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# AN URGENT MESSAGE FROM GEORGIA GOVERNOR SONNY PERDUE



Greetings from Atlanta, capitol of the great State of Georgia, where we are currently facing a most peculiar crisis. My constituents were highly alarmed to learn from news reports that we were being invaded by Russia. I cannot imagine what kind of madness this Vladimir Putin fellow is afflicted with to conceive of such a thing, but we Georgians, I can assure you, will not go down without a hell of a fight.


But modern warfare really has moved into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and there are many confusing elements to my state's unprovoked conflict with the new, unexpectedly bold Russian bear. For starters, no matter how hard we look, we can't find any Russians. It's not clear whether they've invented some newfangled cloaking technology that renders them invisible, or the Red cowards are simply hiding in underground tunnels, but so far there's just no sign of them. Oddly, although they claim to be reporting from Georgia, there is also no sign of any national press here. However, it is possible that they are all in Bainbridge. Another mystery is that nobody seems to know where South Ossetia is. I've got a map of Georgia right here in front of me, and I keep staring at it like one of those Magic Eye pictures, but I just can't find it anywhere.

Also, I want to alert the media to the fact that some impostor has duped them into thinking he runs this state. I've talked to everyone in Georgia's state government, and no one has ever heard of this Mikheil Saakashvili, if that's even a real name. In fact, I'm pretty

sure there is no such thing as a "President" of Georgia. I'm surprised the national press is so easily fooled. I fear that the Russians have slipped some kind of brainwashing hallucinogen into our water supply, and are waging a perverse psychological war on the nation, convincing us we're under attack. That or the invisibility thing.

Still, Georgia is taking no chances. We are currently rounding up all of the Russian or Russian-looking people we can find in our state and holding them in a Stuckey's near Savannah. Thanks to the expanded police powers granted to us by President Bush, we're going to keep interrogating them until they fess up to something. Already we have discovered that virtually all of our enemy combatant captives have been given the same cover story, a preposterous tale of another "Georgia" in the former USSR. The story remains consistent from detainee to detainee, making clear that these Reds are all in on whatever devious scheme is being implemented here. I am committed to breaking these terrorist agents by any means necessary.

But what is most troubling in the midst of this crisis is the dumbfounding lack of support from the federal government, or even our neighboring states. It is unbelievable to me that the general political consensus is that there is "not much the U.S. can do" to help Georgia. Have you all forgotten that we are a part of America, one of the original 13 colonies? I understand we have a lot of troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, but my mind reels to hear a bunch of detached pundits talk about how our military is "stretched too thin" to come to the aid of one of these United States, when it is under attack by one of our greatest historical enemies! Bush must act immediately to protect this state and nation. Again, I fear this country's leaders must be under some devious Russian mind control.

If anyone out there is still in control of their faculties, I implore you to do what you can to convince the politicians in Washington of the severity of this situation. This strange new war must be won by the forces of freedom, or the rest of the union will fall, and soon we'll be worshiping statues of Lenin instead of the one true God. This nation must speak with one voice, and say "nyet!" to the Evil Empire. Georgia needs your help! 

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**THIS ISSUE'S CAREER  
ORIENTED CHIMP**



"Call me. We'll fling poo."

# Moldy Dick

## John McCain's fraudulent legend

BY ALLAN UTHMAN

I know we're supposed to be used to this stuff by now, but this recent rash of "faith and values" presidential campaign events is still freaking me out. It was bad enough listening to Republican Senators lie about how often they pray, but now I've got to watch Democrats prostrate themselves before the one demographic that despises them the most, evangelical Christians. At least John McCain had the good sense to pass up an audience with the NAACP. When you're beat, you're beat.

It's not surprising McCain got a better response from the audience at squishy Pastor Rick Warren's Saddleback Church. He gave short, decisive answers that pushed all the right fundamentalist buttons, while Obama stammered his way through more complex explanations of why he basically disagrees with everything the audience believes, except the Jesus part. Perhaps Obama was wise to show up and make an effort, but it was McCain's show on Friday, and the pres agreed he had won the day.

That doesn't necessarily mean he cheated, except he probably did. It also doesn't necessarily mean he lied—except he definitely did. In fact, McCain's performance at Saddleback was so dense with dishonesty it's really something of an achievement, something to be cataloged for posterity.

Of course, there is the "Cone of Silence." As Warren introduced Obama at Saddleback, already an obviously tilted forum for a secret Muslim, he assured the audience that McCain was "safely placed ... in a cone of silence." When McCain's segment began, Warren, unable to resist his own wit, asked McCain he was comfortable

in the Cone. McCain joked that he was "trying to hear through the wall." polite chuckles all around.

But the real joke is that it was entirely false. McCain arrived a half hour late, well into Obama's interview. The well-worn excuse was that his motorcade was "stuck in traffic." Whether that's true or not, it doesn't change the fact that he and a staff replete with high tech wireless devices had every opportunity to monitor the live event and prepare accordingly. In addition, Pastor Warren, in defending himself on "Hannity & Colmes" on Monday, explained that the *monitor in McCain's green room* had been "totally disconnected from the source" by an associate. Details on the disconnection's totality were not forthcoming, but we can pray, I suppose, that Warren meant more than just unplugging a cable that could simply be reconnected.

And then there's this: McCain referenced a question that hadn't been asked yet. After fielding a question on abortion and then one on gay marriage with blunt, immediate, no-nonsense answers, McCain asks to "get back to" a question about Supreme Court justices that had as yet *only been asked of Obama*:

WARREN: Define marriage.

MCCAIN: A union — a union between man and woman, between one man and one woman. That's my definition of marriage. Could I — *are we going to get back to the importance of Supreme Court Justices* or should I mention —

Again, there had been no mention of Supreme Court Justices until that point in McCain's interview. He seems to be referring to a question given only to

Obama at that point ("Which existing Supreme Court Justice would you not have nominated?")

And then, immediately, this exchange:

WARREN: We will get to that.

MCCAIN: OK. All right. OK.

WARREN: You're jumping ahead. *You got all my questions, good.*

Altogether, it's suspicious at best. But unfairly prepared or not, McCain still managed to pack an amazing amount of self-aggrandizing bullshit into his clipped, rehearsed responses.

In response to the question, "Who are the three wisest people that you know that you would rely on heavily in an administration?" McCain went for absurd choices: David Petraeus, laughably calling him "one of the greatest military leaders in American history," E-Bay CEO Meg Whitman (this, McCain's hat tip to the ladies, would almost certainly have been Carly Fiorina if she hadn't said that thing about health insurers paying for Viagra but not birth control last month), and, in an awkward gesture to minorities, Democratic Representative and civil rights icon John Lewis.

McCain, who opposed recognizing Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday as a holiday until 1990, has been name-checking Lewis quite a bit this year, citing him as a potential advisor. But after 22 years that they've both been in Congress, they have no relationship whatsoever. As Lewis told *Mother Jones*, "Sen. McCain and I are colleagues in the US Congress, not confidantes. He does not consult me. And I do not consult him." And yet McCain names him as one of the top three people he expects to "rely on heavily"? That, my

friends, is not straight talk.

And then there's the touchy subject, the place no reporter dares to tread: McCain's POW stories. I wrote recently about how McCain inexplicably switched the Green Bay Packers for the Pittsburgh Steelers in one of his stories about giving false names to his interrogators in Vietnam, a strange embellishment that calls the story itself into question. But McCain has another, even better story, one that ties his War Hero backstory to the Lord God himself: The "Cross in the sand." You've probably heard it. Here it is from Friday:

MCCAIN: One night, I was being punished in that fashion. All of sudden the door of the cell opened

and the guard came in. The guy who was just -- what we call the gun guard -- just walked around the camp with the gun on his shoulder. He went like this and loosened the ropes. He came back about four hours later and tightened them up again and left.

The following Christmas, because it was Christmas day, we were allowed to stand outside of our cell for a few minutes. In those days we were not allowed to see or communicate with each other, although we certainly did. And I was standing outside, for my few minutes outside at my cell. He came walking up. He stood there for a minute, and with his sandal on the dirt in the courtyard, he drew a cross and

he stood there. And a minute later, he rubbed it out, and walked away.

For a minute there, there was just two Christians worshipping together. I'll never forget that moment.

For some reason, there is no record of McCain ever relating this tale prior to 1999, despite the fact that author Robert Timberg interviewed McCain specifically about three of his Christmases in captivity, including 1969, the year McCain now claims the story to have occurred on. McCain gave accounts for each year, which became an entire chapter of Timberg's book *The Nightingale's Song*, but no mention of a cross in the sand. In 2000, McCain told the story again during his "agents of intolerance" speech, but this time it was a third-person fable: "Many years ago a scared American prisoner of war in Vietnam..."

Then the story goes back to starring McCain. In some iterations, as it was at Saddleback, the cross-drawing guard's first scene comes in May of the same year, as he mercifully loosens the "torture ropes" McCain is bound with. But McCain was moved to a new prison camp in December of 1969, so how can it be the same guard?

But the real kicker is this: McCain's "cross in the sand" story is nearly identical to another prisoner's tale—Alexander Solzhenitsyn's, from his time in the Soviet Gulag. The great Russian author told of an episode in the Gulag when, his spirits dimming, a fellow inmate drew a cross in the dirt, giving Solzhenitsyn the strength to carry on. It's also notable that McCain is a big fan of Solzhenitsyn, having written about him in *Why Courage Matters: The Way to a Braver Life* (coauthored by longtime collaborator Mark Salter) in 2004.

The only person to recall McCain telling this story prior to 1999 is—are you ready?—Orson Swindle, a fellow POW to McCain who is now a Washington lobbyist and Republican advocate, and is actively campaigning for McCain. Despite having told *Politico* in May of this year, "I don't recall us talking specifically about our faith," He now begrudges to *National Review Online*: "I vaguely recall that story being told, among other stories." Of course.

