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# BEAST



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**GANG  
BANG  
08!**

**OVER 4  
HOURS OF  
CONTRIVED  
ACTION!**

**WATCH HER  
GET SMEARED  
FROM ALL  
SIDES!**

**CANDIDATES  
MASS-DEBATE  
OVER CLINTON**

# Separated at birth?



**Mormon Megalomaniac  
Mitt Romney...**



**...and Love Connector  
Chuck Woolery?**



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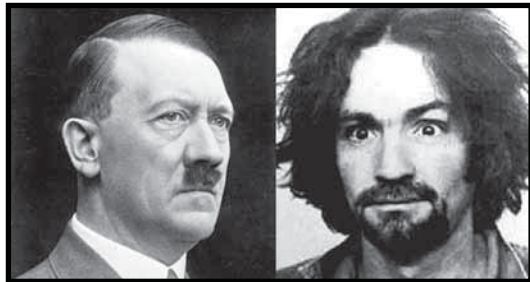
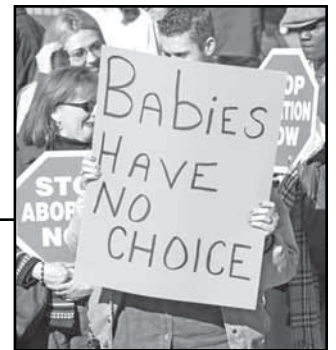


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# POLITICAL SHRINKAGE

## Clinton the Castrator induces pundit panic

By Allan Uthman

It can still amaze me sometimes, how little cable news pundits need to go on to manufacture a “political controversy” where none really exists.

Obviously, there are a lot of baseless lies perpetrated by repetition in the media every week. Recently, there was the infuriating “government has learned the lessons of Katrina” bit they kept pushing with the California wildfires story. Funny, I thought Kanye West articulated the lesson of Katrina quite well when he famously said “George Bush doesn’t care about black people.” So how does the fact that a largely affluent, white community were well cared for during their disaster imply that anything has been learned? It doesn’t.

But real news is not the forte of the press anymore—they’re really at their most creative when blanket-covering a pretty boring story, like a three-year-long presidential race. Ultimately, there’s not much real news there—polls, the occasional debate, speech or policy statement, and that’s about it. But there are a lot of hours to fill on a 24-hour news station, and it’s a hell of a lot easier to fill them with gossip. And if there’s nothing really to gossip about, well, you can just start rumors and talk about that.

Take the universally embraced spin that Hillary Clinton “played the gender card” in the wake of her nebulous performance in the October 30 debate.

Clinton was—paraphrasing here—whining like a little bitch, according to, well, everybody on TV. The question wasn’t even “is the bitch whining?” It was “is the bitch’s whining going to hurt her campaign?” But the evidence for her whining was very thin—nonexistent, really. The story was tethered to two soundbites: One was a web video called



*Pelosi and Clinton, now a lesbian folk duo*

“The Politics of Pile On”, released after Clinton’s very Kerry-like hedging fit over Governor Spitzer’s plan to give NY driver’s licenses to illegal immigrants. The video features Clinton’s debate opponents saying “Senator Clinton” repeatedly, and ends with Clinton saying “there’s a reason” for all the attention. The clear message: They’re criticizing me because I’m winning. There’s no reason to infer at all that she’s referring to her gender. There’s no reason the ad wouldn’t work equally if she were a man. What’s the inference, that she’s saying her opponents think she’s hot?

But the main anchor of the Clinton-as-crybaby story is a quotation from an address she recently gave at her alma mater, Wellesley: “In so many ways, this all-women’s college prepared me to compete in the all-boys club of presidential politics.” That’s it. From that, virtually every cable news pundit determined that Hillary Clinton thinks the men are being

mean because she’s a girl.

First of all, nothing could be less debatable than presidential politics being an all-boys club. Literally every single president, even every single major party nominee for president, throughout history, has been a man. It’s an all-boys club—also an all-whites club, naturally. Whether you like them or not, it really is a historic milestone in American politics that the two leading Democratic candidates are a black man and a woman. If Hillary wants to go back to her old school and brag about it, who can blame her? But that’s the thing: she’s bragging about being tough enough to roll with the big dogs. She can compete in the all-boys club, she says. How exactly does that indicate playing the victim? Here’s a clue: it fucking doesn’t. It just fucking doesn’t. There’s not a shred of credible evidence, not a little trace of a hint, that Hillary Clinton attempted in any way to cast herself as some metaphorical gangrape victim after her flawed debate

performance. The story was a total fiction.

We see these things from time to time, lately especially with Clinton. Obama's wife says that she takes care of her kids, and we're treated to a week of "Michelle Obama attacks Hillary" roundtable discussions. But what's especially disturbing is how transparent it is that this story is a simple projection of its crafters' feelings about Hillary and women in general. The premise of it was completely unsupported by the footnotes, but that didn't stop the "experts" on "Hardball" from inventing

their own, sexually insecure reality:

*Chris Matthews: Don't you both agree, Linda, that she should just lighten up on this gender, "The boys are coming to get me" routine?*

*Linda Douglass, National Journal: Well, you can't ask people to be gender-blind and then make it all about your gender. And I think in this case, she's making a really big mistake because now she's ventured into feminist territory where the man is the enemy. That's part of what comes across when you say, It's the boys,*

*it's all about the boys attacking me.*

Tucker Carlson, an obvious *Koro* sufferer who often makes all-too-transparent "Hillary wants to cut off my penis" remarks, had this to offer:

*And it was a quite—it was a complicated issue and it's a complicated question. Rather than answer it, she said this—"You know, Tim, this is where everyone plays gotcha." In other words, why are you picking on poor little female me? That's pathetic. Can you run for president by saying, "don't ask me mean questions, I can't handle it, I'm going to cry?" I mean that's what she's saying.*

Really? She said "gotcha," which is obviously code for "I'm a weak little girl?"

Of course Fox News' "Beltway Boys" had to get in on it:

*Mort Kondracke: Now, on this point about her using the gender card or the skirt card, whatever you call it, I think it's unworthy of her. After all, Golda Meir and Margaret Thatcher and Indira Gandhi did not whine how the boys are ganging up on me. They ruled.*

*Fred Barnes: Mort, very good. I guess you didn't drink the Kool-Aid. I thought I was going to have to say that about the gender card. Well said.*

Yes, that's a good little useful idiot, Mort. Similarly, Hillary was attacked on Hannity and Colmes, for "hiding behind skirts at Wellesley" and saying "those big mean boys are picking on me" by Virginia Republican harridan Kate Obenshain. Eventually, even Barack Obama joined in the fun, seriously diminishing his own credibility by reminding us that he's never called anyone a racist for criticizing him. Never mind how nuts that would be, or that Clinton, again, *never said anything* to even imply that sexism motivated her critics.

ABC News went even further in developing the non-story, adding their own transparently sexist plot twist: a catfight! Rick Klein's story, titled "Pelosi: Clinton Camp Played Gender Card," is entirely predicated on a quotation from Pelosi, in which she specifically says that that is not what happened: "[Sen. Clinton] said it best: They're 'piling on'—or whatever the words were -- 'because I'm the front-runner.' That's why they're piling on,"

# THE BEAST PAGE 5

## Inane Friedmanism

**Name:** "E2K"

**Turn-ons:** iPhones, Indians, Indians with iPhones, biofuels, unrealistic expectations, mixed metaphors, domestic poverty.

**Turn-offs:** Adherence to the principles of logic, the fact that Y2K didn't amount to squat and is an embarrassing cultural memory, that smart-ass Paul Krugman.

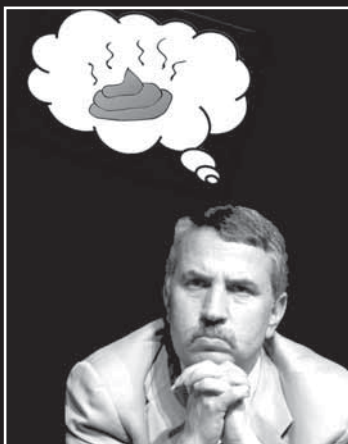
**How I got to be The BEAST Page 5 Inane**

**Friedmanism:** You have to understand first that my creator, NYT columnist Tom Friedman, has been going around saying that "Y2K should be a national holiday in India" for years, I guess because it jump-started the trend of outsourcing programming work there.

It doesn't make any sense—how do you make a holiday out of a year?—but Tom isn't particularly bothered by that. So now, Tom thinks there's going to be a lot of corporate carbon footprint-monitoring work for Indians, because of the tight emissions laws he fantasizes will be passed in the near future. So, obviously, this trend needs a neat, techie-sounding name that is derivative of an almost totally unrelated event, and if he gets in first, he gets to claim his own little patch of future zeitgeist. So now he's pushing me around like he just crapped a solid gold Blackberry.

**Future Plans:** I will, in all likelihood, be invoked by some idiotic journalist within the next month or so—maybe Howard Fineman will attempt to interject me into a global warming discussion, to display his "savvy." From there, I will grow briefly in popularity, then wane as people realize they have no earthly use for me at all, since I was conjured to label a largely nonexistent phenomenon, as it turns out that corporate emissions standards remain irresponsibly lax, due to the outrageous level of corruption in congress my author never hesitates to ignore.

**How I'd Like to be Remembered:** It would be better for all of us if I weren't.



said Pelosi. "If she was in third place, they wouldn't say, 'Let's go attack a woman.'"

Pelosi goes on to say "I think the campaign is trying... to say, 'Oh, they were really rude,' or something like that, and that has some salience."


So, based on that, Klein says that Pelosi is accusing Clinton of playing the dreaded gender card. It's hard to see how he would arrive at that conclusion, unless he just really, really wants to. But the most egregious part of the story is its accompanying picture (see page 4).

Come on. Seriously? This is ABC news? "House Hottie Decks Senate

Slut in Foxy Boxing Fracas?" Cynical I may be, but I really didn't know we were still this backwards as a country. I would expect this kind of ass-grabbing bullshit from *Maxim*, say, or *The Beast*, but when the major networks are manufacturing a false controversy and then framing it as aggressive lesbo foreplay, it only serves as a testament to how far we haven't come.

Look, there are real, good reasons to dislike Hillary Clinton. For instance, all the people who *don't* seem to dislike her anymore: Charles Krauthammer for instance, or George Will. Or key Bush funders. A lot of people I am uncomfortable with seem very comfortable with the prospect of another Clinton administration. Dislike Hillary because she left her principles at Wellesley, or because Bill signed NAFTA. Dislike her because she is John Kerry in a pantsuit, or because her healthcare plan is a giveaway to insurance companies and HMOs, not a

real solution. But please don't make it this obvious that our culture is still so infantile that any woman who doesn't shake her tits at us is perceived as an affront to masculinity. Don't just invent some hostile bullshit story because an ambitious woman makes your dick shrivel. It's just embarrassing.

Despite all this falsification of media narrative, Hillary will likely coast to the nomination, much to my own disappointment. But that's when things will kick into overdrive, and the real-time media sexism will really be impossible to ignore. Nobody's going to say "bitch;" they're going to say "cackle" and "shrill" and "nails on a chalkboard." They'll say "feminist" and "defensive" and "finger on the button." And it will always be in the form of a question: "Is Hillary a hysterical, shrieking maniac?" And then what? President Guiliani, the greater of two evils. And it wouldn't bother me so much if it wasn't for such idiotic reasons. 



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# Irish Get Out!

An 'Ol Timey Opinion




By Samuel T. Smythe T. Prescott  
VonVanderwhig T. Pinnyfeather  
T. Montibanks XXI

If I've orated thusly once, I've orated thusly a thousand times: The Irish are sub-human scum.

They infest our nation as if a plague of bubonic magnitudes. Their peculiarly foul, oft inebriated penchants for debauched vileness assault the delicate, gentile natural sensibilities of true-blue Americans. Their filthy and barbaric musings interrupt the talkies, and sap our vitreous humours by sheer effrontery to our very ethical foundations as moral, decent men of reason. They take our jobs, spread disease, bring street crime and speak in a cretinous manner. I for one will not stand idly by to see my great country engulfed by The Blarney Menace!

Our broken border policy of just a few short generations ago has proven a disaster. Lady Liberty, her libertine French perfume now sullied by the reek of soured whiskey, the once proud patina of her flowing gowns of freedom now stained the tincture of rotten potato peels, stands a traumatized wench doomed to a shallow existence of servile Leprechaun concubinage. We need to take back our country and her pride, by Jimminy!

One need only look at a signpost such as the sports and entertainment industries to see the Irish making good where they shouldn't be aloud: Eddie Murphy and his goonish clone Charlie, Shaquille O'Neil, another crude comedian Eddie Griffin, to name just a small fraction of the foul Irishmen ruining our nation.

What? OH... Well, hmm, well indeed. Let us not split hairs! Black, Irish, what's the difference? Both terrible races. And Mexicans too! Actually, the only group for which I have no disdain are Native Americans. What? No. European Americans!—not from Ireland, you know—real white people. Them and Lou Dobbs. I fucking love Lou Dobbs! 


# Chinese poison imports tainted with toys

WASHINGTON—Yet another revelation of tainted Chinese imports has drawn consternation from both the US government and its citizen alike. “Just when we thought it couldn't get worse,” laments FDA commissioner Andrew von Eschenbach, “we received the test results of several imported Chinese poisons—and they indeed contained a dangerous level of toys.”

Use of cheaper materials and a critical lack of Chinese regulation has dealt a serious blow to consumer confidence here in the US. “Christmas is just around the corner,” says single mother Clare Demure, “and I'm scared to buy my kids the poison, lead and date-rape drugs they love, for fear of toys.” Poison sales are down nationwide in the wake of new toy concerns.

Many are demanding a new agency be set up to monitor and test Chinese imports. “Yes, we will be setting up a new agency,” said House Minority leader John Boehner, “to monitor and test all poison imports coming into the country.” Then he cried. And, frankly, he smelled of gin.

“We currently have no reliable means to test poison,” says Eschenbach, “and we'll be forced to devise new and clever ways for detecting these dangerous playthings in our poison.” The agency is expected to lock children in a warehouse with various imported poisons. “If they die, we know the poison is pure,” adds Eschenbach, “if we hear the squeals of delight and general horseplay, we know we have a serious problem and we'll burn down the warehouse.”

The new agency is expected to be up and running by early next year, though some argue the task could be performed at less cost by outsourcing the testing to China. 



**Retailers are pulling Happy Fun brand poison from their shelves after tests showed Barbie-level contaminants**

# GOD HATES WOMEN

## *Feminism and Religion do not Mix*

*By Allison Kilkenny*

Most religions have a creepy fixation with the eradication of women's vaginas. Some African cultures mutilate the clitoris and sew the vagina shut for the sake of maintaining virginal "purity." Other zealots don't like their saviors free-falling from the womb. In fact, ideological fanatics have done everything in their power to explain away the vagina. God impregnated Mary from his great big bachelor pad in the sky, fat little Buddha burst from his mother's side, and we know little of Amna, Mohammad's mother, let alone his actual birth, but we can assume the good prophet didn't sully himself in vaginal juices. Like the rest of the prophets, Mohammad probably materialized from the heavens. After all, a woman's body is a dirty, sinful thing, which is why women are taught from an early age to be ashamed of their bodies and to keep them covered always.

The belief in a divine creator aside, no rational person can seriously argue that feminism and religiosity can coexist. If you claim to be a religious person, you are not a feminist, nor if you believe men and women are inherently equals can you claim to believe in the fundamental beliefs of any religion. As far as I know, there is no religion on Earth that presents men and women as exact equals.

The most popular version of Christianity claims women are inherently subservient to men, since Eve came from Adam's rib. Meanwhile, Mohammad married at least 11 times during his life, and his favorite wife, Ayesha Bibi, was six-years-old when he married her. Sexy.

Here are some jewels from the Quran, the sacred text of Islam:

II/223: Your women are a tilth for you (to cultivate). So go to your tilth as ye will...

I don't know about you, but if some dude walked up to me at a bar and said, "Hey, baby. Mind if I plow your field?" that man will receive my fist in his eye socket.



