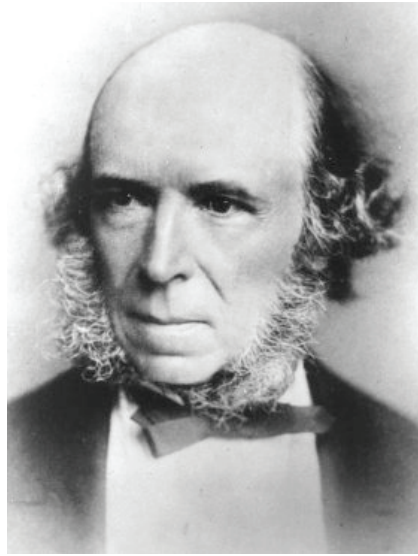
We utilize the first definition almost exclusively. The second definition is a lark; a fetus cannot “survive independently.” Nowhere—outside of an uber-libertarian acid trip—can one imagine a newborn, bindle in tow, striking out on its own to find gainful employment and become a self-made infant. The third definition, though a delightful way to insult someone’s outfit, is not pertinent to this discussion.

Sticking—for now—with the first definition, we enter into the classic moral debate: When does life begin? Evangelicals believe human life starts a half-hour before conception, while looking at gay porn. Other pro-lifers have a more moderate view that life begins when the fetus more resembles a human child than a creepy chicken-beaked thing or an indiscernible clump of dividing cells.

Whatever your personal view on abortion, we can all agree that as pregnancy enters its final stages, the moral stakes are raised considerably. Pro-choicers can even weep at the thought of a huge-bellied woman terminating her pregnancy at the local drive-thru abortion hut. We have a federal law against so-called late term “partial birth” abortions. But is birth itself an arbitrary delineation? How much difference is there between a twenty-week old fetus and a one-week old infant?

It’s my contention that there isn’t any.

Let us turn to the second definition provided by Oxford. Human babies are extremely vulnerable and underdeveloped. They need incessant care well into their early years. A baby horse, by contrast, is



By Professor Horrible T. Muttonchops III, PhD.

fully capable of running toward food and away from predators the moment it drops to the dirt. Not a full-grown, full-speed horse, but deft enough to make human babies look like crap.

Of course, I’m abusing the second definition. Most would take it to mean the termination of a fetus before it is able to “survive independently” of the mother’s body. It may thrive under constant medical attention in an incubator, perhaps. Not truly “independent” but close enough. We will return to these thoughts later.

Why shouldn’t a woman’s right to choose extend to the sixth or seventh trimester? Does a one-year-old have a better chance of true independent survival than a zygote? Why should the same one-year old possess a more fundamental “right to life” than a fetus in-utero?

For those who think this may be a rhetorical flourish, used to illustrate a pro-life viewpoint, you are mistaken.

Let’s face it: fetuses and babies are not real people. They are people in the making, which is why the argument against abortion holds any weight whatsoever. If fetus A is to become a sanctified life in baby B, then $A = B$, and therefore: A is a sanctified life. This is a sound argument, but it begs the question: What’s so great

about life?

As a society we don’t use biological life as the litmus test of a thing’s “sanctity;” cows, chickens, and even potatoes are alive. Of course, we’re talking about *human* life. Then one must ask: what is it about humans that make us so darn special? The answer is self-evident: our minds.

It’s important to note that human infants do not have human minds. The deliciously complex brain activity that gives rise to reason, reflection, and memory in adult minds isn’t yet hardwired into an infant’s gray matter. Babies are not conscious beings. A six-month old child has no more a sense of mental acuity than a chicken or a potato. Babies should be regarded as property. Even Republicans could get behind that.

The minds of babies—or lack thereof—make them into metaphysical riddles. Did YOU exist when you were an infant? Or were YOU still being constructed? You are an agent of rational thought, capable of looking forward and backward in time with your mind. Babies are not rational agents. And YOU did not properly exist until your brain was about three or four years old, roughly the time of your first memories.

Simply put, babies are robots. As they age, their DNA instructs the brain to build the elaborate physical networks prerequisite to what we would call being human, or having a consciously human experience. Before that point, they are not cognizant beings and should be dealt with accordingly.

“Still,” you say, “If infant A will become adult human B and adult human B is a clear example of “sanctified” life, then $A = B$, and therefore: A is sanctified life.” This is faulty reasoning.

We simply do not value adult life, as countless atrocities can illustrate. Our society devalues the “sanctity” of life after a certain age—the age of one-second. And after eighteen-years, forget about it.

“Still,” you contest. “Even if babies aren’t truly human and can be slaughtered at will with no remorse, all this argument does is

arbitrarily move up the age of acceptable killing. When do children become 'fully human' and 'fully hardwired' for human consciousness? Where does this slippery slope end?" Well, that is the exciting part of this theory: many human brains don't fully develop physically until the later teen years! It gives the phrase "teenage abortion" a whole new twist.

However, teens are capable of independent survival, thus cannot by definition be aborted. A cunning five-year old may also be up to the task. This definition should not be our moral compass on abortion. As we've seen above, the true determinant of a life's "sanctity" is to be found in its human consciousness.

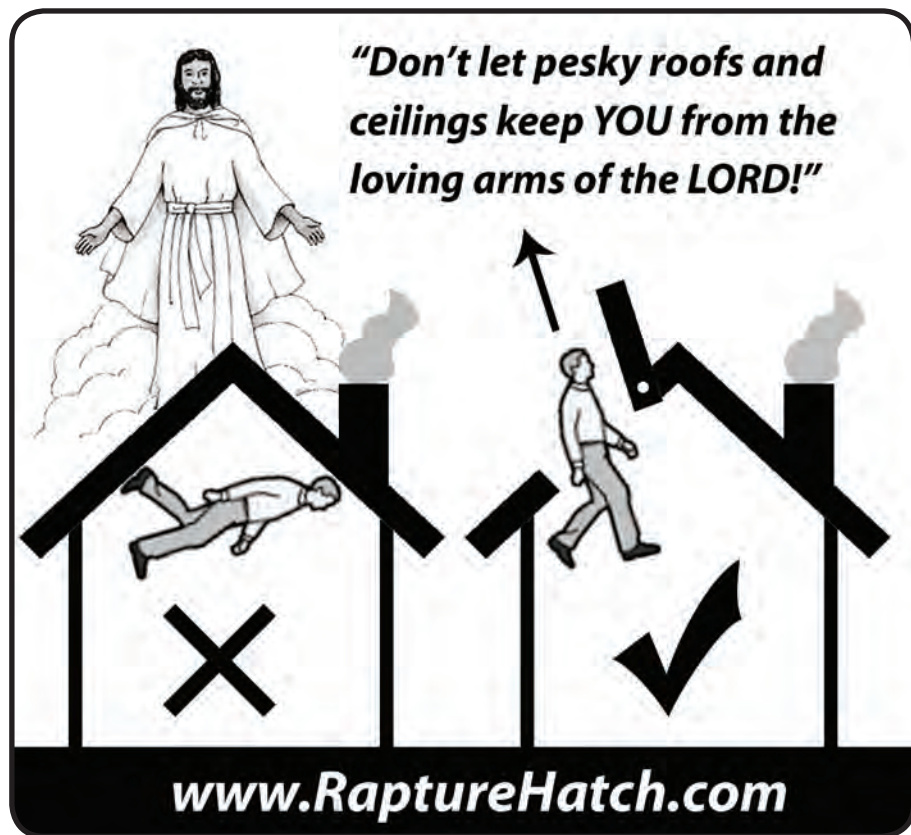
It's not enough to say something is alive and should be kept so. Even before fertilization, an ovum is, strictly speaking, alive. So is a potato. We have no problem when either "dies." What we're concerned about, as always, is human life, which I have defined here as a cognizant agent.