You may think all this is very sordid. I don't care. McCain vowed to run a clean,

# THE BEAST PAGE 5

## *Dictatorial Facial Hair*

**Name:** Robert Mugabe's Moustache.

**Turn-ons:** Charlie Chaplin, ethnic cleansing, crushing dissent, making opposition leaders eat my campaign posters, the Shick Quattro, Hitler, rampant inflation and camping with friends.

**Turn-offs:** Fags, white people, fair elections, international monitoring, the Congo, Uganda, Rwanda, Don Cheadle, Tom Friedman, General Ambrose Burnside and basically anyone who doesn't agree with me.

**How I got to be The BEAST Page 5 Dictatorial Facial Hair:** Well, while Rob was at Oxford I was a full-grown, full-fledged 'stache, but the more he focused on Zimbabwean nationalism the smaller I became. Eventually, I was reduced to the sad state you see today. And that's the real tragedy.

**Future Plans:** I'm talking to Random House right now about getting my book published. We're currently at an impasse about the tone of the thing. They want an historic retelling of my days under the nose of Africa's most terrible leader, but I'm leaning more toward a fictional account of the last days of Stalin's pubes.

**How I'd Like to be Remembered:** As an absolute icon of dictatorial fashion, but more importantly, as an unpretentious bit of keratin which grows approximately .4 mm per day.



serious campaign and has completely ignored that promise. He has decided to get down with the shit-sniffers who sullied Kerry's war record, and accused McCain himself of having an illegitimate black baby in South Carolina in 2000. I don't care if he's been pressed into acquiescence by major Republican donors or if the whole revolting "celebrity/antichrist" strategy against Obama is entirely his idea. Every Democratic candidate in recent memory has had their reputations mercilessly assaulted—affairs exposed, lies about their past incessantly repeated, while the Republicans enjoyed a strange kind of deference. Bush was a deserter, a cocaine user, a drunk until 40, but those truths just slid right off of him, while GOP strategists used surrogates and their numerous friendlies in the press to turn Democratic candidates' strengths against them.

McCain has two strengths, aside from his lack of pigmentation: His POW ordeal, and his largely unearned reputation as a straight-talking maverick. Both of these strengths are vulnerable to revelations that McCain is embellishing his POW stories.

The thrall of Obama's unlikely primary victory over, I think we can all sense that this election isn't going to be easy, not easy at all. The numbers are closer than they should be, and as election day approaches, many fence-sitters are likely to jump to


McCain as the "safe" choice, as idiotic as that truly is.

This election will not be won through civility; they never are. I am not, however, suggesting that people should lie about McCain. Negative political attacks are just fine with me, as long as they are true. And there are plenty of underreported negative truths about McCain to feed a full-scale assault on his reputation until November, which is precisely what needs to happen. The "cross in the sand" and "Steelers defensive line" stories need to become the "I invented the internet" of this election season. It's long past time to stop playing footsie with these sons of bitches.

If you want to understand why McCain's "can't touch this, I'm a War Hero" defense must be eradicated, consider that he has already been revealed by *The New York Times* as having had an affair with a lobbyist, for Christ's sake, cheating on the wife he was cheating on his first wife with, and nobody seems to give a damn, while John Edwards, a man not running for dogcatcher at the moment, has captivated public outrage for over a week now for a plain vanilla affair with a woman his age.

Or consider the McCain camp's reflexive response to the allegations that he broke the Cone of Silence: "The insinuation from the Obama campaign that John McCain, a former prisoner of war, cheated is outrageous."

What the hell being a POW has to with the matter is anyone's guess, but it's a perfect illustration of why it's a wrongheaded strategy to shy away from scrutinizing McCain's legend. As long as his heroic confabulations persist in their immunity to criticism, this formula works for anything: "The insinuation from X that John McCain, a former prisoner of war, did Y is outrageous." While Obama stands accused of playing the "race card" any time he obliquely refers to his ancestry in any way, McCain gets to play the victim at will, for any reason, his pockets bulging with "how can you be mean to me after all I've been through" cards.

The only way to pierce McCain's media Kevlar is to show him for the phony fabulist he really is. This is no time to go wobbly. There can be no doubt that the attacks on Obama will only grow uglier and more dishonest. The Republicans will not hold back; they will not let their consciences interfere with their mission, which is simply to win, no matter what. Refraining from heavy combat is how Democrats lose; we've seen enough examples of that by now. Just calling him "McBush" isn't going to do it, people. So grab a harpoon and start jabbing. It's time to take this white whale down. 

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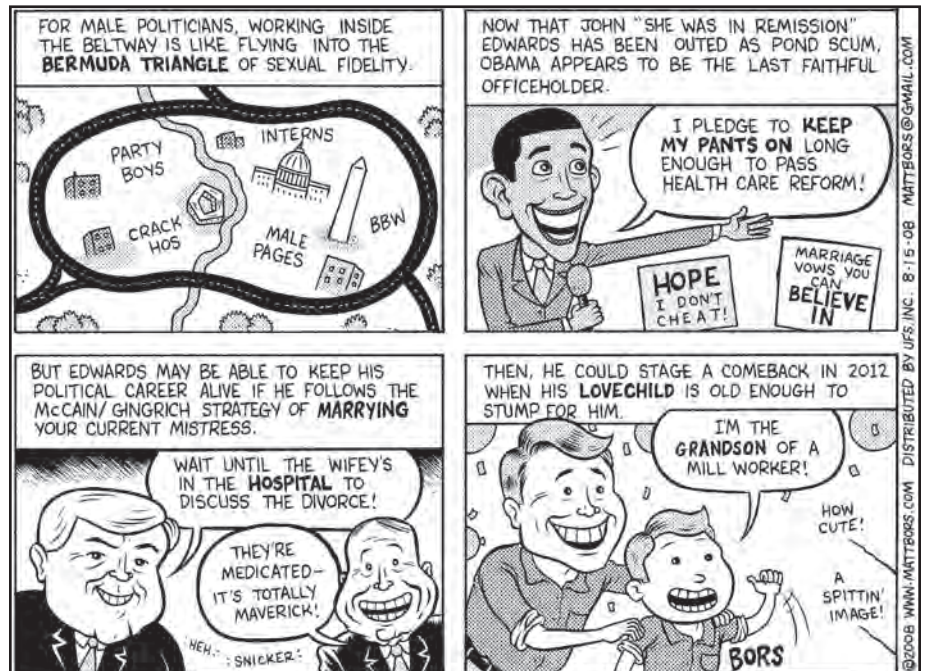


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# GROOMING THE BEAST

**PRIMATE ROBIN DUNBAR TALKS LANGUAGE, RELIGION, POLITICS AND CYBORGS**

Evolutionary biologist, anthropologist and psychologist Robin Dunbar is most famous for comparing primate brain mass and troupe size to find the social limits imposed by the human brain. Dunbar's number (about 150) can be seen limiting the populations of indigenous tribes, army units, corporate offices and other social groups worldwide. Ian Murphy called Dunbar at his office at the Institute of Cognitive and Evolutionary Anthropology at the University of Oxford.

**Thanks for taking the time. Let's start with language. Your idea of language is that it's—what is your idea of language?**

Um... I guess it's that language primarily serves a social function, rather than—

**Communication.**

Yes...

**It's not always about communicating?**

Well, it is about communication, but the traditional view of language is that—what I call the Einstein and Shakespeare idea of language. It's very highfalutin and it's all about how you make things and, you know, how to arrange going hunting and things like that—technical information exchange. And I guess my view is simply that that is secondary to the primary function, which has to do with social bonding.

**Yeah, you've drawn the parallel to grooming.**

Yes. So it replaces—it doesn't *replace* grooming, it adds to grooming in a very efficient way in humans, because we simply wouldn't have enough time to bond our social groups by grooming in the way monkeys and apes do.

**And we have showers.**

Yes. We do lots of other things that also have the same effect as grooming. That is to say the reason grooming seems to work is that it triggers an endorphin release, so you get this sort of light opiate high when you—we still do when you're

sort of cuddled and petted by somebody it produces the same effect. But we've also discovered, if you like, other ways to produce that effect that doesn't require direct physical contact. And one of them is laughter, so joking. You can therefore get lots of people bonded at the same time. Whereas the problem with grooming is that it's a one-on-one activity; you can only do it to one person at a time. But by getting people to laugh, you can get a whole group kind of jelled together. Religious rituals are very good at having the same effect—and singing and dancing.

**What do you think repetition has to do with religious ritual?**

There's something peculiar about repetitive movements, which seems to be particularly good at triggering trance states. And these trance states seem to be tied up with the release of these neurochemicals that are deeply involved in bonding—including both endorphins, the brain's own painkiller, and also oxytocin—the so called love drug.

**Are we the only species that does that?**

On the scale that we do, I think we are. Primates do it using—these same mechanisms are involved. Both these neurochemicals are heavily involved in social bonding in all mammals in fact, but it's really confined to the few species which have pair-bonded mating systems. But primates are different in that they have more intensely deep-bonded groups where individuals have these pair-bond-like relationships with several individuals, and they're not necessarily reproductive. What



*Dunbar and friend*

we've done is taken a kind of pair-bond mating relationship and generalized it to create a class of friends, in relationships which are not sexual in that sense, but are intensely social and create this same sense of, if you like, obligation and so on that you get in pair-bonded relationships in other species.