*God, seen here smacking his bitch up*

IV/34: Men are in charge of women, because Allah hath made the one of them to excel the other ... As for those from whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them.

Short and simple: Men are superior to women. Women are to be controlled, whether through violence or fear.

IV/15: (to women) If any one of your



women is guilty of lewdness ... confine them until death claims them.

IV/16: (for men) If two men among you commit indecency (sodomy) punish them both. If they repent and mend their ways, let them be. Allah is forgiving and merciful.

Homophobia aside, we see Allah, much like God, is all sunshine and puppy kisses, forgiving and loving, until you're a woman and you sin. Then, you're a whore in need of punishment.

In fairness to Mohammad, the God of the Christian bible is no better than the typical baby's daddy you see on an episode of COPS. Picture the big, white dude in the sky who orated this stirring tale:

Exodus 21:7-10 shows us that it is perfectly cool to sell your daughter into slavery and allow her master to rape her. Also in Exodus (22:16-17), if a man sleeps with a virgin (with or without her consent,) he must marry her. However, if her father refuses to allow her to wed, the man must then pay the father a dowry of virgins. How does the recently deflowered virgin feel about being treated like a piece of property? Well, funnily enough, we don't know. The Bible doesn't seem concerned about her feelings.

Leviticus chapter 12 reminds us that women are unclean. After giving birth to a boy, a woman is considered unclean for seven days. However, if she has given birth to a girl, she is unclean for 33 days. Regardless, the concept that a woman

is somehow unclean after giving birth is ludicrous. Of course, all religions fear the vagina, so it makes sense that the scribes (along with all men) went into a complete tizzy after childbirth, which very much relies upon the vagina.

Leviticus 19:20-22 teaches us that a man can rape his female slaves and be forgiven, though the slave must be punished. Likewise, Deuteronomy 22:28-29 reminds us that a man can rape a virgin, though he must marry her, and also pay her father 50 shekels.

The Bible is a weird, scary place. In case you needed further proof of that, along comes 1 Samuel 18:25-27 where Saul sells his daughter to David. Instead of wanting to be paid money for his daughter, Saul asks for ... are you ready? Saul asks for the foreskins of 100 Philistine men.

.... WHAT? There's a happy ending, though. David gives 200 foreskins, a profit of 100 foreskins for Saul to squirrel away for the winter. HUZZAH!

Eastern religions, such as Hinduism, leave no room for interpretation when it comes to the role of women: "By a girl, by a young woman, or even by an aged one, nothing must be done independently, even in her own house. In childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons; a woman must never be independent". (Laws of Manu, V, 147-8).

Women are subservient to men and inherently inferior, period.

What about Eastern religions?

Even Buddhism has been used to repress people (especially women), such as under Hirohito's rule and currently in Burma. The armies that began the horrible civil wars in Sri Lanka during the '50s and '60s were comprised of Buddhists.

The Theravadan Buddhists claim a woman could never become a Buddha. A popular belief in Buddhist countries is that negative karma results in a man being reborn as a woman. Again, the female gender's state is seen as a punishment, one filled with shame. Buddhism teaches that institutions like marriage must be regulated by society through social, political, and legal processes. This does not mean Buddhism is a progressive religion. Rather, it's sort of like passing the buck. We don't want to say women are equal to men, so we'll just let you figure it out. If you decide they're equal, fine. If you decide she's the social equivalent of a cow, and you can sell her for a dowry, that's cool too. I'll just be over here, under my Bodhi tree.

Jainism is frequently referenced as the one truly peaceful religion. They even cover their mouths whilst walking outside so they cannot accidentally inhale a defenseless bug. Surely they, the Jains, are enlightened in matters of gender. Think again. Jainism does not teach that women can gain ultimate spiritual liberation, though a woman could strive to become a man in her next life so she could then reach enlightenment.



What happens when so-called feminists create alliances with religion?

You get police-sponsored Iranian fashion shows with women dressed in different colored Hijab. Viva La Revolucion! What better way to freely express creativity, passion, and art than in the free world of fashion?

The liberated, passionate world of art, music, and fashion cannot coexist with a regime that maintains these guidelines for women's dress:

#### Conditions of Islamic Dress Code

1. Clothing must cover the entire body, only the hands and face may remain visible (According to some High Schools).
2. The material must not be so thin that one can see through it.
3. The clothing must hang loose so that the shape / form of the body is not apparent.
4. The female clothing must not resemble the man's clothing.
5. The design of the clothing must not resemble the clothing of the non-believing women.
6. The design must not consist of bold designs which attract attention.
7. Clothing should not be worn for the sole purpose of gaining reputation or increasing one's status in society.

Sounds chic, doesn't it? But hey, Allah never said he wanted fashion shows. He said: "Say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty ; that they should not display

their beauty and ornaments except what must ordinarily appear thereof. " [Quran : 24.31]

Now get into your burka, and shut up. It's sad and embarrassing when feminists try to rationalize their religiosity, say with Iranian fashion shows. It's not tolerance. It's hypocrisy, illogical and downright silly. It's a bit like watching a black person try to explain why they vote Republican. Essentially, there is no way to reconcile the rational hope of all genders peacefully coexisting with irrational dogmas. Modern feminists desperately attempt to reshape their religions into something that looks vaguely modern and tolerant, but at their cores, all religions are sexist and repressive.

If the only proof of a religion's dictated guidelines to morality are their religious texts, then we must believe that the Bible, Quran, and Buddhist sutras, vinaya, and abhidharma all represent the core beliefs of their religious sources. If we are to believe they are not truly reflective of their religious roots, then why did God dictate incorrect information to his scribes? If the errors of the texts are man's folly, why has God not corrected them or made his true beliefs known? God is, after all, the supposed creator of the cosmos. Surely, he could have given us a Bible 2.0 by now. Perhaps a Bible XP?

## Fun Fact



No, we must assume these texts are truly reflective of their religion's ideologies. With that assumption firmly cemented, we see that there is no room in religion for feminism, the doctrine advocating the equality of rights, social and political, with those of men. For feminism to work, it must exist outside of the constraining margins of religion. It must operate outside of the assumption that women are inferior to men, which is a foundational belief of the major theologies. Or, feminists must attempt to rationalize their religious ideologies to reconcile them with their desire for social equality, which is an impossible order. You end up changing the definition of your religion by rejecting their sacred texts or you change the definition of feminism so it says: I want to be equal always, except when it comes to your religion that says I am inferior, and I accept that.

Either you are a feminist and you reject religion, or you are a worshiper and you reject the concept that the genders are equal. ~~BEAST~~

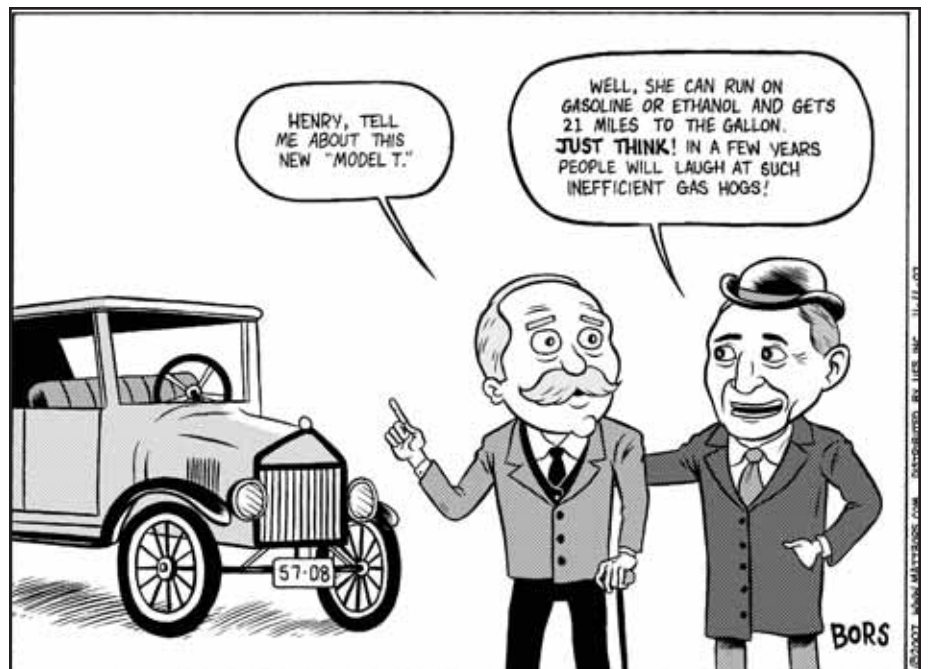
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# KILL THE PRECEDENT

## Congress does nothing, to give us hope

By Ian Murphy

Do I often fantasize of jamming a rusty shiv into the Vice President's eye socket and twirling it around until he passes out from shock and slowly bleeds to death? Of course. Would I do it? No. This author does not torture.

Not only are there insurmountable logistical problems, there'd be dire consequences! Never mind my jail sentence—imagine the draconian reactions of W. and the thoroughly whipped, subservient congress. We'd be a police state on steroids quicker than two shakes of cat's ass.

Luckily, we have a built-in constitutional mechanism for removing rogue vice presidents from power. There's just one problem: the Democrats are worthless piles of chicken shit.

Last week, UFO-spying sprite Dennis Kucinich introduced House Resolution 799, Articles of Impeachment Relating to Vice President Richard B. Cheney. And then a funny thing happened: Republicans went for it.

Naturally, the Democrats followed suit, right? Wrong. The idea was that by supporting the bill and forcing an up or down vote in the House, the Republicans would "embarrass" the Democrats into... following the constitution and demanding justice on behalf of those who put them in power.

How embarrassing! The Democrats will never do that. Pelosi took impeachment "off the table" the second she took office. Why? So we could all just "move on" to brighter days and put all this ugliness behind us. The Democrats were trying to prove that they're the classier party by forgiving and forgetting. The negativity of an impeachment, so goes the conventional wisdom, would tarnish the Democratic brand. Too late.



*Kucinich moved to impeach Cheney in the House, but was stopped by a large group of pussies*

The bill was referred to the Judiciary Committee, as was a near identical bill submitted by Kucinich in May. So don't expect action on this anytime soon (read: never). Public support for impeaching Cheney is higher than it ever was for Clinton, but people in the beltway just don't get it. In D.C. an impeachment amounts to partisan politics, rather than following the laws of our land.

This is the latest in a series of Republican outmaneuvers. It's the same scenario running on a loop in Washington: Democrats do something that demonstrates conviction, like attaching a time table to the Iraq War budget or introducing impeachment articles. Then they fold, unwilling to face the heat or challenge the status quo. Acting on what they portend would provide too much fodder for their opponents in the next election.

And that's what this is all about: getting reelected. The Democrats want to paint themselves as the party of hope and possibility. But if they took action, all that hope and possibility would dissipate into feelings of contentment

and accomplishment. It's their MO to do nothing significant, put on a smile, and tell us to hope. Keep on hoping. The less they accomplish the more we hope, and as the party of hope, the better they look. Meanwhile, Republicans and the unitary executive will continue cramming their agenda down America's throat.

The Democrats are still playing the roll of battered minority, fighting the well-oiled Republican machine. It as if they're waiting for the Republicans to destroy themselves, or by doing nothing they'll look like saints by comparison to right-wing criminality, and they'll pick up more seats in '08. But this congress was elected to carry out the will of a deeply dissatisfied nation. And by incompetence and the willful tact of delayed gratification they have failed miserably.

The appeasement precedent set by this congress is shameful. Their not giving inches, they're giving miles. There not doing what they were elected to do. They're not following the constitution. They're not doing nothing. This is their MO.

And it's going to backfire. 



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# Burnt Toast Bears Likeness of Prince, Prince to Sue Toast

LOS ANGELES—After a recent row with fans over the unauthorized use of his image on websites, Prince has again gone on the offensive, threatening legal action on a piece of burnt toast, which some say bears his likeness.

“That toast ain’t nobody,” Prince squealed from behind a velvet-wrapped podium at a Beverly Hills press conference yesterday. “It’s just using my image to make something of itself, trying to get itself a little attention, make a little money, but that toast ain’t nobody special. That toast ain’t no Prince, baby.”

“I think he’s lost his mind,” counters Beverly Smith, the California lawyer hired to represent the toast. “It does look like Prince,” admits Smith, “but you can’t sue a piece of burned bread. There is no legal precedent.” The toast itself has declined to comment on its ongoing feud with the pop star.

In response to Smith and other critics, Prince plans to embarrass the toast with a thoroughly funky musical diss. “That toast won’t know what hit it,” Prince cooed in a high-pitched falsetto. “I’m gonna be all ‘Bow, chicka, chicka, bow, wow, chick—oooo, baby, damn!’—and that’s were the horns come in trilling between C and C sharp, that’s also where that nobody toast learns a real life lesson: don’t mess with Prince, baby.”



Prince has accused the toast of profiting from his image

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# THE GIFT OF GRAFT

## Corruption makes the world go round

By IOZ

In August, Pittsburgh's 27-year-old mayor, Luke Ravenstahl, along with his wife and some friends, hopped into a GMC Yukon and went to see a Toby Keith concert. Turns out it's a sort of double-secret-probation-mobile, purchased with a federal homeland security grant and assigned to a police "intelligence unit." Questions arise. Politically: Why does Pittsburgh have a 27-year-old mayor? Aesthetically: Why does he listen to Toby Keith? Ontologically: *Why* is Toby Keith? Practically: What the fuck kind of intelligence do you gather tooling around the hilly neighborhoods of an old steel town only now on the uncertain cusp of a modest economic recovery in a 5,500 lb., 5.7-liter, 320-bhp V8?

The Yukon, meanwhile, has gotten itself one of those permanent modifiers: Just as you can't say "Muqtada al-Sadr" without "Radical Shiite Cleric," you can't mention the troublesome truck without adding the Homeland Security prefix. The price tag is also a popular adjectival appendage. Forty-five grand, give or take. The federal grant that paid for it came in the amount of \$59,000, which compels us to ask: Where did the rest of that money go, and can we get some decent rims?

Ravenstahl has elsewhere and otherwise been prone to embarrassing transgressions of political decorum, which is as you'd expect from a kid his age. I say that as a kid his age. Were I in his shoes, that truck would've come back with a lot worse than "barbeque stains," as goes the current allegation. Pittsburgh chose to reelect the dumb stooge, and who am I, at last, to contend with the Triumph of the Will of the People? And yet a certain irony—at least, a disconnect—underlies our ongoing *scandale*. If the mayor's personal outing violated the terms of the vehicle's proper use, then what precisely are those terms? What constitutes proper use?

That is the rub. These Homeland Security



Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl, center, enjoys a Toby Keith concert to better secure the Homeland

SUV mini-scandals are common these days—Buffalo had its own too, with public officials using similarly purchased SUVs for "personal use." But again—what would constitute "official" use?

The answer is that no one seems entirely sure. Our US Attorney, Mary Beth Buchanan, more widely known for her quixotic (by which we mean Javertian) pursuit of various porn purveyors, is looking into possible improprieties, and within the police department at least one whistle-blowing type has suggested that the federal money came with "strings attached." By which we mean that the feds could conceivably issue some sort of take-back, although frankly with the way SUVs bleed blue-book value from the minute they roll their fat asses off the lot, the federal grantmakers come out the losers in any such scenario.

Mayor Luke isn't a smart man. He's not even a smart boy. He's certainly no disestablishmentarian. Lord Jesus and his choirs of mewling angels know that no man who takes his wife to the homosocial

proving grounds of a Toby Keith stadium show is angling to heighten any fucking contradictions or subtly undermine the operations of the global gulag by exposing its operations as a vicious—and expensive—fraud. Yet the truth is that the absurdities of the system are often better exposed by its exemplars than by its harshest, most insightful, and most incisive critics. For a hundred years, for instance, America has pursued empire abroad, and for all that time wits, wildmen, professors, aberrant congresscreatures, celebrities, street-corner preachers, secular saints, columnists, madmen and militiamen alike have cursed it and hurled invective against it. But who has done more to expose its failings to the broad, broadening, and bovine public than America's imperial apotheosis, George W. Bush?