Therefore, a simple solution to the abortion debate is obvious: Ask the fetus, baby, toddler or teen in question whether or not it minds being aborted. Barring the obvious exception of the odd deaf-mute, this task will more than serve its purpose. If they express the desire to continue living, it is immoral to terminate their lives. If the question posed is beyond the offspring's ken, it may be morally aborted, whether in-utero or ex-utero. Surely, if a hitherto unknown species of monkey could answer the same question, we'd be morally obligated not to eat it. The same ethical principle applies.

The very defenselessness of human infants mentioned above is what inspires the impassioned ideology that strives to give voice to those who have none, to stand up for those who cannot. This assumes too much. Who ever said a baby *wants* to live, or has any opinions whatsoever? They don't.

In summation, babies and fetuses are robotic, inhuman property, the fate of which should be solely determined by its owner or owners. And although this has been but a loose sketch of a new ethics toward ex-uterine abortion, I hope this essay has been comprehensive enough to shift the debate somewhat in favor of killing toddlers.

I fucking hate toddlers. 



Irrelevancy, Decline & Revolution

Ron Hawkins discusses the music business, file sharing, and the US healthcare crisis

A native of Toronto, Canada, Ron Hawkins has been a musician for twenty-three years and a painter for five. His first gig was in a brothel. With his bands The Lowest Of The Low and The Rusty Nails, He's walked a line between mainstream and indie success that's allowed him to release nine discs and tour worldwide, "getting both drunk and paid."

You recently completed a solo album, *Chemical Sounds*, which includes a song titled "1-800-Radio," broadsiding the current state of radio in North America. Most people I know have given up on radio completely, but anyone who has ever been trapped in my car, an 11-year-old Saab with a broken tape deck and no CD player, describe the experience of trying to find something decent to listen to as a slowly unfolding form of modern torture. As an independent musician, can you describe the devolution of radio and what the industry was like for you before, and now after media super-consolidation?

Since I was a kid and into my teens, I remember thinking of the music industry as a fortress. It seemed as though access to a recording contract or a label that could get you on the radio was restricted to a small handful of people who had been scouted by an A&R department, which

was akin to some secret society in my mind. I believe that payola and bribery were the norm in terms of getting acts heard nationwide.

Then a few things happened. Punk rock blew up, and it suddenly seemed like the DIY ethic would bust open the exclusivity of this relationship by a generation of artists who would A, not give a fuck about getting on the radio and then B, get on the radio. This sea change against the bloated classic rock scenario was a long time coming, but had an immediate affect on young bands and songwriters that were coming of age in the early eighties. It spurred me on in a huge way and inspired me to start writing my own songs.

Then the early nineties came, and the band I was in, Lowest Of The Low, was part of a wave in Toronto of bands that suddenly enjoyed the ability to manufacture their own CDs, and in so doing cut out some middlemen and get their work right to the audience they played for. As well, there was a generation of DJs and VJs willing to take a chance on these independent acts, at least at such stations as 102.1 [Toronto's CFNY, now "the Edge"]. That door remained open for about five years as far as I can tell, and it created a sort of renaissance of grassroots music and the street and the industry enjoying a mutually beneficial, if somewhat tenuous, relationship.

Since then, we've witnessed a corporate merging of the many into the few, and nowadays with the Clear Channel phenomenon and fewer major labels, the door has again closed on independently made music. This is not a specifically music or art related trend of course. It's the logical extension of corporate capitalism and the modern trend of corporatism in general.

What are your feelings on file sharing? Have people stopped buying CDs?

The counterpoint to this problem seems to be the democratization of the arts through the internet. On one hand, it's a wonderfully democratic tool to raise awareness of independently made art. On the other hand, it gluts the senses, so that it is very difficult to wade through the miles of shit in order to get to the good stuff. Everyone can now make a disc in their bedroom. Some people shouldn't.

My thoughts on file sharing are similar to my thoughts on cassette taping back in the day. If people are music fans and have an awareness of the struggle it takes to be an artist and to build a life of making music, they will more than likely support those artists they love by buying their CDs. File sharing may be a way in, and a risk free way to check stuff out, but it's then up to

word of mouth to make the music viable. I admit this may be a generational blind spot I have. It's been suggested to me that there is already a generation growing up never feeling the need to pay for music. I have no rebuttal to that.

I think—well, I know, people are walking away from record stores en masse, but that doesn't mean they've necessarily stopped buying CDs. Most of my friends buy online. And if we get to a day when people stop buying CDs because they've stopped being interested in music—literature, visual art, film, et cetera—then the culture is doomed anyhow.

How do you see the future playing out in the music industry?

I think these things are cyclical to some degree. There will always be energy from the street level for new art forms and new modes of getting that art to people. The need is there, so the demand will follow in some form. And the struggle to wrest

control of that work from the hands of the artist to the corporate entity that shills it will go back and forth as well. I've seen it happen at least twice in my lifetime and expect to see it again. And as I said before, this is no different than the struggle that goes on between labor and corporate entities in all walks of life. The many are struggling for control of their labor from the hands of the few.

Some people in the United States describe our healthcare system as a form of lifestyle blackmail. As a Canadian, your healthcare is provided at no direct cost to you. As the father of an 18-month-old daughter with your partner Jill, and as an independent musician and artist, how would your life change if you had to shell out \$1000 a month for health insurance?

Needless to say it would be much harder. Healthcare and education are two sectors of society that should be immune to

exploitation. They should be birthrights of all people of a society. The fact that the wealthiest nation in history cannot—will not—provide free healthcare and education to its population sickens me. Socialized healthcare in Canada has been hard won and is by no means permanent. There are attempts at every turn to repeal it, to privatize it and to chip away at its social foundation.

What are the implications for a society like the US, that treats its independent artists so harshly?

The implications are infinite, but I'd say, in the interest of being brief, irrelevancy, decline and revolution.