**So, while a group of people are creating their social bond, are they also excluding the other?**

Um, that is probably almost inevitable, so I think yes. The lot of these, these mechanisms are designed to create intensely well-bonded communities. But in a traditional kind of context, in an evolutionary context, that is, in much smaller scale societies than—of course we are way beyond small scale societies! [Laughs]

**You're probably best known for your number of approximately 150, which is uh—**

That's a small scale society, yes! But the interesting thing is: that these, these



mechanisms very easily capture, um, on a grander scale, so that comedians, but also preachers can appeal to very large number of individuals, far beyond 150.

Uh huh...

What seems to happen is that these kind of people, preachers and comedians, kind of share qualities in terms of their performance, their ability to—I mean, if you think of a kind of classic Baptist-type, you know, charismatic-type, church service where there are lots of, you know, ‘hallelujahs’ and ‘yes brother,’ and all this kind of stuff, you know, the way the preacher works the audience and builds them up into this sort of state of intense excitement is very, very similar to the way a comedian works the audience. And it probably requires the same kinds of social skills to be able to do it. Hopefully, the purpose is very different, but it’s exploiting the same kind of bonding mechanism, which kind of makes us feel, you know, very happy with the world and with everybody—‘We’re doing it!’ when we come out of Ives’ fifth, or the church, according to which way you’ve gone.

**So, the means are different, but the end is the same.**

Well, the end that it creates is a sense of belonging to a community. And I think the point is then that you can use that, in principle, to create a very large scale community, on a bigger scale, in the way big religions do, you know, in that they create this sense of belonging. I don’t think comedians don’t work quite so well at that. There’s seems to be something kind of slightly peculiar about religion that really makes you feel that if you’re part of this *small* community, then another community down the road which signs up to the same set of beliefs, belongs to the same church, you know, is also part of your extended community and therefore you know you should be nice to them. It offers the opportunity of political power to create enormous...social groupings, in effect, far beyond the level of tradition societies of 150.

**Do you think that this kind of inclusion and exclusion that’s caused by social binding, like, that results in, you know, racism, religious spats or tribalism—do you think it’s endemic to the human condition?**

I think it probably is. I mean this goes back. If you look at all tradition societies—all the

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hunter gatherer societies—they all have this distinction between us and them. And indeed it's in the very words they use. The words, most of these traditional societies—which are pretty much now confined to sort of the Amazon, South American jungles and bits of Africa and bits of Southeast Asia—the word nearly all of them use for themselves doesn't say, like, 'We are Americans' or 'We are British' or whatever, it just says we are human—human. And the big distinction is between us and our community, who speak the same language, and them out there, who don't count as human. And it doesn't make too much difference, as it happens, if they belong to a different human group, as it were, or if indeed they're animals. It's clearly—hunter gatherers of that kind are not confused! *[Laughs]* They don't confuse zebras with, you know, members of another tribe in a kind of ontological sense. You know: 'Those people over there, in that other tribe are human in the sense that we are, but they don't belong to our group and therefore they don't count as human!' And this is a very, very—almost universal feature of human society. And I think it goes back to the fact that, like all primates, our social, you know—our kind of evolutionary success hinges on solving the problem of survival and successful reproduction communally. We live in an implicit social contract. And to make an implicit—so you gain disproportionately by collaborating in the processes of successful survival and reproduction, in a way which is dependent on individuals being very committed to each other. But you can't do that with an unlimited number of individuals in the natural state, as it were. It only works up to a certain point, and that's why you get these limits on group sizes. And we're kind of stuck with that psychology, if you like. I mean, it's one argument for the fact that, you know, we have a stone-aged mind and a space-aged body. Here we are, the world has changed! What is it, 305 million in the US as of today? Going up to 450 by the middle of the century, I heard the predictions this morning.

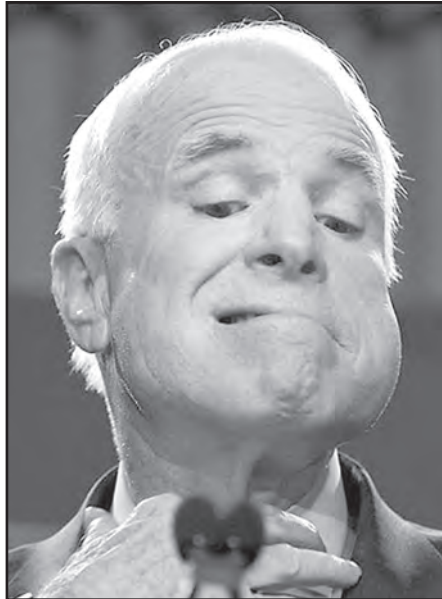
**That's just not sustainable, is it?**

*[Heartily laugh]* Well, you know, I mean, that is another issue, I mean, whether it's sustainable or not. Let's be charitable and say it is. It's perfectly clear that you can maintain some sort of social cohesion—even on something at that scale, in that, you know, all you guys, you know, sign up to certain kinds of principles and beliefs,

you know, as laid out in the Constitution and so on. And that's kind of reinforced every morning in school with the kids with the...uh...the...what's the thing with the flag and all this kind of stuff. So, you can create a sense of belonging to a community on that kind of enormous scale, but it's never going to have the same feel to it.

**It's a more tenuous bond—**

Well, it is. It's never going to be on the scale that you'll get in a small rural



**McCain: too asymmetrical to lead?**



**Resistance: futile?**

community in the Appalachians or Quintana or somewhere, where people's roots go back many generations in that community and many people are kind of interrelated with each other. That sense of small scale community can be very, very

deep and very committed. You know, if you threaten one of my second cousins twice-removed, you're threatening me. Whereas, you know, on the east coast you may look askance at what happens in California. "Let 'em!" If California falls off the edge of the continent, who cares?

**Yeah, Lex Luthor had it right.**

But nonetheless, you know, you see it in the context of war and stuff, you know, if there's a national atmosphere, then people kind of pull together. They will never pull together in the way a small community will pull together. But it's still there—this sort of aegis. And you can whip it up, you know, by exploiting these same sorts of psychological mechanisms that create bonding in small communities. They can be whipped up on the large scale, as is clear from many, many examples. I guess the Nazis onwards and backward, really.

**US society is still rather fractured, though...**

Of course, because it's so big! *[Chuckling]*

**Yes. That said, how do you think this fractured tribalism will factor into the upcoming US elections?**

Yeah, that's kind of really interesting, isn't it? In some sense the, you know, the way national level politics works is kind of a...law unto itself, and often doesn't necessarily bear any relationship to what the communities are interested in. You know, there are small factions kind of that drive it. And there are all sorts of other strange effects which influence the way people vote, so people's perception of the physical traits of the candidates has a huge effect. Almost every US president elected in the last century was the taller of the two candidates. And my colleagues have looked at the facial symmetry of US presidents over the last century, and again, the candidate that was elected had the more symmetrical face of the two.

**That's definitely not John McCain.**

Ha! Well, it starts to make you wonder. I mean, in fact, on the facial symmetry stuff the predictions are so good that they—they were able to predict the UK, the last UK election, the voting split between left and right parties within half a percentage point.

**Damn!**

It seems to be extraordinary. Well, you know, you kind of go: 'Democracy? What is this stuff?' I do think there's an issue about—that comes out of all this—about the kind of integration of society on the large scale, when you have these huge, you know, monolithic structures that we have now. Obviously, we're trying to create that in Europe with the European Union. But, you know, sort of—you're going to end up with a kind of, not quite dysfunctional, but, you know, these sort of stresses and strains within these very large units that are ultimately going to overwhelm them, unless we can find a way to kind of neutralize them. And I cannot see a way of doing that, short of something like, sort of, a mass religious experience. Religion is very weird stuff. Whether you believe in it or not.

### **I believe religion exists.**

You know, it seems to have this hold on people. There's something odd about the kind of spirit world or whatever you want to call it that somehow fires people's imaginations. Now, it's irrelevant whether it's actually true or not. It just seems to be part of our psychology, and I think it goes back to the nature of ancestral religions in these small scale societies and how they kind of evolved right at the early beginnings. These mechanisms seem to be extremely powerful. They seem to be able to capture the sense of people, you know, and create this sense of community and commitment to the grand project. Somehow it creates—and I think the way you do it, in my view, for these big nation-states that we have now, is that you create

a grand project for the nation-states. So you ask, what is the US's grand project?

### **So, we're looking for a kind of new New Deal—**

Ha! Once you've got one—I kind of think that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Britain's was The Empire, and that created this sense of purpose in life. This is what we're doing, you know, this is why we're doing something that's good. And so, people then pull together and they go out and sort of commit themselves to this big project.

### **Don't you think we're going to have to do something like that in regards to the environment?**

That's an interesting question, actually, as to whether, because clearly the environment is a big, big serious issue. Um, you know, we're heading for deep shit.

### **Yeah, yeah. I mean, you need something like 500 parts per million of carbon in the atmosphere to basically bake the planet, and we're at like 300 now, and it's just going through the roof—**

Right.

### **And China recently surpassed the US in emissions. It's just not good. I'm not optimistic.**

The question then is: Is the environment a big enough project, as it were, to have this effect? I mean, clearly it does with some people—the environmentalist lobby. They

have that kind of missionary zeal about them. But is it a big enough missionary zeal, as it were, to virtually draw in everybody to create this sense of single purpose for the country as a whole?