The unintentional aftermath of our mayor's high-rollin' car-pool scam has been the further transformation of Homeland Security, both the Department of and the Idea of, into more of a joke. Pittsburgh is a town of deep affections but few pretensions, and the idea that a terrorist

would ever choose it as a target strikes everyone as more than a little ridiculous. Now the bemused question lingers over water-cooler conversations: Supposing Al-Muslim bin-Nazifascist, having finally realized that the Steelers are America's team now, decides to blow himself up in a crowd of vastly overweight tailgaters in the far lots of Heinz Field—supposing he does, what on earth will ownership of a big ugly truck contribute? And if nothing, then who really cares if the mayor wants to use it to cruise for pussy, listen to bad country music, or run over small animals?


Mencken said that a belly-laugh is worth a thousand syllogisms, and to the extent that minds change at all, I wouldn't argue. Unfortunately, even the mild transformative power of laughter and ridicule is inadequate to the challenge of changing minds *enough*. Mencken watched Darrow turn William Jennings Bryan and his biblical certainty into a laughingstock, but lo these many years later the population of Tennessee is still more inclined to think that man is the dust of the earth rather than the fruit of some dirty damn ape's loins. Hell, half the field of Republican candidates will tell you the Earth itself is 6,000 years old.

Today you'd have a hard time striking up politics in a bar and finding a drinker who doesn't think all this War on Terror huff and Homeland Security stuff is a waste of bad time and good money. It's up with the Drug War as something to be mocked when some particularly egregious example of fraud and skullduggery makes the papers, but otherwise to be ignored. Both the laughter and the lack of interest otherwise spring from the same unfortunate perception: that this shit is just implacable, as much a fact of life as death, taxes, and gravity.

I say unfortunate perception, but I can't

call it untrue. Do Americans recognize that the domestic security apparatus is a cracked panopticon whose endless maintenance serves only to line the pockets of the powers in our Sovietized system of State Capital and occasionally to exact petty revenge on poor, powerless peaceniks and other assorted losers whose eternal response to the United States of Pepper Spray and Tasers is to complain that it is all horribly, horribly unfair, and to erect, without apparent irony, towering monuments of rhetorical indignation that dissent should bring reprisal in America as it does in every other society on earth—ever? Sure they do. What are they going to do about it? More and better Democrats?

The well-meaning and thoroughly moronic optimists who now hawk their internet-ready people-powered politics with the predictable fervor of losers trapped in a pyramid scheme from which escape means ruin, the folks who populate websites like DailyKos, who give money to MoveOn.org, who persist in the belief that deliverance will come in the form of electoral politics, are the exemplars of this error. They think of themselves as the empire's irritants, agitating for a better, fairer, juster world in which slicker politicians will keep from them the dirty truths about the maintenance of their comfortable lives, when so clearly they remain its enablers.

The question before us is not how we get more and better, but more and worse. I don't mean worse in the sense of Iran-slaving Joe Lieberman, say, or Iran-slaving Hillary Clinton. I mean worse in the sense of Mayor Luke Ravenstahl. I mean: How do we stuff the public coffers with dishonest losers who will grind the gears of the state and its security apparatus through sheer, ham-fisted, dumbassed graft. How do we ensure that the police will take our bribes, that the city council will blow Homeland Security funds on Vegas hookers, that our local black markets will proliferate? Dissidence, if it's to be practiced in our terrible, powerful country, is going to be practiced in the provinces. The path to liberty lies in misappropriation. 

## The Final Word on Superman

You know what? Fuck Superman. Fuck him in his laser-beam-shooting-eyes.

I don't mind the impossible science. I understand the juvenile escapism of the stories. What I cannot stand—and will not tolerate—in a superhero is abuse of power. It's not right.


Now, I don't mean your typical, "with great power, comes great responsibility" crap. I'm talking about comic book characters who flagrantly abuse their own precious time. Morally, shouldn't, say, a certain son of Krypton be compelled, nay, obligated to spend his super-time as efficiently as possible?



Truth be told: Superman is an ass of the highest order. He dresses up everyday in an ostensibly masterful disguise of glasses to work at a newspaper outfit. Why does he do this? Did *All the President's Men* make him want to get into journalism? Is it just a gig to make rent? Or is he super-stalking Lois Lane?

**Superman--  
or Superstalker?**

Superman can get money a myriad of ways—by dominating the NFL, off the top of my head. And the last time I checked, he's no Sy Hersh. "Clark Kent" wastes upwards of forty hours a week—time that would be best used saving humanity—obsessively hovering over a love interest.

That's super creepy. 

## Fun Fact

Pittsburgh's mayor  
is 324 months old!



# SHIT STORM!

**God gets even with the gays, turds rain from sky**

*By Effrey Daniel*

## **Sniper rifles and naked baby photos**

Throughout October, a group of protesters mounted a pro-life demonstration at the Womenservices abortion clinic here in Buffalo, NY. I'd pass them anytime I traversed the city's northeast side on Main St., and the prospect of a counterdemonstration nagged at me for days.

I don't have anything against people mucking around outside a clinic. As long as they don't go contradicting themselves by firebombing the place, protesters are protected in their right to express their stance in public zones. And as much as the abortion argument—which hinges on whether conception or birth demarcates the beginning of life—continues to inspire both sides, it's pretty damn useless to shout noise at the opposing side.

After all, the idea that birth marks the beginning of life removes the male from the role of creator by nine months. This distancing of power is as much of a theft of control to pro-life men and their subservient womenfolk as the theft of a pregnant woman's right to choice. No amount of rational argumentation or street-corner sermonizing can make someone within a power structure willingly give up control, wherever it manifests. As a result, the dispute stagnates in its unresolvability. And everyone just keeps shouting.

But Buffalo is too critical a battlefield in the War on Fetuses to not do anything. This city boasts a newsworthily volatile Life-Vs-Choice historiscape. In 1992, Mayor Jimmy Griffin invited Operation Rescue, a prolife organization, to Buffalo to harangue area clinics. "If they can close down one abortion mill," Griffin had said to reporters—no, really—"they've done their job." A thousand protesters showed

up, with over 600 arrests occurring in the ensuing chaos—a period lovingly reminisced upon as the Spring of Life. Fortunately, they didn't do their job—outnumbered by counterdemonstrators, they left town two weeks later. Buffalo ain't Wichita.

And it wasn't ten years ago that Barnett Slepian, one of the few abortion-providing doctors in Buffalo at the time, was sniped in his home by the appallingly inconsistent "pro-lifer" James Kopp. To celebrate, 250 pro-killing-in-some-cases-but-not-in-others demonstrators reconvened in the city the following spring. The resultant demonstration rapidly escalated into a hostile mish-mashing of religious hate platforms, with sub-protests against homosexuality, feminism, and public education sprouting up around the city. Protesters even utilized their freedom of expression to contest freedom of expression itself, as captured in an April 1999 *Village Voice* piece:

"Once outside the [Barnes & Noble] bookstore, a few dozen Operation Rescuers unfurl a 'Boycott Barnes & Noble' banner and—unaccountably, given that the action is against child pornography—haul out the standard fetus pictures. Meanwhile, David Lackey, who's been jailed 17 times for demonstrating, preaches from the highway divider outside the strip mall, waving photocopied examples of child pornography. Though the store stocks little of the material that Lackey finds objectionable (books of photography by Jock Sturges, David Hamilton, and Sally Mann), he holds *his own copy* [emphasis added] of Mann's

*Immediate Family* so he can easily demonstrate its pornographic nature to passersby. Save the throng of reporters, however, there are none."

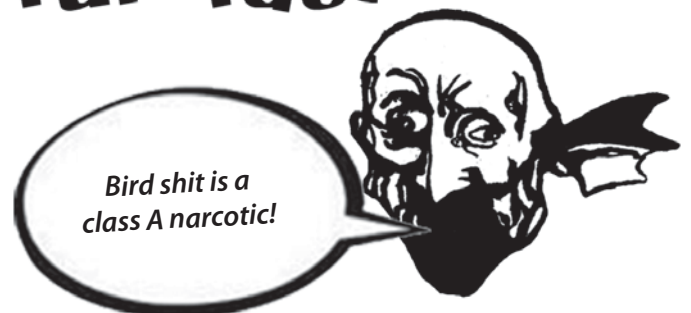
This year's protest was not quite as glamorous. It consisted of a few dozen suburbanites, taking turns waving "Life is God's Choice" placards until about 9pm each day. They even had an old blind guy man the post on a few exceptionally cold evenings. I wanted to ignore them until they went away, but I found myself inadvertently planning out anonymous pranks and subtle maladies in my head each time I'd pass. Halloween was coming up, after all, and I hadn't properly celebrated in years.

## **God One, Constitution Zip**

I was passively concocting a trick for the pro-sniper bunch when news of the Phelps settlement broke.

Fred Phelps is a controversial figure who defies blue state liberals' ability to holistically categorize religious botards as pro-war. Actually, Phelps' position on the war is unclear, but he and his organization, the Westboro Baptist Church, stage protests at the funerals of American soldiers who have lost their lives in Iraq. Their goal is to remind America that God is punishing our troops because,

## **Fun Fact**







of course, the United States embraces homosexuality. The group notoriously waves signs with slogans like “Thank God for Dead Soldiers,” and “Fags Die, God Laughs.”

Largely in response, President Bush signed the Respect for America’s Fallen Heroes Act in 2006, which prohibits protests within 500 feet of cemeteries within an hour of a soldier’s funeral. And on October 31 this year, Phelps was forced to pay an \$11M award to the family of a Marine at whose funeral the group had protested.

Phelps’ unsightly argument suffers from several lacunae. First of all, America doesn’t embrace homosexuals; it fucking *hates* them. After the momentary penetration of “Will and Grace”/“Queer Eye” unstraightness into pop culture started a few years back, America responded with near-unanimous support for a deluge of anti-gay legislation. During 2004, for example, fourteen states moved to ban same-sex marriage, and as much as the media may have made a fuss about it, a huge majority of Americans supported it.

Secondly, Phelps is so clearly haunted by hidden homosexual inclinations that his tragic, pulsating repression emanates to anyone who has ever double-taken the man’s ferociously homophobic platform.

Fortunately, Phelps’ constitutional jouncing-about will inevitably lead him to the one place that can alleviate his fixation: Prison, or as we all know it: Gayrape Agonytown, USA.

The most common reaction is to regard Phelps as a lunatic. People just tend to write him off as a sick, cruel bastard, pointing out that, while war may be unfortunate, it is unavoidable, and everyone knows that God *supports* our troops. He’s on our side. No one in their right mind would ever speak ill of an American Hero, right? But it takes a bit of selective cognizance to ignore the “God Hates Fags” position. God—as far as anyone can really tell—is a sick, cruel bastard himself. I mean, if he can just go gallivanting around, inventing wars here and waging famine on infants there...then why can’t he be a gay-basher like everyone else?

Regardless, this is a case where you have to assume the most absurd, frontier interpretation of the Christian religion to be the most likely, and accept it anyway. And, alternately, this is where you assume that the most absurd, frontier interpretation of the First Amendment is also as plausible, and start warming up to wacko advocacy groups like the WBC.

No matter how distasteful or deplorable someone’s message might be, they still have a right proclaim it. Representative

Barney Frank (D-MA), who along with Ron Paul (R-TX) and David Wu (D-OR) opposed the Fallen Heroes Act, summed it up best in a *Washington Times* interview: “It’s true that when you defend civil liberties you are typically defending people who do obnoxious things... You play into their hand when you let them provoke you into overdoing it.”

Phelps is right; this is free speech. You signed up for it. Everyone signed up for it. This is what it entails, *reductio ad absurdum*, right? So let’s get used to it. Or else let’s get out the red pen.

### A botched civil liberties science experiment

Hypothesis: Bird poop sucks.  
Materials: 10 lb. Bird seed.

Procedure:


At 2:30am on Sunday, October 28, I rounded up a few friends to help me with this experiment. As we gathered around my car in a cold Buffalo parking lot, I popped the trunk to reveal a ten pound package of bird seed. I then filled three large plastic groceries bags evenly with the seeds and distributed them to my cohorts.

We pulled up to the curb and filed out of the vehicle when we got to the clinic on Main St. As we began to walk southward on towards the Tri Main Center, we sliced our bags open. Once the seed was liberally scattered about the sidewalk, we ducked into a bar across the street for a drink.

Results:

Unfortunately, the experiment didn’t quite fuel the merciless shit storm I had imagined. When I returned the next day, the protesters were still gathered in front of the building, smilingly sedate. There were white splotches here and there, but no mayhem, no people running and screaming in the street. I cursed and shook my fist furiously at no one in particular.

But I am happy, looking back, that I’d participated to some extent in the madness. Freedom of Expression protects anti-abortion protesters. The WBC tried to push the envelope when they protested soldiers’ funerals. And I was prepared to push it too.

What, can’t someone express themselves through bird shit? It’s sort of like paint. 

# THE BIGGEST LIE

## When does the Lesser Evil Become Just Evil?



By Stan Goff

House Resolution 1955 must have been numbered to reflect the rebirth of the House Un-American Activities Committee, that was flailing in its McCarthyite abuse of US citizens that year after McCarthy's vicious anticommunist burlesque a year after Joseph Nye Welch rebuked McCarthy publicly during one of his Congressional show trials.

The revival of these witch hunts is not being headed up by Republicans, but by Democrat Representative Jane Harmon of California's 36th District. So much for the mythical Republican threat. As always, when it goes to shit, Democratic operatives will blame the neocons, or whomever, and self-absolve. Those bad, bad authoritarian Republicans!

Let me remind readers that no President in the last seven decades has had a more devastating effect on the African American community -- the greatest captive demographic of this lesser-evil scam -- than Bill Clinton, whose "crime bill" facilitated the incarceration of hundreds of thousands of Black, non-violent offenders who were already facing the perils of ubiquitous prosecutorial misconduct, bigoted judges and juries, and vast sentencing disparities.

Read Harmon's Orwellian masterpiece... and weep. The Dems are showing freaked-out Suburbia that they can wipe their ass with the Constitution just as well as any Republican, if it will just stop all that "violent radicalization." And the women in the men's club are proving they can be just

as mean and asinine as any man.

Hardly any Democrat is challenging the recent Bush administration propaganda that Iran's government is producing and distributing weapons for Iraqi resistance fighters.

The US military has been claiming all year that Iran is sending explosively-formed-penetrators (EFPs) into Iraq; and to date has not shown a single shred of supportable evidence to back this up. In fact, no one has demonstrated that Iran is any kind of threat to the US. The reason -- dare I say it -- is that the whole thing is a lie. That's spelled L-I-E. It means an intentional fabrication.

It's no surprise that the defense-industry press pretends otherwise, but the vast majority of Democrats have already been harmonized on the message that Iran is dangerous.

They say that the truth is the first casualty of war. It's also the first casualty of Democratic political campaigns... the exceptions this time being a few like Kucinich and Cindy Sheehan.

How many Democrats are pushing for sanctions against Iran? On what grounds? Nukes? They don't have any. Israel does, though. No sanctions there. So does Pakistan, India, China, France, etc etc. No sanctions anywhere. Most of the nukes are in the US, however, and no one is sanctioning us.

For that matter, what are Democrats saying about the government of Venezuela? ... now the most advanced experiment in this hemisphere in popular democracy. Have any of the front-runners for the Oval Office decried the US-supported coup attempt against that democratically elected government? No, Nancy Pelosi called President Chavez "an everyday thug." Her support for that statement? There is none.

Have any of the Democratic front-runners made a peep about the successful US-orchestrated coup against the democratically elected government of Haiti? Obama said he would "support a fact-finding mission." A fucking fact-finding mission! About a transparent US overthrow of a legitimate government! The rest of them? Silence.


Which of them showed up at Jena?

How many of them will dare speak out about Israeli abuses of Palestinians? Or even the recent attacks against academic freedom by American Zionists? Among the front-runners? Zero, that's how many.