Ron's recently completed album, Chemical Sounds, is available at victimlesscapitalism.com. You can learn more about Ron, his music and his art at ronhawkins.com. He'll be playing at the Tralf in Buffalo Saturday, November 3rd at 8pm.

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Michael Gildea

30 Days of Night



"Where the hell is the craft service table?"

Now here's the movie that could've been called *We Own the Night*. Another movie based on a graphic novel (that means R-rated comic book) you've never heard of. Unless you live in your parent's basement, that is. This also means it's going to shamelessly pilfer its visual style from either a metal video or another movie based on an R-rated comic book.

So there's some town near or above the Arctic Circle where there's no sunshine for... I'm gonna guess 30 days. Josh Harnett is some kind of hick sheriff up there and vampires start popping out of the woodwork. Their faces look like they were designed with some distorted CGI

and it makes sense. You're a vampire and you don't have to find a coffin or a dark nook to rest your My Chemical Romance-looking ass in. I mean, the food's going to be frozen *and there is really no measure to how much I truly do not care about this movie or its trailer.*

Josh Harnett looks like a grown up version of DJ from *Rosanne* and sounds like Keanu Reeves to me. Maybe he's a cool guy and everything, but those things have always bugged me about him and I don't want to pay cash money to be reminded that he exists. Now I'm just going by the trailer here, but it seems like the filmmakers are asking us to forget that they're plopping yet another shitty horror movie in front of us by telling us that it's based on an R-rated comic book. Like we're supposed to say *Ooh! Ooh! Sin City, V for Vendetta and 300 were all graphic novels, I mean R-rated comic books so 30 Days of Night must be good too.* The trailer trying to get you to see this movie is like some pimp telling you that you should do it to some girl with Down Syndrome because she'll swallow.

Wow. I just grossed *myself* out. I never wondered what it would feel like, because I never actually thought I could pull it off. I don't know if it's like hearing The Stones for the first time or if it's like smelling raw sewage for the first time. I hope I don't start chasing the dragon.

The Heartbreak Kid



Add 2 parts Stiller, 1 part romantic comedy, and you get the same crap you always do

Yeesh. Here we go again. Ben Stiller playing his typically neurotic character in another series of supposedly comic mishaps designed to line his and a self-important producer's pockets. Or release the tension out of a shitty and unoriginal first date after soup and salad at Fuddrucker's. But I'm guessing the latter is merely incidental.

According to this zinger of a trailer for *The Heartbreak Kid*, Stiller plays (get this...!) a "guy who could never commit" because "the idea of marriage" is "just so permanent." If you can stand a little more, you'll see he "finally takes a chance." Shit, sign *me* up because that *never* gets old! At the patented bad-advice-of-his-unattractive-best-friend, he marries a girl he's known for 6 weeks. On their honeymoon in an unrealistically beautiful Mexican backdrop, Stiller discovers he married an unbalanced and severely annoying (but in a *really* funny way) retard. A reasonably cute retard, but a retard nonetheless.

It's at this point in the trailer that the directors of *There's Something About Mary* are announced to have some grimy hand in this, and the fart jokes and unfavorable sophomoric humor begin (remember, there's *good* sophomoric humor and *bad* sophomoric humor). Mix in that bad date movie aspect of Stiller meeting the "right" girl on his honeymoon, and you're in thirtysomething hell. This looks so bad I wouldn't be surprised if Carlos Mencia shows up.

We Own the Night



"OK. This is funny. True story: I once stabbed a guy's eye out. Seriously."

If I had to take a guess, I'd say the fact that "Heart of Glass" by Blondie playing at a shitty disco, the bad outfit Joaquin Phoenix is in and the hooker makeup that Eva Mendes has on sets *We Own the Night* in the '80s. You know, because nothing draws in all the suckers like playing the same crappy music they've been listening to for nearly the last 25 years.

Just in case you haven't seen *The Departed* enough on cable and the idea of seeing Mark Wahlberg playing another hard-assed cop makes your fly itch in that really good way, here's what you can expect: Two brothers, one an ambitious club owner/drug runner and the other an ambitious cop looking to take down a drug ring. And Robert Duvall is their father *and* the chief of police. (You smell that cooking?) Oh, and Wahlberg and Duvall are heading up the task force to take drugs off the streets.

So Phoenix's dope ring buddies decide to tell him they're going to wear Elephant Man hoods and take out the heads of the cops on their collective ass. Moral dilemma time.

So despite the fact that Wahlberg was always dad's favorite, Phoenix decides to potentially put his wang on the chopping block so his brother and father will invite him over for poker night. Car crashes, lots of action and trouble ensue. Don't get me wrong, it doesn't look *that* bad, but it doesn't look that good either. Maybe if I'm on a plane or home sick from work when it hits cable. But if the filmmakers promise me Mendes gets used as a coke mule, I'll go opening night. And besides, only pretentious asses say shit like they "own the night." It sounds like a shitty teen vampire movie.

Michael Clayton



He's bringing Clooney back

For years, George Clooney seemed to have this trademarked acting style (unfortunately trademarked by William Shatner) where he... annunciated his... dialogue with... dramatic... pauses... intended to... leave you... hanging on his... every... word. Combine that with his salt and pepper (many have called it distinguished) hair color and the fact that he smiled a lot and looked down in a shy, yet devilish manner. And no one really seemed to mind because he had a reasonable amount of presence, he was pretty funny and schoolgirls to cougars to

grannies wanted to screw him like pyramid scheme latecomers.

Then Clooney met up with a talented director who decided to make him do something he'd never tried before—acting. Since then, Clooney's taken up directing, picked some smart, socially-conscious roles and hasn't committed any cultural war crimes involving rubber suits with nipples. He even got an Oscar—for acting of all things!

Now Clooney's doing a lukewarm Grishamesque conspiracist lawyer drama/thriller called *Michael Clayton*. Some guilt-ridden lawyer is about to win a multi-billion dollar class action lawsuit and flips his shit. Clooney plays the burned-out fixer called in to take the reins on the situation and pull off the biggest screwjob yet. There's running, plenty of trouble and serious dialogue that starts getting kind of boring about halfway through the trailer. Then the trip continues south when Clooney falls off the annunciation wagon.

But you're not sure you care, because Clooney's kind of dreamy. Not in the *I'm going to tug it in the shower to him* kind of way. But in the *I think we'd be good friends and would have fun hanging out* kind of way. You know? I think we'd have a lot to talk about. He doesn't have

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Washed up Hero Gets Second Chance at Glory



Nauseatingly Cute Children



Wisecracking Cartoon Animal



Gratuitous Christ Imagery



Rampant Xenophobia



Simplistic Epiphany



Crappy Remake



Likable Thug

that air of douchieness to him and you feel like you can trust him around your woman or your pets. Speaking of which, Clooney seems like the kind of guy your girlfriend or wife would leave you for and you wouldn't mind too much. Unless your kids start calling *him* Daddy at which point you'd have to teach the son of a bitch a thing or two. Yeah, then it'd be on. Let's see you fix that one, Michael Clayton.