### **Can we be like that as a species without having a kind of hive-mind—a bug-like existence?**

Well, my problem with that is really that I think these neurohormone effects are actually creating that hive-mind kind of thing. But it's doing it on a scale which is only in the region of 150. And as you go beyond 150 into the successive layers out beyond that, the effect becomes smaller and smaller and smaller very rapidly. And it just doesn't have that kind of hive-mind effect. I think the problem in the end is, with all primates, is one reason they've got a big brain is to allow them to fine tune their behavior, so that you're constantly engaged in this kind of balancing act between doing what is good in the communal sense, because you know in the long run you'll benefit from that, and also doing what is in your own selfish interest right here and now. So there's this constant trade off between short term and long term benefits. And that always is the problem. This is the free rider effect and it's what destabilizes these communal effects. The hive effect, as you get in bees, for example, everybody is committed to the big project because they're unable to step back from it and say, "Hmm, I could do better for myself if I go this way and trade off everybody else's generosity." And our problem is we can do that, and therefore we have this temptation to constantly undermine the social contract. And, you

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know, our problem, as I see it anyway, is how to get the balance between those two right. Because in some sense progress depends on individuals being able to step back and say, "Hey maybe there's another way of doing it." If you don't have that ability you don't get science, you don't get—I suppose you get literature and all the rest of it that's part of human culture, as it were. But you don't have that ability to say, "Uh-oh, there's a problem here, let's find another way of doing it," because the hive effect will just have you in a rut.

**Do you think that we'll eventually merge with silicon-based life—and do a cool sort of cyborg thing?**

[Giggles.] It's an interesting question, isn't

it? There is an issue about what constrains the structures of our relationships, so, you know, is the constraint of the number of individuals you can have in your social network, this sort of 150, as it were, or a time constraint? In order to know people well enough to be able to work in this way, you have to spend time with them—socially that is. Or is it a purely cognitive constraint, because you know, your brain just isn't big enough to hold all the information and manipulate all the information about each individual for more than, let's say, 150 individuals. Now, if the second is the real problem, it's a cognitive constraint, a memory constraint partly, then you know an implanted silicon chip, which allowed you to call up info on more individuals, might cut through that and allow you

to have a bigger circle of friends. If it's a time constraint, it's not going to help at all. For a time constraint, maybe a cell phone would cut through that, because you can reach more people more quickly, and therefore maintain—and things like Facebook and Myspace, the networking sites, might allow you to communicate with more people individually, because otherwise the problem is, you're back down to face-to-face things, you know, sitting down and having a beer together. And there's a limit to how much time, you know, you can afford to spend, ah...

**Yeah. Is that a hint?**

Well, he-he-he! Well, here's an interesting question, which is seriously concerning, not concerning, but involving the kind of mobile technology industry. Because, you know, it may be that having a cell phone or SMS, or what have you, is a way to maintain larger networks of people. I'm not entirely convinced, but I think it's actually quite good for servicing relationships—

**And giving you brain cancer.**

That's a disadvantage.

**Yeah.**

There's a key rule in biology: Namely, nothing comes for free. There's no such thing as a free lunch in real life. Anything you do, there's always a cost somewhere. So that may be the cost that offsets the benefits. But I actually think the problem is that you cannot maintain silicon relationships with people. Relationships come actually through direct physical intimacy and contact, as it were. And that's what in the end limits how many people you can have in your social circle.

**But on Myspace I have like 3,000 friends.**


Sure.

**We're all really close.**

That is the question: How close are they in reality? The work that we and others have done suggest that most people's Facebook and Myspace networks mirror quite closely their everyday social relationships. And then you've got a few people who have very large numbers of individuals. It's clear that people are very, I mean, *some* people are just better at maintaining large numbers of relationships anyway. They

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can go above 150, easily. Some people are poorer than that, maybe they can only handle 100. So that's the natural range of variation. But also, what Myspace lends itself to is having very large numbers of people signed up there, which are kind of undifferentiated in terms of the quality of the relationship. If you ask people to—of both parties—to specify the quality of the relationship you'll find that they aren't equal. Because what you have to remember is that this number 150 is simply one in a series of circles. So if you think about it in this way, you're sitting in the center of a series of expanding circles of friendship or acquaintanceship with a very small inner core of about 5 best friends, and then there's a sort of layer outside that which include about 15 people, and another layer outside that of about 50, then you've got your 150. As you go down through those layers, the quality of the relationships is declining, but it seems 150 marks a real drop off. Now, there's at least two other layers we know about beyond that, one at about 500 and one at about 1500. There are suggestions for layers at about 5000 out beyond that, too.

#### What's up with that?

You kind of know these people, and you have some sort of relationship with them, in these outer layers, but they're not deeply personal relationships. They're kind of acquaintances and people you know for professional reasons that, you know, you want to have or maintain contact purely for professional reasons. But you probably wouldn't be too bothered if they passed by your town to have a beer Friday after work, but if they came along on Saturday they'd be a nuisance.

#### At Oxford you studied with Richard Dawkins, is that correct?


I was an undergraduate here, when he first started lecturing, so I did have lectures from him, but I wouldn't say I studied with him in that he physically taught me, but he certainly lectured to me.

#### What do you think about memes?

Oh, they're fine. I don't have a big problem with them. It's just a useful handle for referring—I mean, the problem is it's clear that there's stuff that gets passed on from one individual to another which is not genetic, right, which is cultural. We need a word just to refer to that, and memes,

to be honest, is as good as anything. Any problem comes when people get to exercised about the exact relationship between memes and genes. But in terms of stuff that you learn, there's lot of parallels with the way genetics works. You don't want to get too bogged down in the details, because that's when you start to get silly objections to it. It's just the transmission of stuff you learn. That's good enough, that's fine. It allows us to at least know what we're talking about.

**I'm just fascinated by the ideas of people like Daniel Dennett, who talk about memes and genes, and how these things both replicate in a Darwinian sense—and it's basically substrate neutral, is the way he puts it.**

Yeah, sure. And I think this is true. It's true that memes operate in a memetic universe that is quite separate from the genetic universe, where the genes operate, and sometimes the relationship between the two can be quite loose. Things can evolve in this cultural universe in ways that are disadvantageous to the genes and the bodies transmitting the meme...to be honest we're still a long way from really understanding all the ins and outs of how these things function, but as a principle I don't really have a problem with it. 

Professor Dunbar is the director of the British Academy Centenary Research Project "From Lucy to Language: The Archaeology of the Social Brain". His books include *Grooming, Gossip and the Evolution of Language*, and *Evolutionary Psychology: A Beginner's Guide*.



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## IMPEACH OR BEHEAD:

# What Should be Our *GOOOOOAAAAAL?*

**BY IAN MURPHY**

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA—45% of the population supports impeachment, according to a July American Research Group survey. This administration's criminality is extensive and well documented. The only serious question left is whether Bush's head should be used as a soccer ball, or other athletic gear. Scholars are unsure. Let's look at our options:

### **Decapitation**

Cutting folks' heads off—as punishment and stark lesson to future troublemakers—

is a longstanding human tradition. Unfortunately, most of the fly-swarmed skulls impaled on history's bloody spike belong to terrorized plebes, but every so often the people get sweet payback.

In 193 AD, the Roman mob took to the streets to hurl rocks and invective at Didius Julianus, who paid off the Praetorian Guard to become emperor. General Septimius Severus ordered Didius beheaded and then ruled as a military dictator. Score one for the people, I guess.

The French revolution epitomizes popular head removal movements (PHRM). Again though, once Marie Antoinette, Louis and

the aristocracy were reduced to spurting stumps, the immediate aftermath was not good. The Jacobins seized power, and with the help of Alberto Gonzales prototype Maximilien Robespierre, they ushered in a fifteen-month Reign of Terror. Over 16,000 citizens went to Club Guillotine. Like I said, it's mostly proles' heads that roll. But eventually, Robespierre got his, too.

Roughly a century earlier, the Brits posthumously beheaded the power-grabbing Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell—a full three years after his death! Ancient Japanese Samurai routinely severed necks as a pragmatic political solution.

Scandinavian countries used beheading as standard capital punishment as late as 1900. It's actually a great way to kill someone, whether they're powerful or powerless.

Frankly, when I began this writing, I was excited to recall Mussolini's infamous decapitation. I've always heard Il Duce's bloated, fascist head was used for soccer. Though he was hung up in front of a Milan gas station, beaten to a pulp and ripped to bloody shreds (and yes, kicked in the head), there's no good evidence that his head was completely severed or used as sporting equipment. Bummer! It's like Jane Mansfield all over again.

Beheading gets a bad rap as being unethical or barbaric. This just isn't true. It's quick, painless and cheap—though not preferred by janitors. Lethal injection is far more ghastly, but the ethics of capital punishment are a little off topic. Let's just agree, for now, that we have the death penalty, so let's use it!

There's also a false sense that decapitation is both antiquated and un-American. Granted, the last few hundred years of American assent pales to Europe's pre-Enlightenment-head-removing-heyday, but that doesn't mean we haven't done it—and in recent memory. The CIA trained death squads that employed beheading in El Salvador in the '80s. And then there's the botched US-sanctioned hanging that made a human Pez dispenser of Saddam's half brother in 2007. That in mind, it's scary to think of how many black heads rolled on southern dirt, because of some honky hangman's incompetence.

US forces might have even trained the unofficial head-choppin' Iraqi Government death squad known—comically, if one thinks of Chris Robinson mutilating Otis Redding's "Hard to Handle"—as The Black Crows. And not for nothing, but I think if you're going to get a few dudes together a form a killer group, you'd at least have the decency to crib the name from Zeppelin or Sabbath. Wu-Tang would also be acceptable. The Black Crows is only slightly more intimidating than a death

squad named after Hall & Oates. (Though, legend has it that Oates can behead a man with his mind.)

Continuing in the theme of accuracy and '80s pop culture, it should be noted that we didn't start the fire. The world's been burning since the world's been turning, as Billy Joel so eloquently expressed. Iraqis have been lopping off knobs since Muhammad's grandson Husayn ibn Ali got his at the Battle of Karbala in 680



### **DEMOCRACY IN ACTION!**

(apparently, 72 of his closest buddies were similarly martyred).

Beheading is a perfectly natural activity. It's been with us all throughout history, and will remain a mainstay of acquiring, maintaining or shifting political power in the foreseeable future. It's a good option, but is it the best?