They won't even vote to impeach the current band of gangsters, though there is evidence aplenty to do so.

Here is what we should be telling them, instead of holding out the perennial hope that this "lesser evil" will somehow show us a difference.

Tell them they can all go straight to hell.

I'll vote Kucinich in the primary. Likely as not, that will be my last vote above the state level. And then I'll tell people to resist, resist, resist... and Congresswoman Harmon can investigate us for our "violent radicalizations." 

*Stan Goff is a US Army veteran, the author of several books and a contributor to The Huffington Post. His website is [feralscholar.org](http://feralscholar.org).*

### Fun Fact



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# *I Saw Ween*

*By Andrew Blake*

From the sides of the stage at the Docks concert hall in Toronto, the fog machines are turned on a good fifteen minutes before the lights dim. As soon as the first burst of vaporized liquid wafts into the crowd, the cheering crescendos and reverberates from the walls within the narrow venue, a staple of the Toronto music scene but by no means a pleasant place to see a show: The venue is isolated, away from both downtown and ample parking, and offers the most mediocre of acoustics. It's another five minutes before the stage is immersed in enough artificial smoke to obscure the drum set from the crowd, but by then it's unclear what percentage of the haze is the product of hastily rolled joints. Amidst a nebula of pot smoke and dry ice, Ween takes the stage in front of a crowd of over 3,000.

Ween's live show does not call for advanced pyrotechnics or synchronized video shows. Great White and two hundred New Jersey

mutants ruined that for the rest of us four years ago. Tonight's performance, like the others on the tour, is over 120 minutes of deafening sound produced by one of the leading quintets of the alternative rock scene. Ween has been doing this for over twenty years now, and to those that make up the sold-out crowd, it is clearly not getting old.

Formed during 8<sup>th</sup> grade typing class in 1984, Ween centers around Aaron Freeman and Mickey Melchiondo, a duo who affectionately go by the monikers of Gene and Dean Ween, respectively. During the next decade, the Ween brothers traveled across the world, performing decidedly off-beat music with nothing more than drum and bass tracks on a pre-recorded cassette-tape. Imagine if They Might Be Giants flunked out of high school and got into inhalants and acid. Understandably, this did not go over very well with the fading hair metal scene, nor with the snowballing grunge fad of the West-Coast. But with consistent touring and the release of several records on Twin Tone and Elektra records, Ween eventually developed a cult following by the mid '90s, appearing in feature length films and and

an episode of *Beavis and Butthead*. During the last several years, Ween has spawned from an adolescent duo singing cock-jokes in front of bewildered Dutch crowds of merely a dozen to it's latest incarnation: a five piece rock band performing sold out shows across the world. This night's show is at The Docks, the Ween brothers are 23 years older, and yeah, they totally kept the cock jokes. Their audiences are no longer made up of high school buddies but seasoned fans who will make cross country treks to see their favorite band.

It had only been ten minutes since I made it through the doors at The Docks, and I have already spotted a handful of faces present at last night's three-and-a-half-hour show in Cleveland, Ohio, a three hundred mile excursion that questioned my '95 Eagle Summit as well as my concept of taste. A few days before Halloween, I waded through the crowd of fat bearded men reeking of B-grade bud and \$6 Molson in my "ironic" cat-costume. "I'm a dude, but, you know, I'm a cat. Guy's don't dress like cats." The joke was neither comprehended nor appreciated as intended, but Ween fans took to it nonetheless. "Make way for the cat, far out." Ween fans possess

accepting passivity of Dead Heads, but thankfully lack the stench. Maybe not the best compromise, but good enough.

James Martino, a 37-year-old Toronto native, has made this night his fourth consecutive hometown Ween show, and sixth altogether. As if the two-hour set in Toronto isn't enough this year, Martino has already purchased tickets to see the band perform two nights in a row at a New York City club this winter. "They really have to be seen to be believed," says Martino, who must suffer from astigmatism. I should talk. This is night two of my own Weenapalooza and finances and a tie-rod are the only things keeping me from tomorrow's show in Detroit.

Another Canadian citizen, Kevin Scromedia, made the recent Toronto show his 7<sup>th</sup> Ween performance since first catching them three times on their 2001 tour. A die-hard fan to the utmost regard, Scromedia not only flew in from British Columbia for the show, but planned his honeymoon around the show at the Docks. "My wife and I married at the end of August and we had planned to stop in Toronto on our way to Italy," said Scromedia. "She used to live there and she wanted to show me around to all her favorite old haunts. The stopover didn't work out at the beginning of September, so I said we'd go another weekend. Once I found out Ween's Toronto tour date, I worked our trip around the concert!"

While tonight's show will feature a number of new songs off the recently-released *La Cucaracha*, fans that came far and wide are hoping for the old hits: "You Fucked Up," "Waving My Dick in the Wind," or perhaps

even "Piss Up A Rope," a decade old song that Dean and Gene originally performed with a full fledged Nashville country band for 1996's *12 Golden Country Greats*, a flawless dig at classic country with cameos with Presley and Perkins vets. Ween's titles and subject matter are in many cases as laughable as their name itself, but the music is far from funny. Ween's sound is hard to pinpoint, with each album differing in flow and production, but even with an array of genre parodies from disc to disc, the music is more imposing than it is ironic. And above all, Ween fucking rock, in a completely authentic, un-ironic way.

While Ween's tours are often sporadic and limited in region, this year they are traveling the better part of North America in support of *La Cucaracha*, their 9<sup>th</sup> studio album. In a recent interview with the *Onion*, Dean Ween admitted that the studio sessions for the new album yielded 50 potential songs, which the band narrowed down to a dozen. "It's quantity, not quality," laughed Melchiondo. "If you write 50 songs, you're bound to write at least a dozen good ones."


With *La Cucaracha* only having been available for a week, fans in Cleveland and Toronto alike still sang along with the new songs. Both "Fiesta," an upbeat festive instrumental and "Object," a slow-tempoed minor ballad about exploiting others ("Paste you across my body / You're just an object to me"), were performed this tour, to a crowd of thousands that already knew each word and note. The thirteen songs off *La Cucaracha* range in style from the faux-reggae "The Fruit Man" to the abrasive "My Own Bare

Hands," an aggressive rock song in the vein of Steve Albini's venerable Shellac that features guitarist Dean Ween singing lead vocals: "She's gonna be my cock professor, studying my dick / She's gonna get a master's degree in fuckin me."

Immaturity aside, Ween's music has vastly developed from the low-fi home-recordings of the '90s *Pure Guava* and *The Pod* to what is available today. Recorded in a moldy, 200-year old farmhouse, the atmosphere surrounding the *La Cucaracha* sessions miraculously yielded a delectable and bright album, especially in comparison to the drugged-out 2002 release *Quebec*. Despite the tuberculosis developed as result of the new album's harsh studio conditions, Melchiondo still considers *La Cucaracha* Ween's "Party record, unlike [*Quebec*] which was more of a Jonestown party vibe."

As Martino prepares for his two nights of Ween in Manhattan, he reflects on performances that even after eight and nine times are still inspiring. "As impossible as it may seem, I really do believe they continue to improve as a live band every time I see them, which just leaves me wanting more," says Martino.

Despite getting four shows under his belt by the year's end, Martino hasn't had enough. "They are the only band around today that if I had the means and the time, I would follow them on tour. I wish there were more bands like Ween."

So do I. And Cheap Trick. I fucking love Cheap Trick. 



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# MEME-RY PROBLEMS



## Conditioned Historic Revisions and the Evolution of False Choice



By Ian Murphy

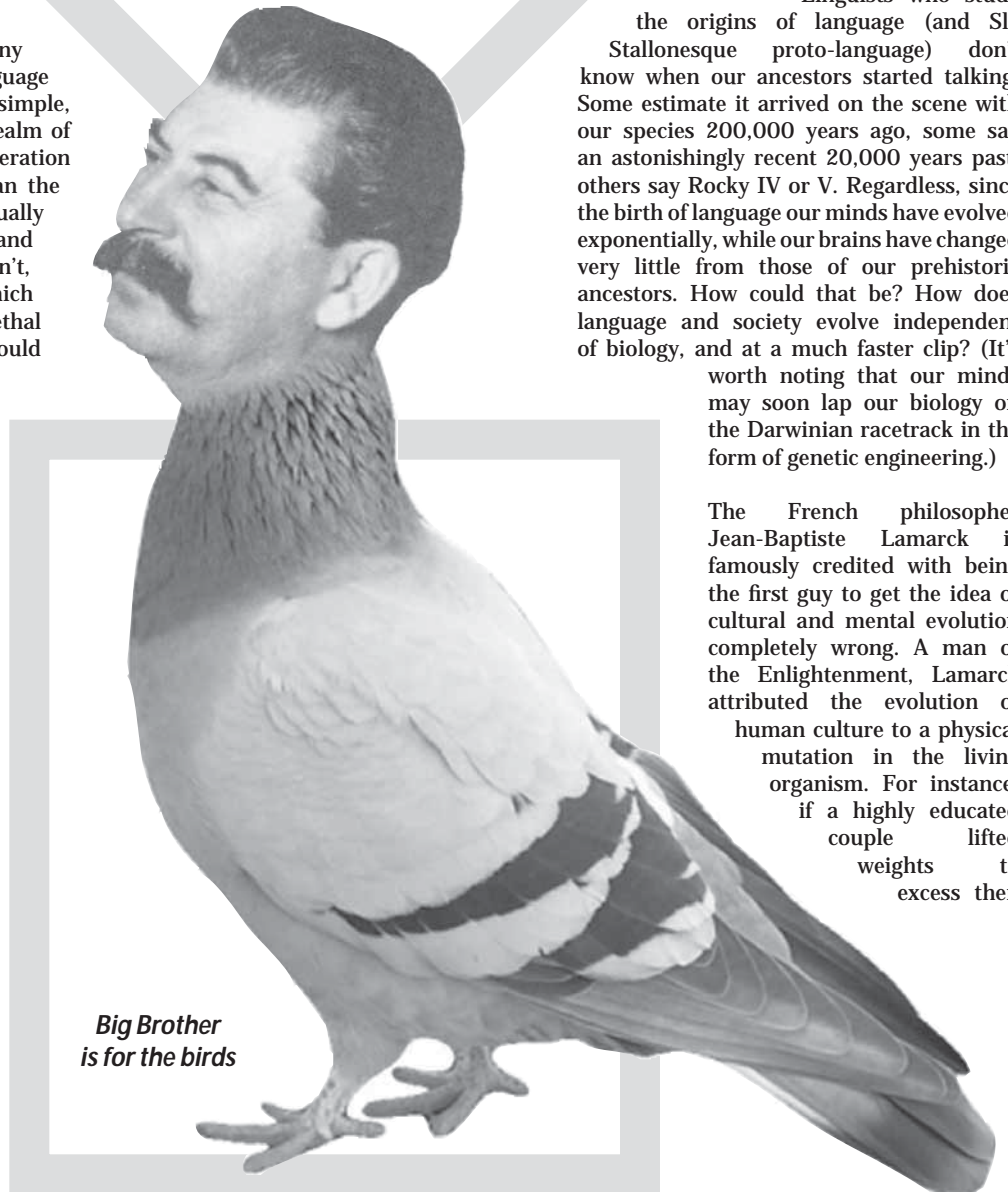
### Talk the Talk

Humans are unique. Our ability to communicate far surpasses that of any other species on the planet. Language is the catalyst that propelled our simple, prehistoric animal brains into the realm of modern human minds. Each generation accrues a tad more information than the last by virtue of verbal—and eventually written—records of simple trial and error. What works and what doesn't, which herbs will poison you and which will heal, how to make a non-lethal meatloaf, etc. Without language we would certainly be impoverished (and meatloaf-deprived) creatures, our mental capacity limited to vague impressions alone. It might be safe to say we *can't know how we would think* if it weren't for language—and even *if you were able* to imagine the state of your mind without the tool of language, how would you express those thoughts—Pictionary?

However, the wonders of language are fret with a potential confusion, manipulation and misunderstanding also far beyond the ken of our animal cousins. We are vulnerable to myriad false beliefs that are truly unimaginable to, say, dogs or chimps. All animals—aside from people—are atheists and anarchists by default. They're not prone to deception from political rhetoric or a well-funded public relations industry—ignoring animal parallels like chest beating, bared fangs and angler fish, for now.

Linguists who study the origins of language (and Sly Stallonesque proto-language) don't know when our ancestors started talking. Some estimate it arrived on the scene with our species 200,000 years ago, some say an astonishingly recent 20,000 years past, others say Rocky IV or V. Regardless, since the birth of language our minds have evolved exponentially, while our brains have changed very little from those of our prehistoric ancestors. How could that be? How does language and society evolve independent of biology, and at a much faster clip? (It's worth noting that our minds may soon lap our biology on the Darwinian racetrack in the form of genetic engineering.)

The French philosopher Jean-Baptiste Lamarck is famously credited with being the first guy to get the idea of cultural and mental evolution completely wrong. A man of the Enlightenment, Lamarck attributed the evolution of human culture to a physical mutation in the living organism. For instance, if a highly educated couple lifted weights to excess then



Big Brother  
is for the birds

copulated, the ensuing offspring would be born both heavily muscled and well read. We all now know this isn't the case.

The American psychologist James Mark Baldwin evoked Darwinian natural selection pressures to favor the rise of the clever human mind. Individual organisms, which were most deft at manipulating their external and internal environments through problem-solving, would produce descendants that were genetically cunning. The Baldwin Effect is how we get from mammals to primates and from primates to super primates, such as ourselves. But it still leaves us wanting for an explanation for the cultural and mental evolution of modern people whose mental hardware hasn't been significantly upgraded. It also raises the question of whether our species is still subject to the same selection pressures that encouraged the proliferation of smart-minded organisms. A trip to your local Wal-mart may suggest otherwise.

Modern Darwinists, like the philosopher Daniel Dennett and ethologist Richard Dawkins straighten this issue out for us by employing the term "meme"—a term coined by Dawkins—meaning a replicating unit of cultural information. Memes can be scientific ideas, fashion trends, religious dogmas, jingles and jingoism. Memes, strictly speaking, can't be quantified, but they're a useful way to describe and—maybe one day—better understand the evolution of our minds. But, both Dawkins and Dennett remind us, memes replicate quite independently of the benefits provided their hosts (us). Like a parasite, memes can operate to the detriment of their host's "fitness." Martyrdom is a meme. It certainly isn't to the benefit of the organism, yet that meme replicates laterally in what Thomas Jefferson might call "the marketplace of ideas."

### **The brawn of brains**

Our brains are powerful learning-things. A brain born in China will learn a dialect of Chinese. The same brain born in America will learn a dialect of English or Spanish—maybe both (Chomskyan Generative Grammar). The same brain born 10,000 years ago would be concerned with an entirely different set of data, mostly relating to nature, agriculture and attaining orgasm—still a modern preoccupation. I wonder whether early Homo sapiens would have ever really gotten off the ground as a species had there been access to internet porn.

Like the rapidly vanishing indigenous nature-based cultures found in places like the New Guinea highlands, the brains of our ancestors contained different—but no less sophisticated—information than, say, a modern American. For all of our html

knowledge we would starve in the jungle, whereas tribesmen have a wealth of inherited environmental knowledge to draw from. Conversely, our biological predecessors—and I dare include indigenous adult New Guineans—would be at quite a loss in the virtual tubes of cyberspace we inhabit with ease. Their children, on the other hand, would have little difficulty using the internet if they were raised with it.

As the beneficiaries of a mind-having species, we don't have to learn every idea which preceded it. It's all been hard-won information: language, the written word, agriculture, domesticating animals, the internal combustion engine, economic theory. Modern people needn't know how to farm apples, build a car or print money in order to drive to the grocery store and purchase a delicious red. We may not—and probably won't—understand it, but we can read a Richard Feynman book about quantum mechanics without first having to absorb centuries of scientific advances that are its theoretical ancestors, nor does a modern reader need to learn—and then reject—the innumerable scientific false-starts that join the relatively few scientific successes throughout history. Knowledge of alchemy is not prerequisite to utilizing Mendeleiev's periodic table of elements, and you don't have to know Newton to learn General Relativity. In fact, the argument could be made that a firmly ingrained Newtonian outlook may be detrimental to truly grasping Einsteinian physics and a firm belief in alchemy will no doubt prove disastrous in a volatile Midwestern meth lab.