Rendition



Commander in Streep

If you watch the trailer for *Rendition* (or *Dude, Where's my Civil Liberties?*) you'll see a rambunctiously cheery Reese Witherspoon talking to her Husband of Questionable Heritage (HQH) on the phone as he's getting home from a business meeting. He gets pulled into a stairway and eventually Witherspoon isn't so bubbly. We're eventually introduced to a couple of craggy, burned out government agents, played by Meryl Streep and Alan Arkin, who decide to send his ass out of the country. You know, for kicks.

Enter Jake Jellyjar, I mean Gyllenhaal, as the young agent out on his first assignment, and a cue-balled man of Middle Eastern descent, explaining why his methods are just as he beats Witherspoon's crying, buttery pecan husband, who isn't particularly pleased with his situation. Meanwhile, Witherspoon is nagging her way up the governmental food chain. Things heat up with some explosions, and Witherspoon's nagging eventually gives way to whining.

My money says the HQH is guilty as

shit. The trailer spends too much time confusing us and asking deep moral questions to its audience to make you even consider the possibility of the HQH's guilt. The cast also distracts, Witherspoon for the boys and Gyllenhaal for the girls and *Brokeback* enthusiasts. Even if the supposed eye candy doesn't do its job, you'll likely feel burned that you just shelled out cash American to watch the same stuff you've been seeing on CNN special reports for the last few years.

Things We Lost in the Fire



"At least I didn't lose my hotness."

Fall means Abercrombie-clad douchebags traveling the rusty, yellowing countryside, another year of bad TV and gruesomely overpaid football players taking no less than 18 minutes to set up plays that last no longer than 8 seconds. It also means overseas auteurs storming Hollywood to release pretentiously contrived tragedies in hopes of spewing out some libido-murdering acceptance speech at the Oscars months later.

This year the smell of cat shit is trailed by Halle Berry, trying to uglify herself again by wearing no makeup (the Academy loves fake-ugly as much as retard roles) as a widow who goes on a codependency bender with her dead husband's loser best friend, played by Benicio Del Toro.

The trailer shows Del Toro moving into Berry's impossibly expensive, yet modest home with her and her tragic mulatto children/future underwear models she had with her husband, the now-dead David Duchovny. They've got the curly hair and the blue eyes—wow!! It looks like Berry and Del Toro might hook up in their grief, but if he puts his throbbing

uncircumcised member in her fartbox after she says *'make me feeeeeel good,'* you'll know this is just a shameless Oscar ploy. The trailer alone made me feel like I just read something off of Oprah's book club list or like I just had my nose broken with a hardcover copy of *The Secret*. I'll just go listen to the Low album by the same name and pretend this isn't happening.

Dan in Real Life



Slightly less disappointing than Evan Almighty

From the moment the woozy narrator of the trailer for *Dan in Real Life* explained how Steve Carrel plays a renowned advice columnist whose life is kind of in shambles, I got bored. Yeah, yeah—loves his daughters, overly protective of them after what I'm guessing is the death of a wife or volatile breakup with a trannie roommate, whatever. You pretty much lost me at hello. I like Carrel, just not *this* much. Besides, I get too many irony enemas when I go to the movies lately.

Then Carrel meets a girl who he manages to make laugh at a book store in the annoyingly typical scenic town where he's visiting his parents. But wait! Oh no! Turns out this little dream pie is dating his brother! And the worst part? Dane Cook plays his brother! And they're playing a shitty Pete Townsend song in the trailer! They're dancing around and partaking in contrived family activities! You know, just to try something new! And there's comically awkward situations involving sneaking out a bathroom window and falling in the bushes below!

I feel like I'm watching *Meet the Parents* and the only upside is that I don't have to put up with Ben Stiller. And the words *real* and *life* do not belong in a movie title. At least not in that order.

Saw IV




"Ah! When will they stop making these?!"

The trailer for *Saw IV* says if it's Halloween then it must be *Saw*. A bunch of grisly and brutal images that go for gross more than they do for scary projected on a wall. And the people who write to us at The BEAST have the ass to call us lazy?

Yeah, yeah. More lunatic ramblings and death traps and Jigsaw or whatever his name is. All of the *Saw* movies mean less to me than my last crap. I wouldn't waste time out of my life, hard drive space, blank DVDs or even blank VHS tapes on these movies.

To me the *Saw* movies are a lot like getting bad press or being the object of any kind of negative attention. If some prick is picking on you and you get upset or pissed off, it's just going to keep coming. A whiny reaction is all that's needed to keep the ball rolling. Just ask Tom Cruise. And in the event that you do get the former Mr. Mapother on the line, he'll also tell you that ignoring it eventually makes it go away. Unless it's some kind of VD in which case *anyone* will tell you that.

But apparently that's not working. I ignore these goddamned things and the same gang of Roger Corman wannabes keep farting them out! And I don't even see them! So maybe I'll go take a nap in an iron maiden or something. From what I've heard that Pinhead or Handjob or whatever the hell he goes by died like 2 movies ago, and they're still dragging this out like he's Anna Nicole. All I can say is if you do go, expect to smell plenty of Axe body spray, hear lots of Austin Powers impressions and see high-fives aplenty. 



"We read The BEAST because we can't bear speaking to one another."



l*** People named Brown edition ***

What can Brown do for you?



It takes a while for an NBA player to establish his legacy in the league — he might, over time, become known for last-second big-shot daggers (à la Bob Horry), or for continuing to play past age 63 (Dell Curry), or for hugely entertaining, unprovoked three-ring freak-outs (Rasheed Wallace).

A few years ago it would have seemed unlikely that former No. 1 overall pick Kwame Brown would leave *any* legacy at all, but that situation has clearly changed. By the start of the '07-'08 season, the strapping, stone-handed big man has earned himself a triple legacy: he is, at once, perhaps the biggest draft bust of all time (move over, Joe Barry Carroll); the player whose continuing mental and developmental immaturity after being drafted out of high school may have provoked the league to end the practice of allowing pre-collegians into the league; and now has become the player perhaps most likely to accrue a completely pointless arrest during the NBA off-season.

Brown may have sealed that final part of his trifecta this past week, when he pulled a Mount Etna act with some small-town Georgia cops. The details of the incident are sketchy, but his cousin, Charles Warren Jr.,

was arrested for a DUI in Valdosta, Georgia. It appears that Brown was not a passenger in the car when his cousin was driving, but was in the area. His cousin had turned the wrong way down a one-way street and gotten himself pulled over, at which point Brown walked over to the officers and became confrontational. The publicly released reports so far stink of a Gil Arenas situation ("You can't arrest me — I'm a professional-basketball player"), especially the part where police say that Brown came over and "told the officers he was Warren's cousin and the vehicle belonged to the basketball player." Police say Brown at some point became "disruptive," earning himself a disorderly conduct charge and an additional count of "interfering with an

officer." He was then hauled to the pokie and released on bond shortly thereafter.