### **Impeach the Bastards!**

Impeachment—as punishment and stark lesson to future troublemakers—is a longstanding American tradition. Unfortunately, impeachment has historically been underused, abused and sadly meaningless.

The founders knew impeachment was the ultimate check to the ultimate

potential imbalance—a new King George. Though it's mentioned six times in The Constitution, congress has only acted against two presidents—Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton.

The former was thrust into the presidency at Ford's theater and impeached for removing Lincoln's Secretary of War without senate approval. The later saxophoned his way from "The Arsenio Hall Show" to the Oval Office and was impeached for lying about jamming a cigar up an intern's vagina. Both were acquitted.

Nixon resigned before being impeached. Hearings involving the Watergate break-ins would have led to his conviction. So, Dick was perversely correct when he famously said, "I am not a crook." And Ford agreed.

In 1998 only 25% of Americans supported impeachment, but sex sells. Though more severe and numerous, there's nothing sexy about the High Crimes and Misdemeanors of the Bush White House. Let's recap a few of the 35 articles of impeachment introduced by Denis Kucinich in June, 2008—which were summarily ignored by the Judiciary Committee:

- **Creating a Secret Propaganda Campaign to Manufacture a False Case for War Against Iraq.**

- **Falsely, Systematically, and with Criminal Intent**

**Conflating the Attacks of September 11, 2001, With Misrepresentation of Iraq as a Security Threat as Part of Fraudulent Justification for a War of Aggression.**

- **Misleading the American People and Members of Congress to Believe Iraq Posed an Imminent Threat to the United States.**

- **Invading Iraq, A Sovereign Nation, in Violation of the UN Charter.**

- **Misprision of a Felony, Misuse and Exposure of Classified Information And Obstruction of Justice in the Matter of Valerie Plame Wilson, Clandestine Agent of the Central Intelligence Agency**

- **Illegal Detention: Detaining**

## Indefinitely And Without Charge Persons Both U.S. Citizens and Foreign Captives

- **Torture: Secretly Authorizing, and Encouraging the Use of Torture Against Captives in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Other Places, as a Matter of Official Policy**

- **Rendition: Kidnapping People and Taking Them Against Their Will to “Black Sites” Located in Other Nations, Including Nations Known to Practice Torture**

- **Spying on American Citizens, Without a Court-Ordered Warrant, in Violation of the Law and the Fourth Amendment**

- **Directing Telecommunications Companies to Create an Illegal and Unconstitutional Database of the Private Telephone Numbers and Emails of American Citizens**

- **Announcing the Intent to Violate Laws with Signing Statements**

- **Failing to Comply with Congressional Subpoenas and Instructing Former Employees Not to Comply**

- **Etc, etc...**

These are all known knowns. These are things that we know we know. Yet, congress has so far allowed the administration those treasons, and made traitors of themselves in the process.

Hungry for justice—or not hungry enough—the American people have seen one allegation after another fall into oblivion. According to conventional wisdom, impeachment will never happen, but there’s one slim hope:

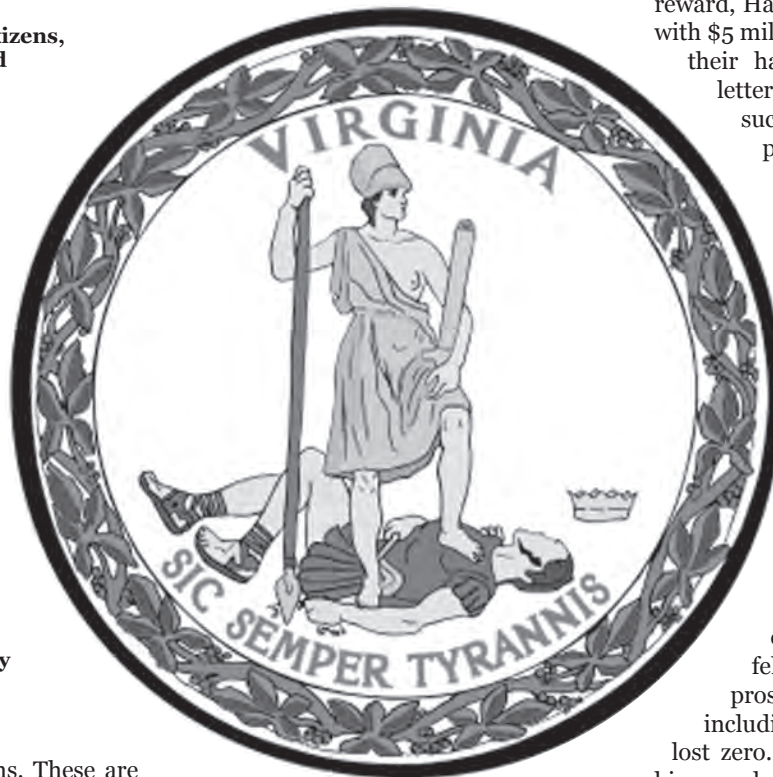
House Judiciary Chair John Conyers has begun an investigation into recent claims made by Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Ron Suskind. In his new book *The Way of The World*, Suskind reports that the White House directly ordered the CIA to forge the “Habbush letter,” a purported Iraqi intelligence document that showed ties between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. Leaked to *The Daily Telegraph’s* aptly named Con Coughlin by interim

Prime Minister Ayad Allawi in 2003, the document was post-dated to July, 2001 and used to justify the illegal invasion of Iraq.

The document reads:

“To the President of the Ba’ath Revolution Party and President of the Republic, may God protect you.

“Mohammed Atta, an Egyptian



### Virginia is for Lovers—of Regicide!

national, came with Abu Ammer [the real name behind this Arabic alias remains a mystery] and we hosted him in Abu Nidal’s house at al-Dora under our direct supervision.

“We arranged a work program for him for three days with a team dedicated to working with him... He displayed extraordinary effort and showed a firm commitment to lead the team which will be responsible for attacking the targets that we have agreed to destroy.”

The letter also obliquely references a received shipment of uranium from Niger, according to Coughlin. Eminent Middle East scholar Juan Cole asserts this may

have been to cover-up the infamous Niger forgeries. But who cares?

The fact is that the Bush administration had the Iraqi Chief of Intelligence—a man they were pretending to still be looking for, going so far as to put a price on his head—write a phony letter, almost ridiculously convenient for them, supporting two of their most dubious lies—that Iraq was behind the 9/11 attacks, and that they were seeking uranium from Niger—a story based on another forged letter. (As reward, Habbush was resettled in Jordan with \$5 million American.) They then had their handpicked puppet “leak” the letter to the press, in a blatant and successful attempt to lie to the public. There is no wiggle-room here. This was not a mistake; it was an outright lie. This is the smoking gun.

### In Summation

You may be thinking that I’m a legal dunderhead with no understanding of the law. You may also be correct in that surmised. But no one is better versed in the art of prosecution than Vincent Bugliosi, a former California ADA with a record of 105 convictions out of 106 felony trials. He’s successfully prosecuted 21 murder cases including the Manson slayings, and lost zero. Bugliosi knows the law, and his new book, which has received nary a mention in the mainstream press, is called *The Prosecution of George W. Bush for Murder*, and he’s dead serious about putting Bush to death, as he told *Corporate Crime Reporter*:

“I’m urging here that an American jury try George Bush for first degree murder. I want to see him on trial for murder before an American jury. And if they convict him, it will be up to the jury to decide what his punishment is. One of the options would be the imposition of the death penalty. If I were prosecuting him, absolutely I would seek the death penalty. As Governor of Texas, George Bush signed death warrants—152 out of 152—most of them for people who only committed one murder.”

But, as Bugliosi argues, Bush is responsible for hundreds of thousands of



murders, including those of over 4,000 Americans, empowering each of their states' prosecutors to simply charge Bush with murder as a citizen, once he's out of office. So that's another option right there, if and when impeachment doesn't pan out, time to pursue some real justice.

With decapitation sometimes things blow back, like The Reign of Terror, Severus's seriously severe rule or Charles II's prudish resistance to parliamentary input after dissolving Cromwell's Republic. Sometimes, beheading begets beheading.

Impeachment on the other hand is completely meaningless. The American people have never successfully deposed a tyrant. Johnson was a racist dick, and Clinton simply used his. Nixon should have gone to prison, but lived the rest of his days in freedom and opulence.

And there's the sad truth. The conventional wisdom on impeachment is likely correct, and even if it wasn't, it would result in absolutely nothing. I began this article excited to kick around these options as if they were Il Duce's decomposed skull, and then eventually settle on impeachment as the only civilized course of action. But then I began reflecting on the words of our own Declaration of Independence:

"But when a long Train of Abuses and Usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security."

It is our duty alone to throw off this despot and by any means available. Now

it's only a question of which road to take: Impeachment Ave or Headless Lane. We can't travel the former because of hitherto congressional road blocks, but the latter is nothing but open highway.

Unfortunately, either course of action would require Americans to get off their couch, turn off the TV and physically occupy Washington. We'd need millions. We have millions. We'd need the moral high ground. We have the moral high ground. We'd need snack food. We can bring snack food!

The only serious question left is whether we should bring pretzels or chips. But, as with impeachment and execution, we don't really have to choose. Let's just start with impeachment, and take it from there.