This accumulation of cultural data is simultaneously a boon and a burden, and undeniably used as a mechanism for societal control, both intentionally and unintentionally. Knowledge is power. Language is control: Control over our own mental acuity, our external environment, and ultimately, control over others.

### **The Birth of PR**

Animals without sophisticated mental lives are locked in a biological arms race that may involve stealth or deception. Angler fish fool their prey with a dangly appendage that looks like food and so called "stick insects" have evolved impeccable camouflage to hide them from predators, who've in turn been forced to evolve ever more attuned ocular "stick bug" detection. It's a classic battle for survival. Strictly speaking, however, it's a bit disingenuous to regard environmentally influenced adaptation as something which is an act of conscious deception. Only we language users can do that. Only we lie. And to stifle further debate on this point, it's safe

to say were the only species that can lie well. Too well. Monkeys and lions may bluff, but it's a stretch to say they're aware of this. We don't necessarily have to be aware that we're fibbing either—those are the lies we tell ourselves.

Animals with complicated minds—like us—are locked in a similar arms race. It's popular these days to refer to it as the battle for "hearts and minds." The theater of war in this case is the world of ideas. (The Cold War provides an example where battling dogmas manifested themselves in a literal arms race.) And just because ideas or memes survive and replicate in other minds doesn't mean they are correct. Old wives tales, myths and pure falsehoods flourish. It's not "survival of the fittest," as Charles Darwin might say—because he never said that. The man who coined that phrase was a Social Darwinist lunatic named Herbert Spencer. Somehow, and quite nicely illustrating my point, this quotation's false attribution to Darwin has managed to survive despite its being flat out wrong. Some of you may think lemmings commit Jonestown-type mass suicides by hurling themselves off of cliffs, too. They don't. We are the only species that could imagine doing something so idiotic. Sometimes, the more implausible the meme, the more attractive. Understanding evolution and American tyranny takes a lot of reading; God and Uncle Sam are a magically catchy ditty.

### **Coke or Death**

You may not need to know about Gutenberg in order to vomit on a copy of the NY Post, but it may be a richer experience if you do. That said, let's backtrack a little to a time before minds as we know them and look at the cleverness selection of The Baldwin Effect. This is important for us to understand the evolution of choice and false choice, the kind that only arrives (or thrives) on this planet with human systems of societal control.

Things on this planet started off pretty dumb. And the things that existed then had no choice in their actions. They were just molecules following the laws of physics. Molecules begat macromolecules, macromolecules begat macro-macromolecules, macro-macromolecules begat simple encoding replicators like RNA, which begat DNA, and so forth. Eventually, two chemical "choices" became available to early single-celled organisms like bacteria. There wasn't a lot to choose from—it was either move towards or squiggle away from "good" or "bad" stimuli. In the case of marine phytoplankton, they have the choice between curling up to protect themselves, and just chilling out. "Choice" is a bit of a misnomer when discussing simple life forms. It's not like us choosing between Coke or Pepsi, but it may be more akin to it

than we're comfortable discussing. Single-cellular "choice" more resembles reflexive behavior like blocking your face from a blow or your foot shooting out when the doctor whacks your knee with a mallet—or breathing. There's a stimulus and a bodily reaction, but no deliberation about what action to take. No "mind" is necessary.

From single-celled bacterial organisms with no real choice of action, the Darwinian arms race gave rise to multicellular invertebrates with decentralized sensing apparatus and eventually vertebrates with a complex central nervous system like a rat or pigeon. After the behaviorist B.F. Skinner, Dennett calls these creatures Skinnerian: "Skinnerian creatures ask themselves, 'What do I do next?'"—even if their choices are limited to pushing one of two buttons in search of food.

To continue cribbing Dennett on the evolutionary road to freedom, "Popperian creatures ask themselves, 'What do I think about next?'" Distinct lines are hard to draw between which organisms are behaviorally Skinnerian or Popperian. We are Popperian creatures, and this, "permits our hypotheses to die in our stead," according to the philosopher Karl Popper. This marks the advent of foresight and generating odds of future action from the outcomes of previous experience.

Dennett continues the evolutionary trajectory of minds and choice from Darwinian replicators (which have none) to Skinnerian (simple trial and error) to Popperians (hypothesizers), and adds a fourth category of mind-having creatures he calls, "Gregorian," after information theorist Richard Gregory. According to Dennett, "Gregorian creatures ask themselves, 'How can I learn to think better about what to think about next?'" I'm going to go out on limb and say not all humans attain a "Gregorian" level of mind. Some indeed do, but it might be safe to say, most humans live their lives as functional Popperians, or worse, as functional Skinnerians. Dennett may disagree.

As brains—and later minds—evolved on this planet from simple single-celled organisms, living things evolved more options, more freedom. The more complex the brain, the more numerous the choices available to the organism's mind—which should be as good an indicator as any that the American two-party system should, and needs to evolve. Without getting too much into the "problem" of free will, we'll simply steal another Dennett jewel and say, "*Freedom Evolves*" in direct correlation with organic life. In the central nervous system and resulting freedom of choice departments, we kick bacteria's ass

(if they had one).

### Brains, minds and memes

Before going further, we should dispel the idea that the things represented in the above subtitle are at all dissimilar. They function together and overlap to produce our behavior, as I hope to demonstrate. Some still cling to the antiquated Cartesian brain/mind dualism. But modern thinkers cannot talk seriously of a non-physical mind, self or soul that somehow directs the brain, and ergo the body. This is one of those well-ingrained theories that persists to the detriment of true understanding of science and human nature.

Descartes posited the pineal gland controlled the rest of the brain and body with a system of tiny, arcane pulleys. The pineal gland was in turn affected by a non-material ghost agent, or mind, or soul. Today this is laughable to educated people—perhaps this is why it's so damn popular in America. How could a non-material thing control a material one? Far too many folks still go in for this type of thinking *about* thinking. People are scared to give up this illusion because they fear it turns them into blind Freudian beasts, deterministic meaty robots. It's worth noting that this myth of non-material entities interacting with material ones is at the heart of the modern God debate. It's also a handy myth for societal control: "That's the invisible hand of the free market!"

So now—our minds are our brains! But what of memes, and our unanswered questions about the evolution of human minds and cultural artifacts—and by extension—societal control? Well, one cultural artifact is a near-perfect analogy: the computer. Using simple binary code—a series of "on" or "off" electronic impulses represented numerically as 0's or 1's—we can install any kind of software we want onto our crappy Dell. "Dude, I'm getting a brain!" Biological evolution is hardware development, mental or cultural evolution is software development. Brains hardware; minds software.

Dennett goes a step further and draws a parallel between the Von Neumann series architecture found in most contemporary computers and human consciousness itself. Meaning, with each small step of our biologic evolution, we add a series, or a new "layer" of nominal thinking power. The computing power of our brains grows exponentially with each new layer of mind, as each new layer "talks" to the already accumulated series of "mind layers," vastly multiplying our computational capacity. Human brains are like the newest, fastest Macs and the brains of our pre-human, mammalian ancestors were like the slow, punch-card-

reading IBM models of the 1940s. It's the same architectural hardware—just more complex, and far more powerful.

Memes are harder to talk about than minds and brains, and the term is habitually abused. They're too nebulous to pin down. We'll address them more below, without trying too hard to make them fit our well-established, and hard-fought analogies of computer minds and brains.

### Coke, Pepsi, or death

Most are content to analyze societal control without first recounting the evolution of human minds. To get a good idea of how modern citizens are manipulated by the apparatus of government and industry, one needn't travel back billions of years—only back one-hundred years to the birth of the modern PR industry. But it's useful to think of us mind-having humans as the product of evolution in the context of societal control for one reason: Sigmund Freud.

Freud—a raging pessimistic misanthrope—believed people are nasty creatures, seldom if ever able to transcend their base animal urges. In his thinking, every act we "choose," we do so because of hidden biological imperatives. We're creative enough to wrap our "decisions"—if you can say that—in psychological mythology; we're blissfully unaware of why exactly we do things like buy flashy, red sports cars or iPods. We buy them to get laid, but we just think they're cool and we really think we just want one.

Freud is the de facto Great God-uncle of the public relations industry, the psychiatric *Homo habilis* to *Homo sapien* public relations. The industry's proper father is Freud's nephew, Edward Bernays. Bernays was a clever bastard who used his uncle's theories to begin a dialogue, which continues to this day, between the base, animal urges of citizen consumers and a professional class of "Gregorian" societal managers. Bernays "engineered consent" (his terminology) by tying the agenda of his well-compensating clients to disparate social trends, with amazing success. For instance, he famously hired a fashionable group of flapper gals to smoke cigarettes at a New York City march for women's suffrage. He called the media, they reported on the stylish, smoking feminists puffing their "torches of freedom" and cigarettes became—by proxy—fashionably feminist. Before that, smoking was regarded as unladylike and to be avoided by classy dames. Within a few short years of this PR stunt, cigarette sales nearly doubled. The new tobacco customers were largely women. We can still see this tack employed—none-too-subtly—in modern television advertisements: "Macho men buy product



# THE MIND OF A SUPER-GENIUS



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X—other brands are for fags!” Burger King does this a lot in its adverts. Instead of its ad agency exploiting the feminist movement, they’re exploiting homophobic American machismo.

From Pharaohs to Feudal Europe, societal control has always been with us. It’s the inevitable evolution of primate troupe power structure. As Noam Chomsky explains, “the hammer of the state” is too ugly for modern sensibilities (though it persists around the globe). In sophisticated modern societies, manipulation takes the form of sly mental trickery, rather than brute state—or troupe?—sanctioned violence. This form of control is far harder to fight, let alone identify.

### **Coke, Pepsi or embarrassed to death**

We could have started talking about societal control in the parlance of psychologists, but we’d have only skimmed the philosophical surface of conditioned human behaviorism. Though, it would have worked just as well, if not better to just shout “Pavlov!” But, by taking the Darwinian route, we pick up some valuable understanding of freedom of choice, false choice and biological imperatives along the way. Language also allows us to talk about the same phenomena using different jargons. This speaks directly to the task of language-using manipulators: “We’ll call this smelly crap ‘Super-Stud Body Spray’ and the suckers will buy it up; we’ll call Latin American movements of democratic populism ‘evil socialism’ and the suckers will buy it up.”

According to Dennett, our minds are “virtual machines” created by the very complex interaction between brain-hardware and mental-software. When we look at the world this way, the ethereal and strongly intuitive sense of an indivisible Cartesian self dissolves in a vat of Darwinian “universal acid.” Without the Cartesian illusion we’ve been using for roughly four-hundred years, the mind is demystified into accumulated layers of cross-talking biological hardware and mental software. Like Freud, current marketing manipulators talk of tapping into the visceral layers of the human mind. Master of the PR craft R. Clotaire Rapaille (huge corporate whore) calls it our “reptilian brain.”

It’s fair to say that these “layers of mind” that PR and marketing jerks seek to exploit are by their nature exploitable exactly because they lack a wide freedom of choice. Somewhere in your head-meat computer, finding and consuming food is a big priority. We’re only conscious of this when we feel hungry. The thought: “I’m hungry” is first expressed in the chemical needs of our cellular biology, and only later revealed to us in what we

would call our conscious mind. “Darwinian” replicators—below Skinnerian on the mental freedom hierarchy—have no choice at all, as we’ve seen. They will always “choose” to eat their favorite chemicals, if available, simply by following the laws of physics. We are basically composed of a trillion or so Darwinian replicators—cells. Adding to our “reptilian” mind-layers—the true audience of professional manipulators—is the Skinnerian, which can only ask, “What do I do next?” In the case of hunger, we are back to the simpler choices of simpler organisms: To eat or not to eat, that is the *only* question. Skinnerians almost always choose to eat. On top of that we have Popperian mind-layers asking, “What do I think about next?” Too quell the discomfort of hunger our Popperian layers can use past experience to determine where and how to get food. First, perhaps, we’ll test the “fridge hypothesis,” before examining the “theory of takeout.”

Now, if most consumers’ minds/bodies are built of Darwinian replicators, Skinnerian mind layers, and Popperian mind layers, then PR professionals are our “Gregorian” masters. They ask, ‘How can I learn to think better about what to think about next?’ or ‘How can I learn think better about what to sell you next?’ You, dear reader, and many others, are no doubt Gregorian creatures; I don’t want to create the impression that highly educated PR hacks are truly superior to consumers. They just don’t talk to your Gregorian mind. They talk to the lower layers—and they keep getting better at it.

They do this by providing a slew of visual and verbal cues for our Skinnerian and Popperian minds. This is a scientific specialization. The most widely used tool to gain empirical access to the lower levels of consumer minds is the focus group. Tests upon tests are ingeniously designed to tickle our subconscious mind layers, and to elicit the best ways to commune with them. One banal example is color theory. Through testing subjects, scientists now know what Van Gogh knew instinctively: blue and orange are soothing colors. Look around on primetime TV—it’s awash in blue and orange, and that’s done quite purposefully. It’s not our Gregorian selves that have this mysterious fondness for blue and orange combinations. It’s an imperative built into our biologically evolved minds—perhaps because of the earth’s life-giving blue skies, water,

and slightly oxidized soil. If we evolved on a planet with a plaid sky, we would find golf pants inherently soothing.

### **Get in touch with your inner Stalin**

Until now, we’ve implicitly thought of the mind as a thing the individual owns exclusively. But minds are not made in a vacuum. Our minds are thinking, communicating things that need fellow thinking things to manifest true communicative mind properties (language wouldn’t have evolved if there were no one to talk to). Before examining what I’ll call the Jungian “meta-mind” created by language and shared cultural, archetypal experiences, and how memes tie it all together, we should reflect a bit more on the multiplicity of “minds” within each individual mind.

In his masterpiece *Consciousness Explained*, Dennett overthrows the brain’s Cartesian dictator and his biological minions with the “Multiple Draft” theory of consciousness. Our cross-talking mind-layers are constantly battling for priority, augmenting one another, revising and rewriting the script of our conscious experience. Befitting the topic of this essay, he identifies two methods of mental revisionism: “Orwellian and Stalinesque.” (*Little Brother is watching!*) We won’t get into the pre/post-experiential difference between the two, as they both amount to the falsification of our personal history, our memories and perception. Some revisions—throwing a traumatic event down the memory hole—may be “necessary illusions,” to borrow the phrase of theologian Reinhold Niebuhr. Others can be benign revisions of vanity and hyperbole: “Each time you tell that story the fish gets bigger!” Our minds “engineer” our own personal “consent.” You are our own personal PR hack.

### **You are what you eat; your mind is memes.**

In his book of the same title, Richard Dawkins introduces us to the term *Extended Phenotype*. “Phenotype” is a fancy word for “body.” Each organism’s genotype is coded to produce its phenotypic characteristics

## **Fun Fact**

Your mind is capable of many things, but understanding this article is not one of them!



(this is why you look like both your mom and the cable guy). “Extended phenotype” is a fancy way of describing an organism’s “environmental impact.” Spider webs, beaver dams, termite hills, and football stadiums are all part of their respective genomes’ extended phenotype. In humans, the extended phenotype can be used as a blanket statement for our minds and the way we use them to manipulate our environment—and each other.

A complex human society consists of a series of overlapping extended phenotypes, all battling, cooperating, influencing and augmenting one another in a way similar to Dennett’s mind layers. This is the Darwinian realization of Jung’s “Collective unconscious,” a term I don’t like because we can be quite conscious of our shared cultural influences. I prefer “meta-mind.” Culturally, the meta-mind is created by the sets of ethical, factual, and mythical memes shared by a particular culture or subculture. Your mind may be under the influence, and coauthor, of several interacting meta-minds simultaneously. Call it the “collective (un)conscious,” the “meta-mind” or the “memesphere”—we need this abstract entity to give our memes a proper home.