Brown has been arrested twice before. Once was for a legendarily strange incident in which the seven-footer accosted a man who was on his way to a Los Angeles restaurant to celebrate his birthday. Brown grabbed the man's \$190, two-foot-by-two-foot birthday cake, and hurled it at him, splattering his back with chocolate filling. It seemed the man had arranged to pose for a photo with the cake and with Lakers forward Ronny Turiaf, whom he had run into on the street and who was celebrating his own birthday. For reasons that have never been fully explained, Kwame did the deed and then jumped into a white limo and fled the scene.

Sports Blotter Legend



Exotic Dancer/
Hooker



X-treme DUI



Performance
enhancing
"vitamins"



Open container
of alcohol



Cloying/
Agent-drafted
public apology



"Disagreement"
in parking lot



Subdued
via taser



Rape/Sexual
assault



Unregistered
handgun



Those drugs
belong to my
brother/cousin/
someguy



Frantic spousal
911 call



Stats cheerily
recited after
AP report



Big-ass SUV



Incident involving
"baby momma"



Burglary/theft



No contest plea

Cake-strewn, the victim then complained to yet another Lakers forward, Lamar Odom, and nearly got himself beaten up by Odom's bodyguard. (Odom, it should be noted, rescued the poor bastard, saying, "He didn't do anything.") Prosecutors considered filing a "grand theft of a person" charge against Brown, but ultimately declined.

Later, Brown was arrested on suspicion of sexual assault after a woman claimed he forced sex on her in his home after game three of the 2006 playoff series against the Phoenix Suns. Police dropped the charges after an exam showed no signs of sexual assault. Brown subsequently released a statement that was remarkable if only for its uncomfortable use of the word "stain," given the context: "And even when the truth is finally determined, the stain of an allegation remains with no real recourse against or penalty to the accuser."

Give Brown 18 points for the pointless pre-training-camp arrest. Had he gone another week without trouble, he'd be relaxing in Honolulu with the rest of the Lakers, sipping drinks with paper umbrellas. But instead he had to get all verbal and such with a bunch of dumb, rural Georgia cops. Not too bright. Oh, and by the way, as a player, the guy sucks ass.

What did Brown do to you?



Meanwhile, another NBA Brown — former Michigan State Spartan star and current Cleveland Cavalier guard Shannon Brown — was involved in a completely different sort of incident. Brown was at a Cleveland nightclub called Liquid with teammates Drew Gooden and Larry Hughes. All three of the men were wearing baseball caps. At first, club officials asked the players to remove the hats. Then, after Brown and company informed them who they were, they were allowed to keep them on.

But bouncers at the club balked, and Brown was tossed out of the club for a dress-code violation. After trying to find his teammates at another entrance to the club, some bouncers apparently jumped on Brown, stuck a knee on the back of his neck and kept him pinned to the ground. Way to help out the guard-starved home team, Clevelanders.

Brown's filed assault charges against the bouncers. Let's see if, as punishment, the courts send them into the Cavs locker room for 10 unsupervised minutes.

*** **Orenthal James Supplemental** ***

Free the Juice!



The last time I saw O.J. was in the depositions for the civil trial, and believe it or not, Greta, it was in the men's room. And it was just us, and I was very uncomfortable. And all's he said to me was just, 'Answer everything honestly.' And I took off. I washed my hands and then I took off. — Kato Kaelin, speaking to Greta Van Susteren this past month.

As you surely have heard by now, O.J. Simpson is up to his old tricks again, this time barging into a Las Vegas hotel room with a bunch of armed dudes he met at a cocktail party and allegedly re-stealing memorabilia (the Juice claimed he was just reacquiring items stolen from him, but admitted he took other items, as well) from a pair of washed-up drifter-losers (one of whom, Alfred Beardsley, ended up being arrested some days later on a parole violation), potentially committing a full complement of felonies in the process. The case is already rife with beautiful ironies, including the hilarious fact that the suit O.J. wore at his murder acquittal was among the memorabilia the pair allegedly stole from Simpson.

The whole scene was deliciously captured on audiotape, with O.J. screaming, "Don't let nobody out of here" and "You think you can steal my shit, motherfucker?" Which, of course, underscores the most amazing thing about this case: the mathematically inexpressible breadth of Simpson's stupidity. How a guy who the whole world is just dying to catch in the commission of a serious crime could commit *kidnapping*, *armed robbery*, and *assault with a deadly weapon* on tape and in front of a half-dozen witnesses boggles the mind. After being caught in the act, O.J. then unveiled his legendary "sense of humor" for reporters, muttering something about "I thought what happened in Vegas stays in


Vegas." Simply put, O.J. Simpson is the best thing that ever happened to television — he's *The Addams Family* meets Jason from *Friday the 13th* meets *COPS* meets *Monday Night Football*. He's crazy, he's violent, he can't afford lawyers who'll keep him from saying dumb shit, and he used to run a 4.4 40. Is there a more marketable news protagonist in America than this guy?

On top of all this, we have O.J. Simpson to thank for the public resurfacing of Kato Kaelin, this generation's original famous-for-being-famous pseudo-celebrity icon. Alas, there are no more Katos in this world, mainly because today's talent-negative pseudo-celebrities tend to get their big break by sucking root on the Internet, not by squatting in the guest room of an alibi-seeking double murderer. So today's afternoon broadcasts on E! are filled with illiterate midriff-baring tramps instead of half-literate 40-year-old ex-surfers with affective disorder. Which is a shame, because the Kato era was a noteworthy one in American history, a time when we lived fat and happy off the Internet bubble and the scariest thing on television wasn't Osama bin Laden but Marcia Clark's hairdo. We got to go back to that time again recently, which was nice. And again, we have O.J. to thank.

Most hilarious, to this writer, was the reaction to the O.J. story on the World Socialist Web Site. If you want to know why communism will never take hold in America, read this:

In a time when Washington is busy laying the groundwork for possible attacks against Iran, when a report by Britain's polling agency ORB (Opinion Research Business) estimates that 1.2 million violent deaths have occurred in Iraq during the US occupation, when the US is facing a crisis in the housing market with alarming numbers of foreclosures, the top story on all the major news networks is the alleged botched robbery of some autographed footballs by a washed-up athlete.

I'm sorry, but even a *socialist* ought to be amused by O.J. Simpson. Even the proletariat needs to laugh occasionally, and we will have plenty of opportunities once O.J. lands in a Nevada prison carrying 48 years without possibility of parole. Can we start taking bets on the date of his inevitable religious conversion? Who among us wouldn't enjoy the sight of a completely bald, tattooed O.J. in leg manacles praying at a plastic table with Chuck Colson?