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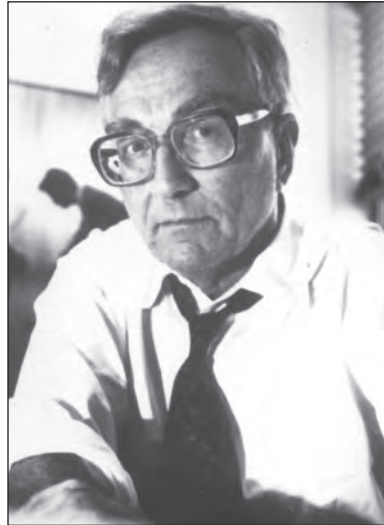
# The U.S. Had Better Invade Iran Soon or My Reputation is Fucked

By Seymour Hersh

As a high-profile muckraking journalist, my reputation for veracity is everything. Without a solid track record of getting things right, my audience has no reason to believe the startlingly criminal government activities I report on are actually happening. I have no reason to wish harm upon innocent Iranian civilians, and I think I've made clear the fact that I actually think attacking Iran would be a disastrous blunder on Bush's part, making the invasion of Iraq seem like a minor screw-up by comparison. But at this point, considering how many explosive reports I've written for *The New Yorker* documenting nefarious White House preparations for an Iranian engagement, I have no choice but to urge the Bush administration to get on with it already.

It's possible, I suppose, that Bush is waiting until after the election to start the bombing, during the period between when a new President is elected and his inauguration. He has spoken of "sprinting to the finish," which may indicate a flurry of last-minute activity in his final days in the White House. On the other hand, he could be planning on beginning the attacks just *before* the election, in order to boost Senator McCain's chances at election time. Whatever their reasoning is, I'm getting a bit antsy.

I think an opportune time to attack would be very soon, perhaps on the first day of the Democratic National Convention. This idea ought to appeal to Republican



**“I’ve written for *The New Yorker* documenting nefarious White House preparations for an Iranian engagement, I have no choice but to urge the Bush administration to get on with it already.”**

campaign strategists, desperate as they are to steal wind from Obama's sails. The attacks should be spectacular enough to draw the media focus away from the DNC, as well as fully vindicate my reporting over the past year or so, ensuring major sales for my next book.

I know this may seem like a drastic course of action to recommend, but I really have no choice. Facts are facts: You can't sell a book about a war that never happened.

I'm still pretty sure they're going to do it, but I wish they'd get it over with. And then I think about all of the other big time journalists this White House has duped—hacks, mostly, but still, Rove is a smart guy. Could they have been feeding me bullshit through mid-level sources? These are the thoughts that wake me up at night. But nah. Not me, I'm Sy Hersh. I'm always right. And there's still time.

You know, Ahmadinejad really is a pretty crazy guy. I mean, it's not like this is some really great country we're talking about. Did you know they all chant "death to America" in their mosques each morning? I mean, that's pretty messed up. Plus they really do have a lot of oil. We could really use that stuff. And there's those centrifuges. They have a ton of them. We can't stand idly by while a rogue state has centrifuges, can we?

For all of these reasons, it's imperative that the Bush administration invade Iran at their earliest convenience. Also, as I mentioned, my journalistic reputation is at stake. I'm not getting any younger, you know. It's not like I can just go take a job at Tower Records or something. 🤔



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CA W. Hollywood Santa Monica  
 World News  
 CA Westwood Smoke Spot & News  
  
 CO Aurora Aurora Newsland  
 CO Durango Magpies Newsstand  
 Café  
 CO Westminster Westminster  
 Newsland

CT New Haven News Haven  
 CT Norwich Magazines and More

DC Washington Bridge St Books  
 DC Washington News World - 1001  
 Connecticut Ave  
 DC Washington Newsroom

FL Ft. Lauderdale Bob's News  
 and Books

GA Athens Barnett's Newsstand

IL Chicago City Newsstand  
 IL Chicago Quimby's Books  
 IL Evanston Chicago-Main News-  
 stand  
 IL Westmont Carol Westmont  
 Magazine and News

IN Bloomington Book Corner

KS Overland Park Hollywood At  
 Home

MA New Bedford Newsbreak  
 - Middletown  
 MA Provincetown Read All About It  
 MA Salem Red Lion Smoke Shop  
 MA Swansea Newsbreak - Swansea

MI Ann Arbor Underground  
 Sounds

MD Baltimore Atomic Books  
 MD Baltimore Harbor News  
 MD Baltimore Normal's Books and  
 Records

MN Duluth Sunhillow Books

NC Asheville Downtown Books  
 and News

NH Portsmouth Market Square  
 News

NM Albuquerque Flying Star Café,  
 I, ii, iii, iv, v, vi  
 NM Albuquerque Newsland

NY Amherst The College Store  
 NY Amherst On The Rox Liquor  
 and Wine

NY Amherst Pizza Plant  
 NY Buffalo Allentown Music

NY Buffalo Antique Man  
 NY Buffalo Broadway Joe's  
 NY Buffalo Café 59

NY Buffalo Century Grill  
 NY Buffalo Cowpok  
 NY Buffalo Fletcher's Grill  
 NY Buffalo Holley Farms Market,  
 Allen St.

NY Buffalo Joe's Service Center  
 Elmwood  
 NY Buffalo Lexington Cooperative  
 Market

NY Buffalo New World Record  
 NY Buffalo Off The Wall  
 NY Buffalo Queen City Book Store  
 NY Buffalo Record Theatre  
 NY Buffalo Rust Belt Books  
 NY Buffalo Shamus McInkys  
 NY Buffalo Shickluna's Bike and  
 Fitness  
 NY Buffalo Shoefly

NY Buffalo Sit N Spin  
 NY Buffalo Skunk Tail  
 NY Buffalo Spot Coffee  
 NY Buffalo Stache  
 NY Buffalo Talking Leaves  
 NY Depew Record Theatre  
 NY Hamburg Record Theatre  
 NY Hamburg The Turnpike  
 NY Kenmore Adrenaline Rush Ink  
 NY Kenmore Frizb's Cd Exchange  
 NY Kenmore Oracle Junction  
 Books

NY Kenmore Seeley & Kanés  
 NY Kenmore TC JR's  
 NY NY BJ Magazines  
 NY NY Dina Magazines #1  
 NY NY Global Ink - 2876  
 Broadway

NY NY Global News - 22 8th Ave  
 NY NY Hudson News - Grand  
 Central Station  
 NY NY Ink On A

NY NY Khawaja News  
 NY NY Magazine and Cards Store  
 NY NY McNally Robinson  
 Booksellers

NY NY Nikos Smoke Shop  
 NY NY St. Mark's Bookshop  
 NY NY Union Square Magazine  
 Shop

NY NY Universal News - 11 W.  
 14th St  
 NY NY Universal News - 234 W.  
 42nd St

NY NY Universal News - 484  
 Broadway  
 NY NY Universal News - 50 W.  
 23rd St.

NY NY Universal News - 676  
 Lexington  
 NY NY Universal News - 977  
 8th Ave  
 NY NY Village Magazine Cigar and  
 Gourmet

NY Niagara Falls 19th Street Books  
 and News  
 NY Niagara Falls Bada Beans  
 NY Niagara Falls Colossal Taco  
 NY Niagara Falls Frankie's Donuts  
 NY Niagara Falls Record Theatre  
 NY Rochester Aaron's Alley  
 NY Rochester East Ave Alley  
 NY Rochester Spot Coffee  
 NY Rochester World Wide News  
 NY Tonawanda Mark's Pizzeria

OH Athens Little Professor Books  
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 WI Madison University Book Store  
 - Wisconsin  
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WV Huntington Empire Books  
 and News



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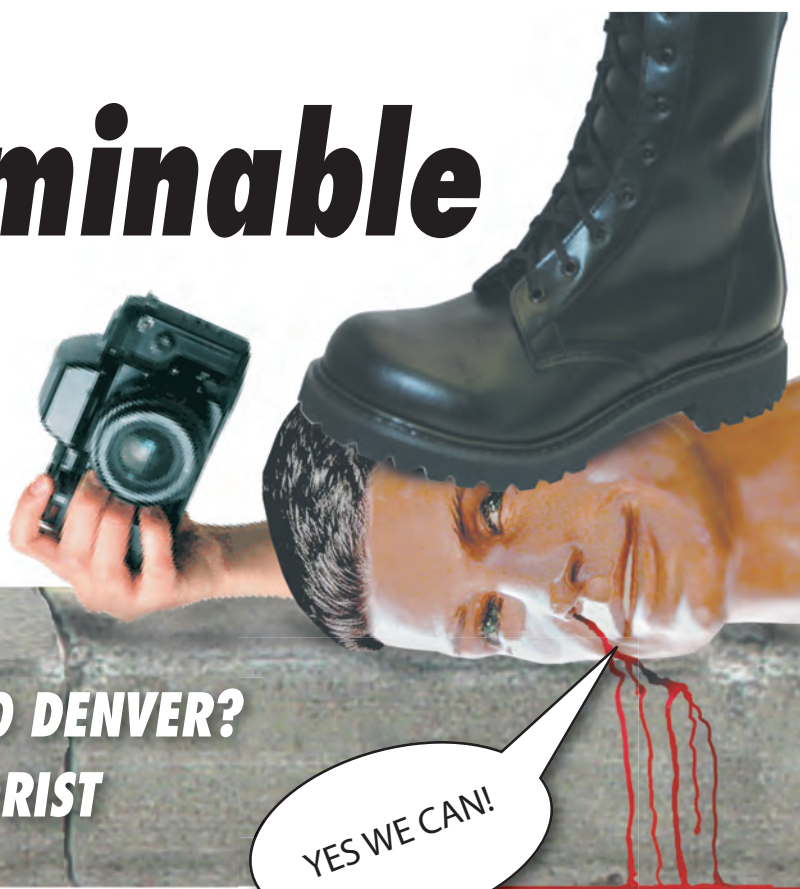
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# The Abominable G-Men



**BRINGING A CAMERA TO DENVER?  
YOU MIGHT BE A TERRORIST**

**BY ALLISON KILKENNY**

**A** word of advice for anyone who is planning on recording video footage at the Democratic or Republican National Conventions this year: Hide your camera.