If our minds are meaty computers, then our language is the internet. And PR manipulators are the equivalent of malicious code-monkeys, working hard to develop literal and mental pop-up ads, links and stimuli for our Skinnerian minds to follow through the labyrinthine cyberspace of decision making. Show us a McDonald’s ad enough times, and a mental path can be carved in our psyche which bypasses our better Gregorian natures. With enough repetition, “I’m hungry” can mutate into “I want McDonald’s.” Skinner’s pigeons are alive and well in our minds, and they go with what they know. A disturbing example of this was a recent test which gave children a choice between two breakfast options: a delicious plate of real food, and a rock with a Scooby-Doo sticker on it—75% choose the rock!

Just as a malicious code (viruses) can infect the operating system and higher-order software on your computer, so too, can the test-marketed and thoroughly-vetted culturally replicating memes of the PR industry. The PR industry is basically a well-oiled meme factory. And, boy, do they make ‘em infectious!

The term “meme” gives abstract things like catch-phrases and dogmas a life of their own. In *Breaking the Spell*, Dennett draws an analogy between malicious memes, like martyrdom-inducing religion, to the Lancet fluke, a bizarre little parasite that, once

eaten by an ant, works its way into the ant’s brain and compels it to commit suicide. The fluke drives the ant, like an SUV, up to the top of a long blade of grass. Once up there, it just waits to be eaten by a grazing animal. This way, the fluke can replicate itself in the animal’s stomach, its traditional breeding ground. The fluke, like the meme, replicates. And the ant, like a suicide bomber infected with fundamentalist Jihad, is profoundly fucked.

Darwinian replication is a “substrate neutral” affair (Dennett). A catchy commercial jingle (meme) can leap from the television, surf a gnarly sound wave, enter your ears and burrow into your brain. It can be said to lay eggs, for we continue hearing its offspring in the annoying, proverbial “ear worm.” Whistle the tune and you may infect another—the meme keeps replicating.

Memes, in their proper home, are a great way to explain groupthink and social modeling. Orwellian revisions of the cultural “meta-mind” directly influences our inner Stalin of Dennett’s Multiple Drafts model (*Little Brother is Watching!*). This creates, multiple, multiple drafts, as dogmatic memes leap from “meta-mind” to mind and back again—creating a mirrored room

of cascading false choices, perpetuating the vicious cycle of fascism.

The memes that infect us change who we are at a fundamental behavioral level—for good or bad.

### Freedom Devolves

Similarly to growth of choice in the biological realm, language and cultural evolution expanded the possibility of choices available to mind-having species. We can choose from thousands of beverages, instead of being stuck with just water or that insufferable Mr. Pibb. It could be argued that today’s capitalist societies offer us *too many* options—if we have the cash.

The conception of democratic capitalism and its ensuing boom of professional perception managers offers a unique point in the evolution of choice. As political speech writers and admen fight for a share of our lower-level mind-layers with catchy jingles and focus-grouped talking points, we are seeing a sizable plateau—hopefully not the peak—on the way up Mount Human Freedom. It’s been a bloody slog up this mountain of choice. We’re now stuck at a height permeated with false choice. Our species may be doomed by its own success. The selection pressures that



gave rise to the evolution of intelligence have eased considerably. Statistics show the more educated and intelligent a modern human, the less likely that person will procreate.

Politically, our primate ancestors could only choose their leaders with physical battles between rival/wannabe alpha males. This gave way to Machiavellian struggles for the thrones of Europe and elsewhere. The French Enlightenment inspired the American experiment with democracy. Not all had choice then: blacks, women, and landless peasants weren't invited to the party. Freedom eventually prevailed, and now all get their vote (not so much in Florida or Ohio). Parliamentary democracy offers even more freedom of choice. So what is this plateau of false choices?

Language, writing, Gutenberg, radio, television and now the web enable those who control these media to be far better PR agents than any angler fish or King—these communication tools grant them access to your mind like never before in history. The modern media greatly amplifies the “meta-mind,” and hence the amount of influence it had over the individual mind. Corporate media is the meta-mind on steroids.

We are living in an age—if it has ever been different—of mental and economic feudalism. In his great book *Unequal Protection*, Thom Hartmann succinctly connects modern corporations to Medieval Lords, and modern citizens to serfs. Through manipulation we've become slaves to slogans and serfs to a patriotic narrative that—if we were better educated we'd see—doesn't exist outside of the American mindscape. The mythology pounded into our brains since birth affects how our minds operate and skews our Popperian decision-making. And a poor education can all but doom the prospect of becoming Gregorian. Though to be optimistic, I have heard “our children is learning.”

Most Americans don't accept that the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections were fixed, because we're ignorant of the past election-rigging the CIA has used to topple nearly one-hundred foreign countries. We're not taught our appalling history, and cannot therefore make the modern, domestic connection, despite the available evidence—if it hasn't already been destroyed in violation of federal court orders, like in Ohio. We do know all about the “third-party spoiler” narrative a la Lincoln, and we're more comfortable blaming Ralph Nader than even considering we were victims of a homegrown coup d'état. But we were.

### **Arms race and class warfare**

In the battle for the meta-heart and meta-

mind, it's the Gregorian manipulators versus the individual. And the GMs are slaughtering our alienated asses! It's barely a contest. What Hitler and Goebbels—both huge Edward Bernays fans—knew is that fear is a great way to bypass the consumer's better reasoning and exploit our skittish Skinnerian mental pigeons. We don't need to look too hard to find modern parallels in today's terrorist-terrified America. The “Jewish menace” of Nazi Germany and the terrorist threat hyperbolized in post 9/11 America provide two fine examples of manufactured false choice. “You're either a Good German or you're against us!”

And, finally, we come to it: the evolution of false choice in a capitalist society. Like the “free market” of Milton Friedman's wettest dreams, the “marketplace of ideas” is heavily manipulated by well-paid professionals. These “markets” are virtually one and the same in the context of capitalism. Somebody's always trying to sell you something—fear, beer, and all things in between.

In the case of “free market” capitalism there are a slew of manipulative forces at work: the WTO, NAFTA, the selective government subsidies predicted by Eisenhower's parting “Military Industrial Complex” warning, the outsourcing of labor to countries with little regard for worker rights, pay or age, fraudulent Enron-type accounting, etc. The examples are numerous and I have left out many. Most understand that the “invisible hand” of the “free market” must by necessity be connected to an “invisible brain.” It would be dead meat otherwise. I'm guilty of anthropomorphizing, but in the battle for hearts and minds one must deploy cliché, *fight fire with fire!* If you're going to talk about something like an invisible fucking hand, you must follow through to the logical conclusion that there must also be an invisible brain. It's a collective “meta-mind” type of brain, sewn together with the “memes” that proliferate in influential economic circles. The seductive ideals of globalization that really turn on your basic economic pedagogues like Tom Friedman and his flat-earth ilk.

Jefferson's “marketplace of ideas” is similar, if not one and the same as the free market (they most often act in collusion). Our multi-billion dollar PR industry is the spokesperson of all other industries. It's not akin to yelling “CONSPIRACY!” to acknowledge that specific people have control over what ideas are successful and multiply. We call them the media. The media is literally owned by giant corporations, which are under direction from its board members and CEOs to maximize profit in accordance with their charter. If they do not maximize profit they get sacked. They are

also shielded from personal responsibility. So I say to you audaciously myopic Ayn Rand of libertarian free-marketeers clogging the well of civilized ideas (to say nothing of the fountainhead), “Where is your iconic, individual Superman now?” Out at the quarry raping self-victimized women, no doubt.

### **Walk the walk, revolution imagined**

Nietzsche once wrote, “A people is a detour of nature to get to six or seven great men.—Yes, and then to get around them.” Many would include Great God Uncle Freud on this short list of great men—and yes, we need to get around him. More than ever.

Whether or not I've made my case that true freedom is currently at risk because of the reinforcing interactions between our internal and external revisionists, one thing should be certain: the rule of mental despots is not inevitable. Humans, either viewed as intensely complicated robots, or accumulated layers of biology, are special. No question. We can all be shrewd Gregorian analysts. We can all transcend, or rather, fully actualize our biological potential. This will be difficult, as one of the main tasks of the Gregorian manipulator class is to keep us isolated and in the dark.

We need to shore up and protect our Darwinian imperatives, our Skinnerian and Popperian minds and become true free-agents! We must develop our own infectious memes to exert as much pressure as possible on the overlapping meta-mind of our collective extended phenotypes—we must awaken from this cascading fascist nightmare. If we own up and become diligent revisionist of our own minds (*Little Brother is Waning!*), we can out evolve Big Brother himself. The engineer Buckminster Fuller barely spoke for two full years in hopes of analyzing and overcoming his conditioned, Skinnerian responses. I didn't say it'd be easy.

Firstly, we need to realize we're being duped by those marketing professionals who use the entire accumulation of psychological knowledge to fuck with our heads. It's sad that a modern-era Bernays like Frank Luntz can basically nullify support for the inheritance tax by simply changing the label to “Death Tax.” To our lower mind levels, death is scary and it should be avoided—even if you'd be richer for taxing it. Then, we need to actualize our potential for Sartre's personal responsibility and overthrow the mental oppression created by the modern information age from the inside out. True freedom is the freedom to take responsibility for one's actions. And if those actions are tantamount to rote, unthinking consumerism propelled by myopic Darwinian

imperatives—we must evolve.

We may act it at times, but we are not unthinking automatons. Unlike our immune systems, which can't see through the false advertisements of a sugar-coated AIDS virus, we can and must see through the sugar-coated lies which pervade our media and ethos. The public relations industry is a meme factory, which is trying—and succeeding—to alter our very minds, our national, political and personal identities!

Long before some mustached species of hack convinced you that outsourcing was good thing, our minds have always outsourced as much information as possible. Labels, libraries and databases are markers we put out into the environment. All that info needn't be directly available to us. In most of our heads there simply isn't enough memory space. It's a handy trick to use visual cues to trigger minds—and that's what PR is all about, both internally and externally. We do it with everyday mental tasks, like reminding ourselves to pay a bill with a bright yellow sticky-note, but we also outsource our opinions about fashion and

politics, our morality, our ostensible core values. We outsource these decisions to pedagogical "experts" like Bill O'Reilly, the Pope and *People Magazine*. Most of us are completely unconscious of this outsourcing. When we leave ourselves a yellow note to pay a bill, we're the Gregorian authors of our own conditioned mental behaviorism—we outsource to the environment and our Skinnerian and Popperian selves pick it up later and perform their robotic tasks. When we outsource the authorship of weighty ethical or intellectual tasks to think-tanks and morons like Glenn Beck, we're just Skinnerian rubes. We're just pecking at buttons on a false choice machine: "We can't give poor kids free healthcare! That would be *evil socialized medicine!*"

When Skinner taunted his birds by randomizing when he rewarded them with food, they turned into insane, habitual wrecks. If pecking at their own bodies coincided with the arrival of food a few times in a row, they would peck themselves bloody, fiending to score a juicy pellet. This is what we're doing now. When will we wake up and realize that we're not getting any

pellets anymore? Every couple of years we knock our faces against two fucking squares marked Democrat and Republican, yet since FDR we're getting fewer rewards—our quality of life worsens.

Our chains are invisible, yet they persist in binding us through the cleverness of few and the laziness of many. We need to overthrow the masters of our minds, and truly own our whole biology. We need to take back what is ours at the cellular level and stop outsourcing our, jobs, minds, beliefs and internal revisions to external PR meme factories! We need to take back the country, the earth (*look out for evil socialism!*), and our humanity. We are not pigeons. We do not have to have to rip out our own feathers, neurotically and ineffectively searching for rewards. We are human beings with the capacity to see we are being conditioned. And it is our responsibility to fly out of our comfortable Skinner box, peck out the eyes of the Gregorian masters who rule us and take as many damn pellets as we want!

Now get to it. 



*It's the shirt the Janjaweed militia banned in 13 villages!  
Now available to affluent young Westerners!*

**ORDER ONLINE AT [WWW.MATTBORS.COM](http://WWW.MATTBORS.COM)**



**Michael Gildea**

**The Golden Compass**



Nicole Kidman makes our Golden Compass point due North

Since the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy was so damn successful, a string of imitators has expeccated like so much snot from Gollum's nose. Okay, maybe just a dull and poorly executed *Chronicles of Narnia*, but you know that more are on the way.

And here's The Way. *The Golden Compass* is about a little girl in an alternate reality (a plot device that comes in especially handy whenever numerous lapses in logic, disbelief and plausibility come into play) or... something. I can't say for sure. Science fiction sometimes is fucked up just for the sake of being fucked up. I'm guessing some kabala of old, pale-eyed and pasty Europeans (*The Majesterian* I believe they go by) wants to rule the world and needs a golden compass which can see into the future to do it. The compass is hidden and a little girl has it and can wield it, a cast of unusual characters who happen to be the sworn enemies of the imperialist limeys are sworn to protect her and you get the idea.

In the plus column, it looks a hell of a lot better than *Narnia*, everyone's got a talking animal (some with celebrity voices) and there are warrior polar bears. Or "ice bears" as the trailer explains. There also appears to be lots of action which may be more Middle Earth than Narnia, but then again that *Narnia* trailer once showed promise. *Once*. And if Daniel Craig, sporting a badly dyed beard, is here, he sure as shit isn't making another James Bond movie. And I don't like waiting.

**I Am Legend**



"Wow, it looks just like Omega Man out there!"

Whenever a *lone survivor after the apocalypse* or a holocaust movie comes out I get all excited. Partially because I know that I don't ever want to see either of these things happen in real life and also because I'll get to see it happen.

So as the trailer so obviously explains, Will Smith is apparently all that remains of humanity because of what he explains is a man-made virus. He's living my dream of being the only person in Manhattan (or the world for that matter) with a German Shepherd (okay, in my dream it's a Great Dane). He eats breakfast with his dog,

"rents" videos, drives a mustang around the city, goes hunting (whenever a lion doesn't beat him to the punch) and uses the back of an aircraft carrier as a driving range.

Of course things get nasty when the mutant vampires come out at night. They want Smith's blood because he's the only one immune to this virus and he's working feverishly on the cure. You know, because coincidentally the last guy left on earth just happens to be the scientist who was responsible for the biggest catastrofuck of all time. It looks like his dog gets hurt, many explosions happen and everything else you'd expect.

So they're remaking *Omega Man* (or *Last Man on Earth* if you're keeping score) and with 99.9% of all remakes something goofy or supposedly interesting has to be done to differentiate it from the original(s). I'm guessing a love triangle with the head of the mutants or a jungle fever tryst with a blow up doll. After all, Charlton Heston had a touch of *the fever* in *Omega Man*, so they've got to do something. I'm going to hold off until cable unless Charlton Heston falls off the wagon and personally invites me to go see *I Am Legend* with him. He's also got to promise to drunkenly provide a commentary track for me and me alone. AND he's got to complain that a scientologist couldn't pull off the lead role in this movie.

## National Treasure: Book of Secrets



"Oh my God... it's signed by John Yoo!"

Oh, sweet Jesus. Another one. Wasn't one *Da Vinci Code* knock off bad enough? Nicolas Cage running around in a really bad wig, lending credence to fictional and non-fictional conspiracy theories with a cast of old farts and computer geeks in tow. All of the intrigue, none of the religious backlash. None of the charisma either.

I don't even remember what happened the first time around, but apparently it comes out that Cage was one of the conspirators in the Lincoln assassination through the creepy ramblings of Ed Harris

as a government creepy guy (I'm guessing that's an actual governmental title) at a public speaking event. Cage and company run around all over the country to secret places looking for evidence to clear his ancestor.

Then the... dare I say it... *Book of Secrets* comes into play. It's a non-existent (or is it?) book that only presidents have access to. It's got such coveted pieces of information such as Warren Commission findings, missing minutes of Nixon's Watergate tapes and the truth about Area 51. So in an effort to get his hands on this conspiracy nut's wet dream, Cage decides to kidnap the president. Yeah, I said the same thing.