At this writing O.J. is being hit with additional felony charges, all of which could put him away forever. Which is certainly enough to put him in our top 10 for this year. 

MICROSHYLOCKS

Microfinance has been everybody's darling recently, and I've read nary an ill word about it until the above article [Steve Gordon, "Who wants to be an imperial occupier?" issue 119]. What's the beef, apart from being a spit in the wind compared to the predatory nature of the IMF/World Bank/WTO?

Alex Kendziorski

Dear Alex,

Well, basically, when you lend money to penniless people and charge them three times what the bank is charging you, you're a loan shark. But we agree, "microfinance" is a much prettier term for it.

STARTING TO CRACK

I know you guys over there hate my fucking guts, because I'm an American patriot and ten year navy veteran, but I'm here to bury the hatchet.

While reading "The Jihad Next Door" by Tina Temple-Raston, I seen that your Beast made her book. pg. 267 NOTES Matt Taibbi "Ken Shroeder's Lost Weekend. The Lackawanna Six Case: A View from the cheap seats." Issue 10, October 11:24, 2002.

It's good reading. My view, is that they went over there to learn Jihad, but they found out that they weren't that radical.

But after 9-11, everything goes. They done fucked up real good.

It was right not to take any chance and lock these misguided men up.

That's how it goes. Everybody is someone's son, father Uncle, etc., but not everyone goes to Afghanistan and trains with Osama bin Laden in an al-Qaeda terrorist camp.

I was in the Persian Gulf region and we visited Karachi Pakistan and it's one fucked up place.

We have to fight this war and win it. Winning is having Iraq and Afghanistan being able to be free and democratic with the ability to defend themselves.

Yes, there are many other reasons and oil is but one of them. Take that up with the glutinous Americans who have to buy

FAX (716)362-0619

[sic]

sic@buffalobeast.com

big SUV's and trucks to drive their big fat asses around.

James Ziolkowski
Buffalo, NY
Ten Year Navy vet.

Dear James,

"After 9/11, everything goes." Sure, they weren't terrorists, or even thinking about becoming terrorists, but hey—9/11! Sure, your concept of victory is an unattainable hallucination, but... 9/11! It's funny, because it almost seems like you want to admit we're right, but you've dug yourself so firmly into the War on Terra dogma that you feel you'd be losing your sense of self. Just look at that last line about fat Americans and their fat trucks—you sounds like a dope-smoking undergrad! Face it, James; your conscience, or your long-forgotten capacity for dispassionate analysis, is creeping in. That's what you get for reading books.

NO BOB FROST

wanted to say that your site and the info (especially the writing) is the well of reality. the diversity of topics and positions are a clue to minds thinking out side the box that you really do HAVE TO THINK outside the box.

i just had the pleasure and the enjoyment of being "cosmic directional routed" to your site and must say... ducking and dodging those meteors to get here was worth the shot out of the slingshot!

glen still
multi-dimensional poet
scofflaser.eyewrite.net

Dear Glen,

Glad you like us. Too bad you're a soft-skulled hippie. Poetry used to mean something; now it just means, "I'm inarticulate and hit the enter key every five words or so."

THE ROSA PARKS OF STUPID PEOPLE

Dear Sirs,

Matt Taibbi is the most self-centered,egotistical,self-serving,assinine,self-righteous cuntbag on the damn planet!! And look who in the FUCK is talking!! Talk about a 'bullshit artist' that's funny I sure as SHIT don't remember that attitude when little snotty pricks like him were praising sleazebag Clinton at every goddamn turn. Not to mention making excuses for all his sicko,creepo,selazy behavior NOW all of a sudden this asswipe wants to criticize?!! What a bunch of bullshit!! America has been putting 'bullshit artists' in office for a long,long time now so why all the bitching from bitches like him over Mr. Obama could it be because one who is close to winning is also[gasp] black?! I think the only REAL bullshitter is the one you hired.

Lavern

Dear Lavern,

Boy you really nailed it. If there's one thing an article called "Obama: The Best BS Artist Since Slick Willie" [issue 114] screams, it's "I love Bill Clinton!" Obviously you've never read anything else by Matt, but it's pretty fucking amazing that you think it's Obama's right to be president because he's no worse than the parade of globe-raping sociopaths that came before. But we should apologize really, because, in the words of Dr. King, "Anytime a white guy criticizes a black guy, it's racism." Stay strong, Michael Vick!

REQUEST DENIED

It would be a treat if you could post all the fun facts together, perhaps in the comix section.

Michael

Dear Michael,

Fun Fact: We're too lazy to do that!

ATLAS FILCHED

I was at the Pizza Plant on Transit road in late September to pick up some vittles. Since that's the only place I know of that distributes the BEAST I was looking forward to putting \$2.00 into the collection box and picking up the latest issue. I noticed then that someone had smashed the money box and stolen all your loot. Since it was near the end of the month I bet before your money

was stolen, the box was crammed with cash. So some dirty son of a bitch walked by and must have figured he had more right to your money than you do. When we as a society cease to have an innate respect for others' property rights, we are doomed. We get things like higher taxes to fund wars and police states. We get higher incidences of smash and grab robberies. We get laws that ban smoking on a bar owner's supposedly private property. The thief was probably a socialist or a liberal. He thinks that just because it's a good idea in his mind, he has a claim to your property.

This is why I am voting for Ron Paul in the Republican primary election, and again in the general election if I have the opportunity. Ron Paul believes in the restoration of private property rights and drastic curtailment of the sort of theft euphemistically referred to as "taxation." His government would serve as a good example, infusing the minds of the populace with respect for each other's property. Perhaps if the thief were thusly influenced, he wouldn't have jacked you guys. Ron Paul is also the only viable candidate to have opposed the Iraq war before it even started, and the only Republican to firmly oppose it currently. Since I bet that only a tiny fraction of your readers are registered Republicans, they probably cannot vote for Dr. Paul in the primary election. They can help, however with their labor or dough-nating at ronpaul2008.com .

As for me, sign me up for a Beast subscription. You guys deserve the money.

Aloysius P. Longfellow (Buffalo)

Dear Aloysius,
"That thief was probably a socialist or liberal?" Really? You sure it wasn't some rage-aholic conservative who can only get it up for Rush Limbaugh and thinks we're the scum of the earth? Or maybe some asshole kid who has never had a political thought about anything? You really think it was some ACLU supporter in a "property is theft" T-shirt? That really wouldn't make sense, since a socialist would steal from the rich, and then use the money to buy a subscription to The BEAST. Thieves don't generally go through a lot of internal political debate, you know—it's more like, "hey, I can get that money," and then they're off. Sort of like what the Republicans have been doing since they "cleaned up congress" in the '90s. But we gotta love your optimism. Sure, there's a real good chance that guy would have thought to himself, "I could steal this money, but President Ron Paul would not approve." Imagine, a world in which Ron Paul's arrow-straight moral compass steers us all away from misdemeanor theft, not to mention the horrors of legal abortion, public education, and health care. We only see one error: "viable" means "has a shot at winning."