Despite living in the age of information saturation, citizens, and protesters especially, face unprecedented levels of intimidation and censorship from an ever-expanding police and intelligence community. But we're still totally free. I know this because the president keeps telling me so.

The "intelligence-gathering" umbrella was formerly comprised solely of CIA agents, men in crisp, black suits and narrow black ties below their Joe Friday haircuts and garden-variety features. Now, it is a beast of a bureaucracy, a massive network of federal and local agents working together toward the purpose of... well...collecting intelligence. Except, the parameters of what they're striving toward

are unclear these days.

What is pertinent information? What's being nosy? What constitutes a violation of the Constitution? No one

"Furthermore, because so little is known about this huge database, there's no way to know if someone erroneously charged with "suspicious activity" will be permanently exonerated for their crime, or if they will forever remain on "The List." In a turn of fate that would make Kafka shudder, simply being accused of guilt could forever brand one guilty."

knows. Or rather, no one cares to stop and ask the questions except the very people now at the mercy of this gargantuan mistake of a Big Brother. Whenever I imagine the intelligence community these

YES WE CAN!

days, I think of The Abominable Snowman crushing Bugs Bunny in his massive paw as he happily sings, "Oh boy! A little bunny rabbit! Just what I always wanted! I will name him George, and I will hug him..."

Well, our private conversations, information, and freedom to protest are George, and George is very much in the grasp of the giant, inbred, retarded monster that is The Intelligence Community.

Later this month, protesters will gather (and by "gather," I mean, "sit in their designated pens") at the Democratic National Convention in Denver, Colorado. When they arrive, they can expect to encounter a new, sophisticated "fusion center" at the heart of the American intelligence matrix,



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- CEO Erik Prince

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- Encryption / Decryption
- Death Squads
- Covert Operations
- Sales

called the Colorado Information Analysis Center.

It won't be your grandmother's protest, where police haphazardly sprinted after hippies, and the game ends when the protest is over. This time around, the police presence will be huge; suspicious activity will be loosely defined and cataloged in a huge national database. Furthermore, because so little is known about this huge database, there's no way to know if someone erroneously charged with "suspicious activity" will be permanently exonerated for their crime, or if they will forever remain on "The List." In a turn of fate that would make Kafka shudder, simply being accused of guilt could forever brand one guilty.

And unlike your grandmother's protest, this won't just involve the local police. The big boys – the National Guard – will be called out for this one. They're not going to get poked in the eyes by damn dreadlocked hippies again, by God! *The Colorado Independent* reports that the military will also be sharing intelligence information and providing support through U.S. Northern Command, created in 2002 for homeland defense. Many fear the fusion center will engage in unwarranted spying on protesters exercising their First Amendment rights at the convention.

In an interview with *Democracy Now!*, Erin Rosa, a reporter for *The Colorado Independent*, explained that Denver seems to be bracing for a serious stand-off between the police and protesters, to the point that the Colorado Army National Guard is constructing makeshift barracks in the far east region of the city:

*They're not saying what the purpose is for nearly 400 people to be stationed in this private university. They're actually going to be stationed at Johnson & Wales University in the eastern region of the city, you know, more than 400 troops in that one area. They rented more than 500 rooms across the city. And they're not saying what the purpose will be for, but they have confirmed that it will be all Colorado National Guard personnel.*

So while Denver is immersed in a total police state, what sort of behavior can individuals expect from their new

intelligence and censorship overlords? In the same interview, Mike German, National Security Policy Counsel for the ACLU, warned protesters that new guidelines for what constitutes suspicious terrorist-like activity may include some pretty basic elements of protesting:

*The Los Angeles Police Department issued an order compelling their officers to report criminal and non-criminal suspicious behavior that can be indicative of terrorism, and they listed sixty-five behaviors...One of the precursor behaviors to terrorism that's identified in the order is taking video. And we put in our report a couple of instances where people taking video were stopped by police officers simply for taking pictures or video. And in some cases, particularly where they're taking photographs or video of police, it actually resulted in arrests.*

This would put quite a damper on many grassroots responses to this kind of intelligence/police state bullying, particularly I-Witness, a group created to protect citizens from the attacks of overzealous police authorities. Eileen Clancy, the founder of I-Witness Video, explains that it's important to keep a video log of every protest (complete with date and time displayed clearly on the camera) should the footage be needed as evidence in later court hearings.

Of course, having your camera taken by the police puts an end to all of that. Activists will be left totally defenseless in court, at the mercy of every whim and accusation from the police. And there will be tons of accusations and court hearings, particularly because there are an ever-growing number of activist watchdogs posting their footage online. The most recent example was the footage of a Critical Mass bicyclist getting brutally body-checked by an NYPD police officer.

It bears repeating that these watchdog groups are a good and important presence. They need to be able to function free from fear of being labeled terrorists for simply documenting protests, especially because the media so rarely walks the extra 200 yards over to their protest cages to interview them. Activists need to remain free to document their own presence for their own safety, and for the benefit of the


community at large.

Maybe you think I'm being too paranoid. After all, it's only temporary, you say! It's only for the convention, and we do have to protect Obama and his giant brain from the unkind intentions of a handful of mean people, right? If it only it were true. Sadly, this Denver police and intelligence presence will be an abiding change in Colorado's social landscape.

Eileen Clancy explains that the Deputy Chief of Operations in Denver testified before the House Subcommittee on Intelligence, Information Sharing, and Terrorism Risk Assessment that they see the DNC fusion center as an opportunity to make permanent a "super fusion center." So, Clancy says, the Denver crew is going to take their government-allocated \$50 million and "play with their new toys," and they are going to build a permanent and more powerful surveillance apparatus for Colorado.

These changes are here to stay, and Denver is only the first string in the intelligence community's new Super Spying Web. Happy protesting, Colorado! The only hope activists have is to join together in watchdog networks. When I interviewed Eileen Clancy, she offered this advice to DNC protesters:

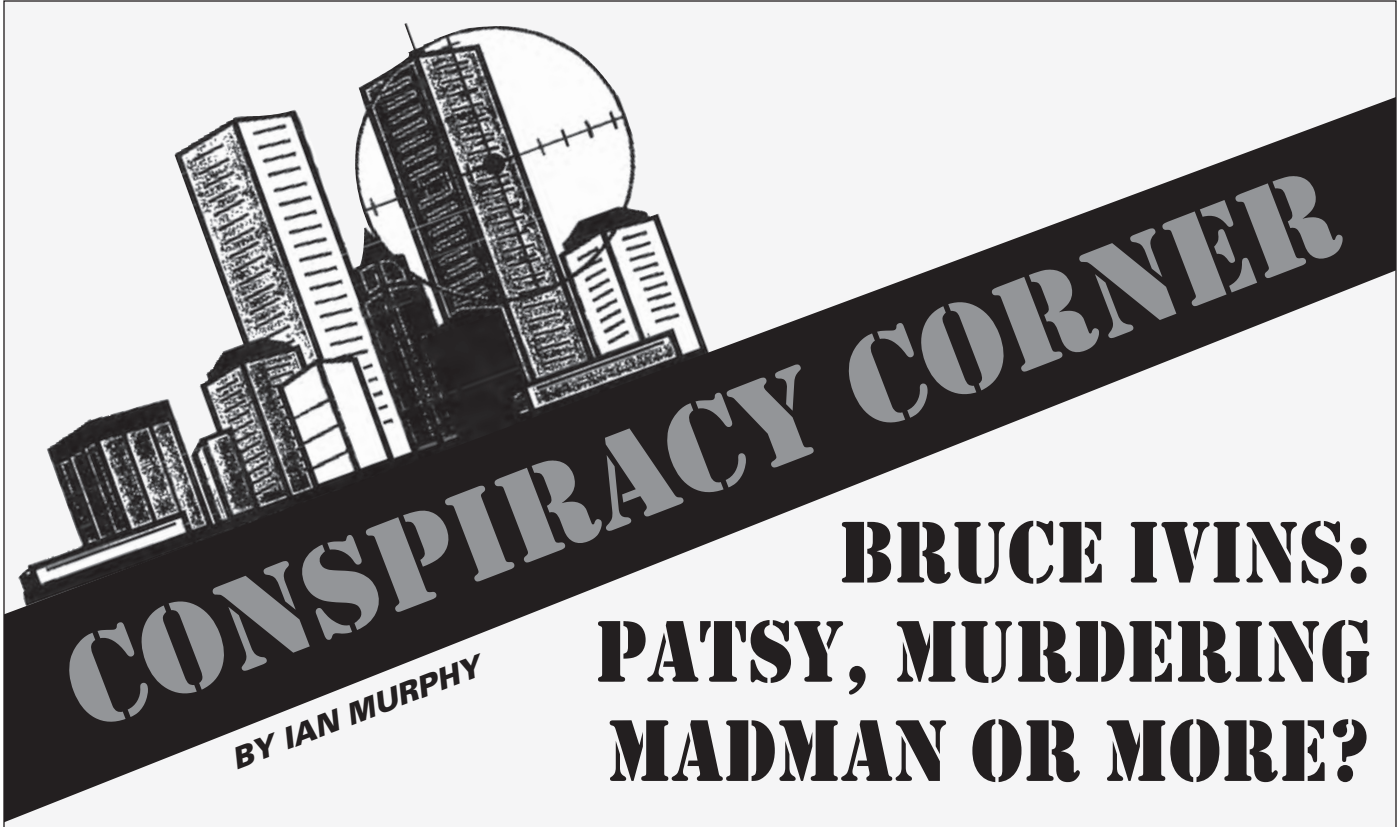
*The federal government is trying to criminalize video because it has tremendous power to expose bad acts by the police and federal agents. The best way for people to document police misconduct is to band together in video activist groups such as I-Witness Video, work in pairs or affinity groups, protect their footage by making back-up copies, publish their work in the media or on the Internet, and vigorously challenge any arrests, detentions and police orders to erase photos or videotapes. The First Amendment offers tremendous protection to people videotaping the police at work, but we must fight to maintain our right to shoot.*

In this world of unfettered, sophisticated domestic spying, the underdogs will need to care for their own, and the protesters at the Denver DNC are no exception. 