Cage and company end up on some sets from *Tomb Raider* that didn't get dismantled while battling some clichéd spider webs and bring Helen Mirren along for some street cred and Harvey Keitel takes a break from his Gatorade commercials to age even more gracefully.

And in case you haven't figured it out, Cage's great whatever had nothing to do with the assassination. Harris is just using him and his team as pawns to get the *Book of Secrets* all for himself! There are embarrassing pictures in there of him both giving and receiving rim jobs or whatever to/from/with Henry Kissinger,

and if those get out he'll never be in charge of his local rotary club. *And he might get away with it if it isn't for those meddling kids!*

## Sweeney Todd: Demon Barber of Fleet Street



Johnny Depp, Tim Burton,  
scissors, attic, etc.

Whenever Johnny Depp and Tim Burton work together it's usually gold, but even the team of Martin Scorsese and Robert DeNiro had their *New York, New York*. And I think this is Burton and Depp's. So we've got *Sweeney Todd: Demon Barber of Fleet Street*. All I knew about the story is that a wackadoo serial killer/barber starts killing people and lets his landlady or somebody like that have the bodies to cannibalize or turn into blue plate specials or something. Which isn't so bad in itself, but if you tack a sticker that says *a musical by Stephen Sondheim* on it any anticipation I may have had for it is deader than Robert Goulet.

It looks decent enough. Depp plays some poor bastard who gets locked away when some rotten judge played by Alan Rickman wants and eventually steals his old lady. Somehow Depp wriggles away, assumes a new identity and hairstyle and his neighbor played by Helena Bonham Carter helps him exact his revenge and the whole thing is very spooky and atmospheric. Actually, the whole goddamned thing looks exactly like *Sleepy Hollow*, but it's Tim Burton so what do you want?

Then Depp starts singing. If there's one thing in the world I can't stand (okay—there are things by the dozens that I can't stand, and when I come across them I'm filled with a boundless rage that can only be relieved by opening fire into a crowd,

## KINO KLEE-SHAY LEGEND



Betrayed by  
Those Who  
Trained Him



Mind Fuck



Noble Retard



Evil Genius



Vampires/Wizards  
as Gay/AIDS  
Metaphor



Post  
Apocalyptic  
Wasteland



Impossible Science



Glorification of Law  
Enforcement Bodies



Enchanted  
Object



Special Effects  
Circle Jerk



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

watching *Stella* or taking a nap) it's when people sing. Obviously if I'm listening to an album or if I'm at a show that's one thing, but if someone starts singing in real life it's a total boner killer. That scene in *Animal House* where Belushi smashes that folkie's guitar on the stairs pretty much sums it up for me.

It's a *musical*. But Borat's in it. Then again it looks pretty cool. At the same time so what? Why should I get all excited about seeing the same thing I've seen a few times already, only this time it'll be with people singing through most of it? It appears to have no comic elements to it and the theater's going to be filled with pussy goth kids and even worse, theater students. I've never downloaded or pirated a movie in my life, but *Sweeney Todd* might make me start for two reasons. 1) I'm probably not going to like it. 2) Those fucking theater kids. There's always a few who just have to dance in the aisles. I don't like when people dance in real life either.

### Alvin and the Chipmunks



One of them literally eats shit

Jason Lee as Dave and three computer-animated chipmunks. One of which eats shit. And I'm not just trying to be a craggy dick. One of them actually eats shit. A scientologist playing second fiddle to cartoons singing "Funkytown." I knew I was going to get a lump of coal this Christmas, just not this early. There is nothing good afoot here and if someone's trying to introduce Alvin and the Chipmunks to a new generation I'm guessing it's not going to work. They couldn't be killed quicker with a bullet.

### Alien vs. Predator: Requiem



After seeing an R-rated *Alien vs. Predator: Requiem* trailer on some film site I was kind of torn. I couldn't decide if I was more impressed with a deuce I dropped a few hours before or this trailer. The deuce won.

The plot for *Requiem* is like the punchline to a joke you've heard before, only told a little differently. Some predators get some alien facehugger eggs, drop them somewhere, and let some poor idiots get turned into mincemeat so the hunt can begin. Of course the predators underestimate the aliens, and there's one predator and one human left. They work together to squash the hive and at some point the predator is going to blow off the nuke on his wrist, effectively bringing the movie to an end and leaving one human survivor out in the middle of some desolate and ominous setting.

I've read the comics during a misspent youth and even though I'd all but outgrown it by the time the battle of the titans hit the big screen, I went anyway. The original *Alien vs. Predator* didn't really offer much. It was a monster movie where the most fun was watching the humans get killed and an ending that offered an interesting premise—a premise that doesn't look like it's going to get touched in *Requiem*.

Instead we get some predators dropping some aliens in some isolated town (instead of Antarctica) only to have the aliens outwit the predators. Oh! But the US military is moving in and if I heard correctly time is against everyone as I'm guessing some hard-on general plans on nuking the site. So maybe Mr. Lone Wolf Predator won't get to blow his load from his fancy wrist band. Ah well. God created cable for a reason, right?

### Charlie Wilson's War



I can't follow the thought pattern of Hollywood for the life of me sometimes. We just had a pair of movies about the current conflict in the Middle East thrown at us and I want to say that definitely one, maybe two more are on the way. Total overkill, right? So when you want to make essentially the same type of movie but you don't want to compete with the 328 other douchebags doing it, what do you do?

You tell a similar story from a few decades ago. Maybe even have this story lead up to the one happening now! Make it about a person that no one's really heard of. Make this person more eccentric in the movie than they ever were in reality. Get a big star, put a bad wig on him. Get an equally big actress, stick an even worse wig on her. And whatever you do, don't make it *too* serious. Or at least don't make the trailer too serious.

And that's what they did. *Charlie Wilson's War* seems to be about a hack Texas senator played by Tom Hanks who either helps or attempts to help Afghanistan by supplying arms, aid and what have you in the '80s. He dusts off his accent from *The Ladykillers* as he exceeds his power to do his part for the cold war. Julia Roberts shows up too. I'm not really sure what purpose she serves because I started nodding off about 16 seconds into the trailer. I couldn't care less and this is apparently one of the movies that has such a level of self-importance it expects people to blow off their families and travel through shitty weather to see it. And if you're an uncle or an aunt on a school board AND a Fox News enthusiast, you might. I'm not, so I'll probably just load up on turkey then unbuckle my pants and watch a sporting event I couldn't care less about. Merry Christmas, everyone.




## The Bucket List



### Cancer patients gone wild!

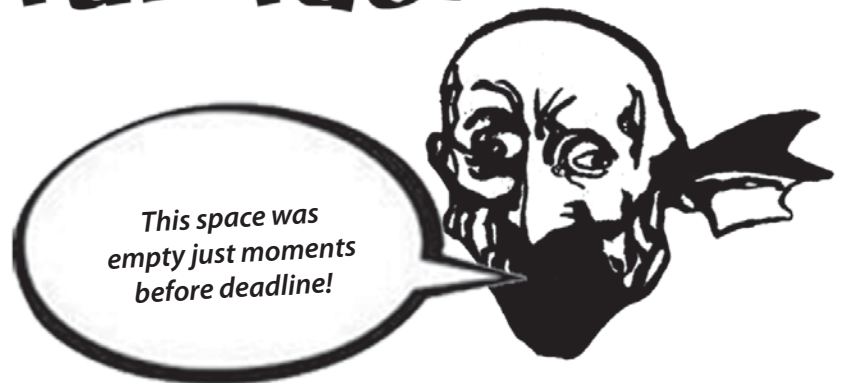
Were you wondering why Jack Nicholson had his head shaved earlier this year at the Oscars? Me neither, but apparently it was for *The Bucket List*. Nicholson and Morgan Freeman play a pair of cantankerous yet good natured terminal cancer patients who decide to hit the road instead of bearing the brunt of each other's incontinence. The plan is that they'll do what they never got around to doing (but always meant to) in their lives instead of playing gin rummy in a hospice and eventually getting kicked out when they don't die within ten days.

So they go skydiving. They abuse classic cars on race tracks. Ride a motorcycle on the Great Wall of China, fight with their wives, visit their estranged children, go to Africa, visit a computer-generated Taj Mahal and Egyptian pyramids. Run a train on a Croatian midget, cut the *do not remove* tags off of mattresses, finger-pop nuns, eat lunch then immediately go swimming, call in bomb threats, compose sonnets, do embroidery, perform fellatio, etc. They get crabby with each other and I'm guessing Nicholson will share an anecdote about a handjob from a nurse in Vietnam.

I'm also going to take a shot in the dark here and say that Nicholson and Freeman will have some kind of blowout, resulting in a faggy and sensitive letter that Freeman writes. You know these two are going to die, and you're supposed to bawl like a baby when they do anyway. Just like when the Titanic sank. Instead, I'll probably just watch *Chinatown* and *Five Easy Pieces* then wonder what the hell ever happened to Nicholson and remember the days when the man did movies without lines like *find the joy in your life*. Gross. 



## Fun Fact





\*\*\* *"Copious amounts of pot" edition* \*\*\*

**A leafy, green substance**



Just when you thought the "supernaturally large quantity of marijuana" sports bust was a thing of the past — a foggy "did I really do that shit?" memory in the basketball-size head of Nate Newton — in comes a new story from Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, where three Coastal Carolina University football players got themselves jacked for carrying the big stash.

Mario Tynes, Eric Brown Jr., and Rickey Johnson were all nailed just after midnight on October 14, following a CCU football game (a 51-0 win over Chowan, in case you're not up on the latest action in the irrelevant Big South conference). Police had pulled over the guys' hubcap-less white Ford LTD after receiving 911 reports of men "flashing guns" out of the vehicle window. Inside the car they found two guns, three pounds of marijuana, and \$1345 in cash. The guns were discovered after police noticed a magazine about firearms in the back seat; the weed after cops saw a "green leafy substance" under the driver's seat.

Cops immediately booked the trio of

Chanticleers (plus two other men who aren't on the team) on drug and weapons charges, but were a little puzzled by the presence of blood on one of the guns. That mystery was solved about 90 minutes later, when a man at a nearby apartment complex called in and complained of having been assaulted and robbed. The caller apparently left out the detail about having been robbed of the three pounds of marijuana, as is now believed, but whatever. The victim had to seek medical treatment for a cut on his head after the men forced their way into his apartment; police matched the blood on the seized gun to the victim, and new armed-robbery and burglary charges were added.

CCU Athletic Director Warren Koegel subsequently dismissed all three players from the team and revoked their scholarships, humorously explaining that he'd done so because the players had violated the CCU athlete's code of conduct. Um, gee, I hope their actions were in violation of the code of conduct. Because if a pistol-whipping, drug-thieving home invasion is not covered, y'all have a problem down there in Myrtle Beach.

Anyway, give these jokers 85 points for their trouble. Armed-robbery and assault is no joke, as they're sure to find out once they get to court.

**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

## Ram tough



Can we get through a week in the NFL without some 340-pound guy punching a woman in the face? Just one?

On the heels of enormous Steelers running back Najeh Davenport's assault charge comes word that St. Louis Rams offensive lineman Claude Terrell, who has been one of the league's classic underperforming ass-hats for some time now, has been arrested on two felony counts. One of the culprits responsible for the future infirmity of QB Marc Bulger (guaranteed this year by the Rams offensive line's collective matador blocking technique — ¡Ole!), Terrell has been in almost weekly trouble for a variety of team-related offenses: failing to make weight, showing up late for team meetings, screaming at coaches, that sort of thing. This in addition to already being on probation for assault upon a family member, stemming from a domestic-violence bust two years ago.

As for Terrell's latest incident, police responded to a late-night call in Webster, Texas, and discovered a weeping woman with what appeared to be a broken nose. Terrell was hauled away and slapped with two big counts: (another) assault on a family member and assault with bodily injury to a family member. The victim later explained that she was Terrell's wife.

Oddly enough, Rams president of football operations, Jay Zygmunt, refused to cite the arrest as a reason in his subsequent release of Terrell. "He was released for performance on the field, and just because of how he was playing," said the boss. One wonders if the team is afraid of releasing Terrell for non-football reasons at a time when the club is so desperate for healthy offensive linemen. Do they think the fans wouldn't forgive them for releasing a guy who breaks his wife's nose? Then again, this is the same team that kept Leonard Little on board even after he got busted for a second DUI, six years after he killed a woman in a drunk-driving incident. Hey, we know he's got some off-field issues, but we really need that pass rush . . .

Give Terrell, a two-time douchebag, 70 points.

## Genius of the year



We've had some real winners light up the crime blotter this year — from Jose Offerman's bat rampage to Elijah Dukes's magic cell phone and the marital love bites of Julio "Chompers" Mateo, there's been a bumper crop of dumb jocks in handcuffs. But we may have to give an award of some kind for this year's saddest and perhaps most pointless crime to University of Iowa wide receiver Dominique Douglas, whom astute readers will note is making his second appearance in these pages this fall.

Just a few weeks back, "Blotter" recorded the exploits of Douglas and fellow Iowa wideout Anthony Bowman, who logged on to school computers using their own names and then used stolen credit cards to buy \$1500 worth of crap from stores with names such as Sneakerhead and Hatworld. They were busted practically before they got up from their chairs and were immediately suspended from the team.

That said, this is D-1 football, and Douglas did lead the Hawkeyes in receptions this past season, which means that, in all likelihood, he would have gotten a second chance pretty damn soon, had he kept his nose clean. But alas, it was not to be, as a few weeks ago Douglas apparently decided there were three DVDs he just had to have at an Iowa City Wal-Mart. On October 11, a store employee observed Douglas stuffing the DVDs under his shirt, and the young man was busted with what police are calling a fifth-degree misdemeanor. I didn't even know they had five degrees of misdemeanors, but apparently that's what they call the theft of \$30.02 worth of merchandise from Wal-Mart.

Iowa head coach and former Bill Belichick assistant Kirk Ferentz was somewhat at a loss over the Douglas news, noting sagely that he had already suspended the player and therefore could not do so again. "It doesn't change things," said Ferentz. You can't double suspend anybody. I'm just going to let the legal system run its course."

This story is even stupider than it reads here. The arrest of Douglas was an absurdly complicated affair, given that all this was over \$30.02 worth of crap. The wideout ended up barricading himself in

his dorm room when cops came to arrest him, apparently in the belief that if he did not open the door, the police would go away. (That, or he just wanted time to watch his DVDs.) Anyway, shortly after his arrest, he was released when former partner-in-crime Bowman sprung him on a \$500 bond.

Eleven Iowa football players have now accounted for 15 arrests since spring practices, an almost Florida State-worthy clip. Give Douglas an extra 20 points for this offense — not for severity, but for stupidity. That brings him up to 51 for the year . . .

## Flat-out gross



Take your pick, if you're deciding which was the most loathsome sports arrest of the past week. You can't lose if you chose "Stormin' " Norman Bounds, a 58-year-old former Buffalo Braves draftee and Continental Basketball Association player who showed up at his arraignment with an aluminum walker. He was arrested for abducting his former girlfriend and threatening her so that she wouldn't go to the police. Bounds, who played for the Rochester Zeniths of the CBA in the '70s, once did two-to-six after raping an ex-girlfriend and holding their two-year-old son at gunpoint for three hours before surrendering to police. Guess they don't hand out very long sentences for that sort of thing in upstate New York.

The other vile charge this week belongs to former University of Georgia baseball pitcher Joseph Carroll, 22, who recently thought he was making a date with a 15-year-old girl on the Internet. When he drove 110 miles to Peachtree City, Georgia, to meet his intended date, he swept the parking lot several times in search of cops before finally parking. That's when the Georgia Bureau of Investigation stepped in and gave Carroll the bad news that he wasn't going to get laid. Police found Levitra and Viagra in the car, plus some Google Maps directions to the agreed-upon site.

Carroll turned down a \$500,000 bonus from the Tampa Bay D-Rays in 2003, choosing to go to Georgia instead. He can bend over and kiss his baseball career goodbye, as prosecutors in Peachtree City bragged after his arrest that no child-sex predator has ever been sentenced to less than 10 years in prison there.