PRAISE WITH FAINT DAMNING

well, A Monkey writes well and has something interesting and even a bit insightful to say. Too bad that in 10 years, A Monkey's bit about religion is the only decently written thing to appear in either Exile or BB. Cheers

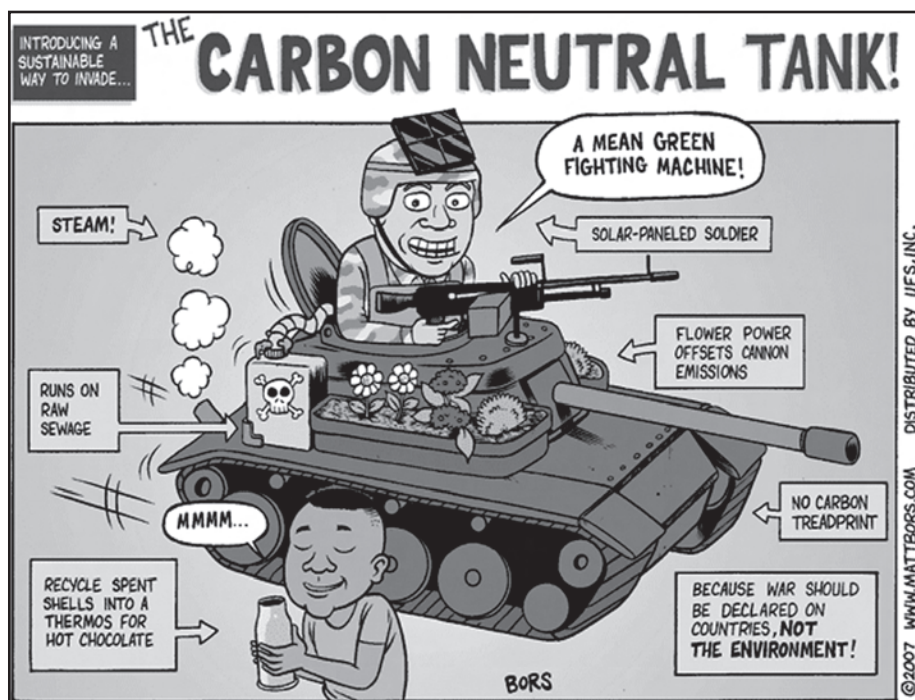
Dear nameless ass,
We have forwarded this message to our IT department and the guys at the eXile. Once Rajneesh locates your IP address, Mark Ames and John Dolan are going to throw a beatdown party at your place. Cheers!

LUDDITE SCAT FREAK

Here's a Brooklyn story from 1990 or 91 that sums up my entire view on life. Even as recently as 1990, the spirit of anti-education industry and anti-bad software industry was still alive. The kids didn't just roll over and comply by learning how to operate junk software because they had to. They knew how to rebel against "The Man".

One day, I was thinking "Man, I hate the goddam school I'm in, and I especially hate this newfangled software (like Word, and C, and this "internet" thing, and "beepers" that all the doctors, whores, and drug dealers had) that we were being forced to learn about just to be able to stay alive in our courses and daily lives". Every time some goddam company would put out some junk software, the pinheads would learn it with all the cryptic commands, and then it would become a fad. Now, we had to learn it, knowing that in a few years, there would be some other new fad we'd have to re-learn. It was a racket, and we needed a people's revolution from the trenches and the gutters.

Just then, as I walked by the Computer Science Dept Office, someone had outdone me! Forget the gutter; this guy said it from the bowels! Stuck on the engraved Comp Sci Dept sign was a giant turd. What amazed me the most was how such a giant turd could defy gravity and adhere to the door and to its principles. That turd was no sell out. It was telling the Man, "Hey Man, I'm telling YOU what to do now", because no education industry or software company could just ignore it and do nothing about this. It was saying "Take that, white corporate



America.” (Well, a lot of programmers are Indian, but what the hell. You get the general idea.)

The next day, the turd was removed, but in typical education and software industry fashion, it was removed in a half-assed way, with residual still stuck in the engraved lettering. Typical! How education industry! How software! These guys summed up what’s wrong with schools. “We’ll fix the problem sorta, and you the public will have to adapt to the results.”

Kids nowadays are so beaten down and compliant that not only will they put up with bad software and marginal education, they don’t even complain, revolt, or throw turds. What’s wrong with this generation?

James H. Burnette

*Dear James,
Yeah, software sucks—except for the software that enables us to write, edit, design and lay out this publication and our website. And the software used to print and distribute it. And the software we used to receive your e-mail. And the software that makes e-mail possible. But yeah... poop. This really sums up your entire view on life?*

BACK AND TO THE LEFT

Your half-baked attempt at debunking 9/11 conspiracy theories gave me a chuckle or two, especially the uninformed but comical imaginary exchange between Rumsfeld, Bush and Cheney [Matt Taibbi, “I, Left Gatekeeper, issue 108] I. Unfortunately, like most bloggers you obviously lack the most basic research methodology and instead “shoot from the hip” while writing, making it up as you go. Who needs research, you’ve got a keyboard and a cunning sense of wit, right? If you had bothered to research any of the 9/11 truth movement, you would have found that no one claims the plane over Shanksville was intended to be blown up. Most likely it was shot down, the reason why no one knows. Likewise why Building 7 (which you of course didn’t mention at all since it would have rendered moot the rest of your rantings) was demolished at 5:20 that day. Most likely it was supposed to collapse while one of the towers was collapsing, so that in the dust the collapse would not be

visible. Why it was demolished so late in the afternoon no one can say for sure. And herein lies my point. Instead of you saying “Yes, the collapse of Building 7 is strange and does raise important questions about that day,” you attack the people saying that it is strange because they cannot explain exactly who did it and why. Actually you don’t say that because of course like most of these propaganda hit pieces you stay away from Building 7 entirely. But for other points, like the Pentagon or Flight 93, you say “Give me a full explanation with names and motives. Oh you can’t, then you must be crazy and your evidence completely without merit.” It’s like a cop discovering a dead body shot in the head and a gun next to it. You would be the cop’s supervisor saying “Tell me who did this and why. Oh you don’t know? Well then obviously there was no murder and your evidence is worthless.” This is why the 9/11 truth movement is pushing for a NEW INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION!! WE DO NOT HAVE SUBPOENA POWER!!! How can we find out who these people are or what their motives were if the most in depth investigation we have had involved Bush and Cheney testifying TOGETHER and NOT under oath with no transcripts. We need a new, independent and full investigation. Get Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, Larry Silverstein et al. under oath and ask the hard questions. This is what we want. You want to know exactly who did it and why? SO DO WE!!! samlabrier