FAX (716)362-0619

[sic]

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## TEABAG OF VICTORY

Matt, you really don't know the state of play [Matt Taibbi, "Year of the Rat," issue 120]. Listen, go to intrade.com. You'll see that according to the collective opinions of people putting money down on the outcomes of the primaries, Ron Paul and McCain are not hopeless cases at all, carrying better odds than that slimy weazel from North Carolina. You'll also see that Clinton is the presumptive nominee for the Democrats. Dean was trading at 50 cents to the dollar at his peak. At 70 cents to a dollar, informed people, not hacks like you, are betting that only a serious setback stands between her and the nomination. In fact, she probably will win Iowa, she has a lock on NH, NV and FL, and probably will win SC. Edwards? He's already toast. Oh, and Kucinich? At zero bid, that sums up the fruitcake congressman pretty well.

well, Ron Paul is trading up to 9, ahead of Thompson. Not bad for a guy mentioned in the NYT maybe once a fortnight. And Clinton? She has a lock on everything, except maybe Iowa. Matt, you should write something about Paul, for once you could be ahead of the curve. Yes, I know, you called the Russian default in July 1998. I got news for you babe. When Russian debt was trading at 40 cents to the dollar, everybody knew a default was coming.

Nameless Ass

*Dear Ass,  
We're going to go on record here: If Ron Paul wins the Republican nomination, we will suck your balls [Uthman alone will suck your balls. -Murphy]. We will suck them well and long, and allow you to take pictures of the event and mail them to our parents. Mmm'kay then?*

## FAN[sic]

Well, strangely enough it seems that like that nice man Glen Beck was wrong [“Pastor John Hagee Launched on Iranian Nuclear Facility,” issue 120]. For some strange reason I've been reincarnated as a cockroach and am currently scurrying my way back to Texas where I intend to continue my work, denouncing the gays and abortion before inevitably being squashed by that janitor who used to work for my non-profit organization.

But the ride on the oil tanker my joyful journey was marred when among when the Bible I was reading was cut out to hide drugs and I was forced to read this piece of shit you call a magazine. How dare you give a platform to that dangerous man, Professor Muttonchops [“Some Brief Thoughts on Abortion,” issue 120]. To systematically break down the abortion debate into a rational argument, and not even use rhetoric to defend the lives of innocent clumps of cells...it makes me sick. I will him know that the moment of conception comes, at least for me, five minutes after regular porn. The times with gay porn didn't work out so well.

Everyone knows that the point at which a fetus is considered human life is directly found in the Bible in...in...you know, that section. And there is no way that modern reason and evidence could ever contradict a book written over six thousand years ago after being passed down my oral tradition. Each word is sacred!!!

Remember, my outspokenness against homosexuality makes me super, super not gay, no matter what they find in my porn collection.

John Hagee

*Dear Pastor Hagee,  
Wait a minute—Glenn Beck was wrong?  
Come on, no way!*

## NO CHILD LEFT ALIVE

Similar view on abortion - life comes from passing a series of tests; genetic, organogenic, birth, etc. Well over half of all pregnancies self-terminate due to faulty DNA or organ damage. They weren't alive to begin with, they failed the test. Same with children dying in childbirth, or who are born alive but lack a brain. Either way, to be pro life requires ignoring biology.

Akendzio

*Dear Akenzio,  
We're pretty sure being born alive without a brain is also integral.*

## NOMINATIONS BEGIN

Dianne Feinstein, I hope, should make it now to the loathed 50 George Scharenberg

*Dear George,  
But...but...if the Democrats didn't approve Mukasey, Bush would have had to appoint an interim AG without their approval! That would make the DoJ's actions seem...illegitimate! We can't have that.*

## JESUS WILL KICK YOUR ASS

You guys are kind of funny, but you definitely don't mind taking a bit of fact, mixing it with opinion and presenting it

as true (or takking the side of people who do, e.g. Chomsky). Kudos on reprinting the Danish cartoon; unfortunately America's mainstream press is only free for certain groups these days. By the way, I'm a devout Catholic and (you having attended the Mike Seaver thing) I'm sure you don't need to be reminded that evry idle word will be given account of (including your cracks about Jesus, before whom you WILL one day bow); however, truly free speech is bound to offend now and then, so...one last point, if you guys are so into Chomsky and these other secular-progressive intellectuals who wouldn't know an honest day's work from a non peer-reviewed journal article, why are you doing this instead of that?  
D

Dear D,  
This is easier. But yeah, we're sure the Vatican is a much more reliable source of information than Chomsky.

## KIDS KILL THE DARNEDST THINGS

Abortion! Who wants to kill some fuckin kids!?

Man, that shit was spot on! Love the logic in the recent article! Babies should be given the same rights has housepets in my opinion: if you want, you can kill it and bury it in the backyard. That's your

choice, but it's illegal to can't torture it or make them fight each other the way mike vick did with dogs (although that would make for an awesome subculture, dragging two babies in chains to abandoned shacks in the woods, dropping them in a pit, and placing your bets)...but I digress, it's about time somebody dropped the dopey sentimentality and got real on this issue.....and I have a favor, could you guys talk to my girlfriend, yall word it better, she's knocked up and not budging on this abortion thing! holla  
Johnn Gautreaux

Dear John,  
We imagine you've provided your girlfriend much better reasons to get an abortion that we can offer.

## [sic]RELIGE

Dear Beast,

I'm trying to spread the word about my new "invention." Well, ok I didn't invent it, I just gave it a name. Its called a Pat Robertson. You take a dump on a girl (or guy)'s chest and wipe it off with the bible.

Sincerely,  
Josh

PS: I know its early but can't wait for the 50 Most Loathsome people of 2007!

Dear Josh,  
If you really can't wait, we suggest writing it yourself and then sending it to us. That would be most helpful in expediting the process.

## BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS

This is hilarious! [Rich Herschlag, "Party Poopers: Rehab for conservative perverts," issue 120]. I needed some comic relief from all every day crap and you gave me a toilet bowl full. Thanks Toysrus

Dear Toysrus,  
Yes, but how many toilet bowls of comic relief would you have to eat to equal the nutritional value of just one bowl of Total?

## CAN'T SPELL "CUBICLE"

OMFG this is sooo funny. I printed this out and it now hangs on my office cubical. Touche' my friend.  
BlingBling

Dear Bling,  
Glad we could brighten your dingy, monotonous hell slightly.

## FREE OFFER!

Hey man - loved your article about rehab for conservative perverts. I noticed you don't have your own site. I'd love to grow my own a bit by adding a new writer or two. It's just a little blog I've been writing for several years without much of a following, possibly because I'm not able to get new material up frequently enough. In any event, if you have any interest in contributing, you have a perfect sensibility for my site. Also, i've had a little trouble being funny lately. I'd love to have your sense of humor on-board.

Best,  
CP  
chronicallypissed.com

Dear CP,  
Dude, we totally have our own website. Thanks though, for offering to use our work for free.



## HYPOCRI[sic]

these guys are total hypocrites. It pisses me off everytime this happens (priest rapes kids, or senator takes anal in bathroom and then condemns fags on senate floor etc.)

Great write up  
Jeebs

*Dear Jeebs,*

*What if the senator's a woman? We're thinking maybe Blanche Lincoln, or Mary Landrieu. Susan Collins is also not bad. Or all three? Like, you're the senatorial janitor or something, and you walk in to clean the ladies' room, and there they are on the floor, all ready for hot anal action, and they're like "whip it out, stud; it's time for a congressional probe," or something. Then they could walk right out the the floor and condemn homosexuality, and they wouldn't be hypocrites, right? Is it hot in here?*

## CON[sic]E

Disgusting [*Ian Murphy, "Let There be Retards," issue 117*]. What's the point?  
Valerie

*Dear Valerie,*

*Um...well... creationists are dumber than retards? It's not really that cryptic.*

## WOODWINDY

Editors:

Unfortunately, Ms. Goldman seems to think that she's Laurie Githens (perhaps you remember her) who was a truly humorous and gifted writer [Donnie Dobovich, "I Hate You: Mary Kunz, vessel of mediocrity," issue 56].

Somehow the powers that be at *The Buffalo News* got bamboozled by this wanna-be with the assistance of Jeff Simon. I recently asked Mr. Simon, as Arts Editor, to have someone else review *Elizabeth: The Golden Years* because Ms. Goldman's review was so biased. The response I got was that she's "a gifted writer." Good lord! If she's a gifted writer then I'm Gertrude Stein.

Ms. Goldman (and why do we have to hear about "the guy Buzz married?") offends a lot of people every week. And

her music reviews are just plain ignorant. I played several kinds of clarinet for more than 20 years in various orchestras and concert bands, and she knows nothing of music, how it is produced or written. I don't know why she still has a job.

F. Reynolds  
Buffalo, NY

*Dear F,*

*If you're going to ask and answer your own questions, we're not bothering to come up with a witty reply. You see, in the context of the Buffalo News, mediocrity is a gift. And Goldman is extremely gifted.*

## YOU MEAN "FUNNY?"

Bastard child of Hunter S. Thompson - you're what the Onion hasn't been for a long time.

David

*Dear David,*

*Ah yes, who can forget the halcyon days of the Onion, that old bastion of Gonzo journalism? Apparently, we can.*

## OEDIPAL-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

Dear NSA,


..I realize you guys have quite a large job ahead of you ["I'm Listening... Advice from an NSA Spook," issue 92]. I mean; closely monitoring the day to day activities of nearly 3 hundred million people is no simple task. It is for this reason that I have decided to volunteer my services to you. My theory is, if more people would begin to closely monitor themselves then it would relieve a ton of pressure and time from all of..you.

For instance, the other day I secretly recorded a conversation between me and my mom. Now, at first glance it seemed like just an ordinary talk between a mom and her son. I was asking about this years garden and she would explain her technique for canning and freezing to preserve the summer harvest so as to feed the family through the cold winter months. The talk continued, however I was growing increasingly impatient. Anxious to begin my investigatory work. I quickly cut her off just as she was

beginning to describe this sweater that she had been knitting for grandpa. "mom I have to go, theres something burning on the stove!" ( a clever lie!) As soon as we said goodbye I feverishly rushed to the tape recorder to examine the evidence. I played the tape over and over again tirelessly looking for clues but nothing was showing up. "There must be something!" I mumbled out loud. It was well into the night now and growing increasingly delusional from exhaustion I was just about to call it quits...Then. As if..it were a message sent down from god himself... It struck me. " What if I play the tape in reverse!" I exclaimed out loud. My heart began to race, my palms were sweaty. I Quickly began to examine the tape again, but this time backwards. My pulse quickening with each passing second. "What would I find?" I knew I was on the right path. All of my years of reading encyclopedia Brown novels was now beginning to pay off. And then; right in the middle of my mom describing to me the superiority of.. heirloom varietal seeds, I heard it.The moment I had been waiting for...I was able to vaguely decipher in reverse the true meaning behind this " innocent conversation" And what I found was astonishing. This was no ordinary sunday afternoon mom and son talk; oh no. What i was able to uncover was a sinister terrorist ..plot to blow up the Dunkin Doughnuts on the corner of virgil and lexington in downtown LA... I gleamed with satisfaction at my latest discovery.. I was the one one smart enough to crack this highly evolved terrorist code. A code that was being delivered from the lips of the very woman whom had given birth to me and changed my dirty diapers. I was the one who would save the lives of tens of people. I was a hero!

So please NSA you must act soon, for our lives and our freedom are at stake. You must not let these freedom haters destroy such a great symbol of Amerika. I will continue further investigations and keep you up to date on anything new.  
kristopher Woyschner

*Dear Kristopher,*

*We appreciate your diligent work, and your mother has been detained. However, in the future it is not necessary for you to write us, as we are currently monitoring your thoughts. Stop touching yourself.* 

# BEAST-O-SCOPES

As divined by  
Andrew Gullerstein

## Scorpio (Oct 23 – Nov 21)

Your new iPhone is really cool. Now you can surf the net, e-mail, listen to music and watch video on the go, wherever you are. Now maybe you should go outside.

## Sagittarius (Nov 22 – Dec 21)

This month, you may notice that pillows are fluffier, music is sweeter, and you feel a deeper connection with the people you meet. This is because your wasted teenager stashed 30 ecstasy tablets in your Brita water pitcher and forgot about it. Enjoy the oneness.

## Capricorn (Dec 22 – Jan 19)

Good move getting all those piercings. You don't want guys thinking you're not trashy enough.

## Aquarius (Jan 20 – Feb 18)

Your mother loves you, but that doesn't mean she's not a total bitch.

## Pisces (Feb 18 – Mar 20)

When your boyfriend swears he's not going to put those videos you made together on the internet, he really means it. But he's keeping extra copies, you know, just in case things don't work out.

## Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 19)

Why would the Linksys corporation bother to make your wireless usb network adapter work, when they can still get your \$60 without bothering? Good thing you've got that 50 foot ethernet cord.

## Taurus (Apr 20 – May 20)

The reason your cats won't come upstairs is that you're being slowly killed by carbon monoxide up there.

## Gemini (May 21 – June 20)

You didn't get arrested because of your political views. You got arrested because you stood up and started shouting in the middle of an organized event. You could have shouted, "Support the troops! Call your mom and tell her you love her!" and you still would have been arrested. Think you're helping, really?

## Cancer (June 21 – July 22)

Mountain Dew is not love. But it is totally extreme!

## Leo (July 23 – Aug 22)

I'm going to go out on a limb here



and state definitively that not a single person who supports Dog the Bounty Hunter is going to vote for Hillary Clinton. They will line up to vote for a cross dresser though.

## Virgo (Aug 23 – Sept 22)

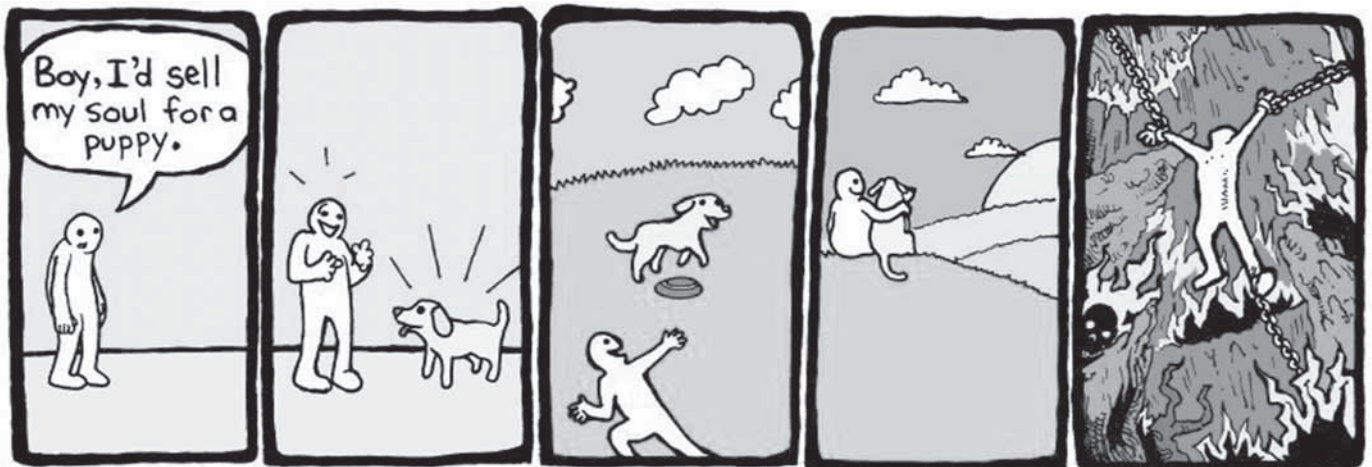
If you really want to keep that man of yours, you're going to need more chloroform.

## Libra (Sept 23 – Oct 22)

It's a good thing the constitution grants you the right to own a gun, because your wife is going to shoot you with it.

## THE PERRY BIBLE FELLOWSHIP BY NICHOLAS GUREWITCH

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