*Dear Sam,
In other words, what you’re saying is, you don’t know. You don’t know why the buildings fell when they did, or why the plane crashed, or, for that matter, how the CIA or Carlyle Groups or whoever convinced people to fly planes into buildings, or how they managed to rig skyscrapers with what must have been thousands of explosive charges without anyone noticing. But you know who did it. How do you know, Sam? Of course, we’re sure that if such an independent investigation as you suggest was undertaken, and found no evidence of governmental foul play, you’d accept that, right? Right. Obviously, a “blogger” like Matt Taibbi can’t match the diligence and journalistic ethics of Alex Jones and the Loose Change guys, but he needs that monthly collusion stipend he gets from the Department of Astoundingly Successful Large-Scale Conspiracies.*

WARNING: GRAPHIC CONTENT

I Love the Beast! I just felt I should let you know that up front, before you go on thinking that this is going to be another piece of hate-mail from some crybaby who has had their feelings hurt by your insensitivity. Piss on them, right? Anyway, I was wondering, could you put more pictures from the issues online? They are hysterical! I truly appreciate the wit of the staff for coming up with the things that they do, and only hope someday I can write as satirically. I am abroad right now, and would like to show people more of the Beast, but we need pictures! This could be good for you, as I’m endorsing the Beast and maybe they’ll subscribe. So please, PLEASE add more pictures! Thanks!
Melanie



BEAST-O-SCOPES

Libra (Sept 23 – Oct 22)

Yes, Libra, your body is a cooperative aggregation of microscopic organisms, which are themselves similar networks of smaller organisms, and your consciousness merely a convenient illusion created by some of them. Still, you should call your mother once in a while.

Scorpio (Oct 23 – Nov 21)

What are you even doing, Scorpio, talking about carbon dating? You don't know the first fucking thing about carbon dating, aside from what some creationist idiot said on the radio this morning, do you? In fact, I happen to know that, whenever you say the phrase "carbon dating," you picture two cartoon carbon atoms holding hands and smiling. Surprisingly, aside from the heads and limbs, the imaginary atoms are fairly accurate depictions of Buckminsterfullerenes.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 – Dec 21)

You're not an asshole because you sell drugs, Sagittarius. You're an asshole because you sell shitty drugs that don't work. Stop being an asshole.

Capricorn (Dec 22 – Jan 19)

I understand you're fond of saying that the troops know we can win in Iraq and we need to give them the chance, Capricorn, but yet another recent poll shows that three quarters of the troops in Iraq think we should get out within the next year. So shut the fuck up.

Aquarius (Jan 20 – Feb 18)

Your secret laugh-suppression campaign to make your boyfriend feel like he's not funny is peculiar and cruel, Aquarius. You're basically just a mean old cunt, and I'm glad he's boning your half-sister. She laughs a lot, you know.

Pisces (Feb 18 – Mar 20)

Pisces, your cross-genre blaxploitation/monster movie screenplay, "Godzilla Jones," will become an unlikely smash hit, but your career will be tragically cut short when you are crushed under a giant coke spoon during production, and plans to make your Yiddish Sci Fi epic, "Attack of the Jewmanoids," will fall flat.

Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 19)

I know it's a classic show, once the best thing on TV, but it's time to face the truth: "The Simpsons" just isn't that good anymore, Aries. It's actually pretty mediocre at this point. And just try to tell me that movie wasn't dogshit. It's time to let go.

Taurus (Apr 20 – May 20)

You will be killed by a drunk driver on Thursday, Taurus. But it's okay, because he's a celebrity.

Gemini (May 21 – June 20)

Gemini, your ill-advised attempts to give yourself "Incredible Hulk Syndrome" are only going to give you anger issues and inoperable cancer. Turn off Fox News

As divined by
Andrew Gullerstein



and the gamma ray generator now, and you may keep a testicle.

Cancer (June 21 – July 22)

For future reference, Cancer, killing a guy when all you were trying to do was shoot the cigarette out of his mouth does not qualify as accidental death. Ponder that for the next 35 years.

Leo (July 23 – Aug 22)

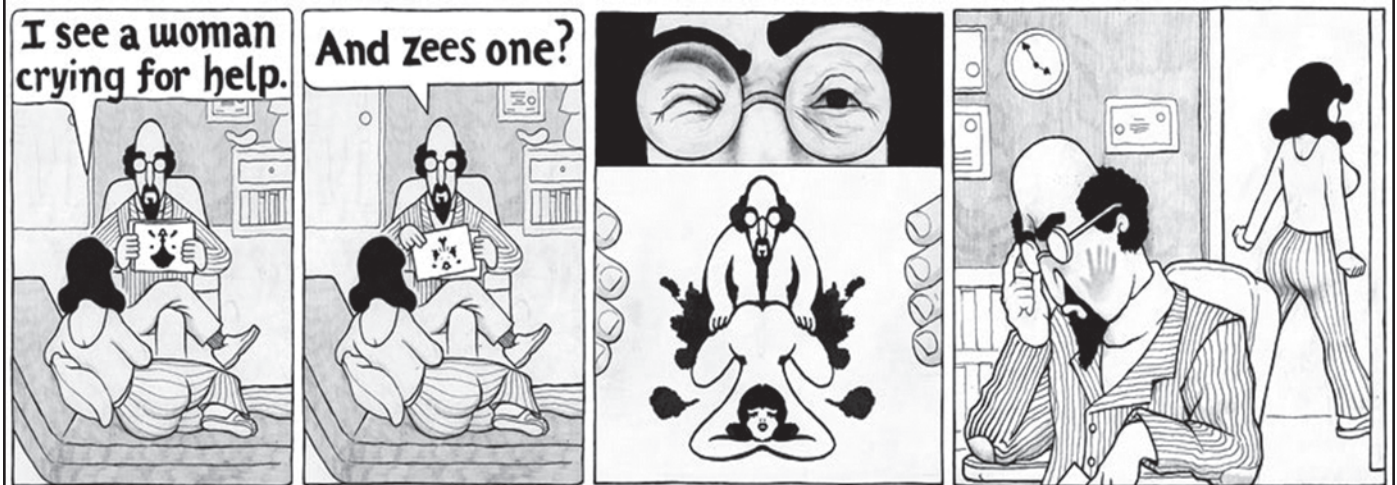
It turns out that over half of lipstick contains lead, Leo. So really, your poor academic performance is directly connected to your mother's whorishness.

Virgo (Aug 23 – Sept 22)

Your boss is a jerk, Virgo, but he is certainly not piping evil thoughts into your brain through your computer monitor. That's his secretary doing that.

THE PERRY BIBLE FELLOWSHIP BY NICHOLAS GUREWITCH

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