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# CONSPIRACY CORNER

BY IAN MURPHY

## BRUCE IVINS: PATSY, MURDERING MADMAN OR MORE?

**I**t's tempting to see gunmen on the grassy knoll. It's fun to imagine Dick Cheney sending encrypted instructions to Osama bin Laden via carrier pigeon. It's intriguing to wonder if James Hatfield—the author who blew the lid off of Bush's youthful cocaine abuse in *Fortunate Son*—actually killed himself in his hotel room as reported, or if he was murdered by Joe Allbaugh's hair.

It's something we can't help doing—connecting the dots and filling in the blanks. Conspiracy theories abound when the official story lacks conclusive evidence or it's full of holes. Sometimes the official story just stinks, and the conspiracy theory is closer to the truth than we're comfortable admitting. Sometimes CTs are plain retarded (WTC was a controlled demolition, even though the towers pancaked from top to bottom, not bottom to top, as would happen in a controlled demo).

And sometimes, boiling just below the debate between the official story and the understandable skepticism is the bigger story. The case of Bruce Ivins is a prime example. Before getting to that bigger story, let's review the some of inconsistencies of the case:

The FBI can't place Ivins in Princeton, NJ—where the anthrax was mailed from, or anywhere between there and Ft. Detrick on the day they say he mailed the weaponized letters. The motive we're given by the Feds and *The LA Times* is that Ivins would gain financially from the larger anthrax vaccine budget. *Really?*

The FBI came out a few days after Ivins' death pointing to The Smoking Flask. It, say would be prosecutors, was in Ivins' sole possession and is contaminated with the same strain of anthrax used in the 2001 attacks. But as it turns out, nearly one hundred people at the Ft. Detrick lab had access to the same strain; so do roughly fifteen other labs across the country.

Then there's the idiot "therapist" with a lengthy criminal record, the sorority stalking from twenty years ago, the "revenge fantasies" that may have come before the attacks or after the Feds drew Ivins as a person of interest: It's all pretty shaky. The case is weak, no doubt.

Remember those letters? The childlike printing (the return address was from a nonexistent elementary school) on the notes address to NBC and *The New York*

Post read:

09-11-01  
THIS IS NEXT  
TAKE PENACILIN NOW  
DEATH TO AMERICA  
DEATH TO ISRAEL  
ALLAH IS GREAT

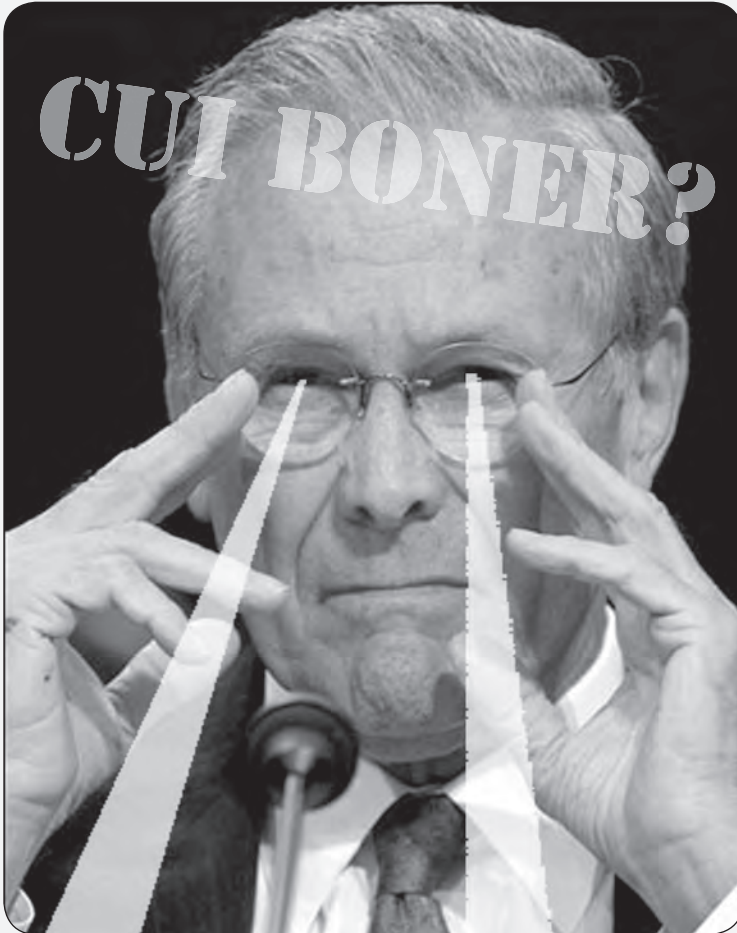
Daschle & Leahy's read:

09-11-01  
  
YOU CAN NOT STOP US.  
WE HAVE THIS ANTHRAX.  
YOU DIE NOW.  
ARE YOU AFRAID?  
DEATH TO AMERICA.  
DEATH TO ISRAEL.  
ALLAH IS GREAT.

The first letters were postmarked September 18<sup>th</sup>—one short week after 9/11. Are we to believe that a scientist with relatively little to gain financially (tens of thousands) whipped up some weaponized anthrax just because he saw an opportunity?

Is Bruce Ivins a pawn in a massive government cover up? Or is it simpler? Is this guy another Ted Kaczynski—a  
a regressive-dual-personality-





**WAS RUMSFELD CONTROLLING IVINS' MIND WITH EYE-LASERS? PROBABLY.**

Unabomber?

In an e-mail dated December 15, 2001 Dr. Ivins wrote:

I made up some poems about having two people in one (me + the person in my dreams):...

I'm a little dream-self, short and stout. I'm the other half of Bruce-when he lets me out.

When I get all steamed up, I don't pout. I push Bruce aside, then I'm free to run about!

Hickory dickory Doc-Doc Bruce ran up the clock. But something then happened in very strange rhythm. His other self went and exchanged places with him. So now, please guess who Is conversing with you. Hickory Dickory Doc!

Bruce and this other guy, sitting in some trees, Exchanging personalities. It's like having two in one. Actually it's rather fun!

So, the guy's a nut. And as it turns out, there was also an unreported anthrax spill under Ivins' watch mere months before the attacks. Maybe he did it. I'm not qualified to say.

The most damning evidence is his suicide—which proves absolutely nothing. Americans shouldn't be satisfied with the case, or the way it's being reported in the mainstream media. But whether the child-like guile employed in the anthrax notes was Bruce Ivins' "dream-self" evident in his kiddie limericks (remember the imaginary elementary school), or the

work of some nefarious conspiracy yet to be proven doesn't matter.


In time, the truth will play out—maybe. What's important to remember now is that the 2001 anthrax attacks—whoever is ultimately behind them—were used by the Bush Administration (and their media proxies) to justify its inevitable war with Iraq.

On October 26, 2001, ABC's Brian Ross cited "three well-placed but separate sources," who claimed the anthrax used in the attacks contained bentonite, a kind of clay that ABC argued tied the anthrax to Saddam Hussein's biological weapons program. The story was and is complete bullshit, but was referenced repeatedly by other news outlets in the run-up to war. Amazingly, the anonymous sources got their information from an "urgent series of tests conducted at Fort Detrick, Maryland, and elsewhere."

*Salon* columnist Glen Greenwald, who's been making Swiss cheese of the FBI case against Ivins, has called the ABC transgression "the single greatest, unresolved media scandal of this decade." Due to Greenwald's diligent reporting on the matter, ABC eventually issued a correction—and only seven years too late.

Bush mentioned Iraqi anthrax in his January, 2002 State of the Union. Colin Powell even mentioned the anthrax attacks at his February speech to the UN. Administration surrogates talked about it endlessly on political talk shows. It's the same old story: Hack reporter meets anonymous government sources, reporter unwittingly disseminates propaganda, administration uses the story to further its insidious ends and we all pay the price. (See: Judith Miller, Con Coughlin, FoxNews, etc.)

Was Bruce Ivins a patsy or a mad scientist? While we'll likely never be privy to enough evidence to say conclusively either way, we shouldn't turn a blind eye to what this case meant to an administration hellbent on furthering its case for war.

And that's the real conspiracy, the one we know for sure is true. 

# FUCK BILL CLINTON

## BRIDGING THE PARTISAN DIVIDE OF HATE AND DISGUST

**BY MATT CALE**

In the time it took for Bill Clinton to issue a self-serving, unenthusiastic, half-hearted, typically narcissistic response to the question of whether or not Barack Obama was prepared to be president, any and all gains—real and perceived—of the Clinton White House years disappeared into the ether. Any good feeling the man had engendered over eight years of calm, triangulating moderation and a relatively low-key post-presidency was in danger of being forever lost after a primary season full of sniping, veiled bigotry, and a near-suffocating sense of entitlement, but now he's gone too far. With mere weeks to go before the Democratic convention, and Obama's campaign inconceivably deadlocked with the worst major party candidate in 100 years, the absolute minimum we should expect from the party faithful is the appearance of unity. Fake enthusiasm if you must—hell, even lie—and get behind the nominee with the force of a hurricane. Make bold comparisons to long-dead heroes. Invoke well-loved martyrs, or shining lights from a distant past. Bow at the fucking ankles, if that's what it takes. But here, now, with the election already slipping away to a pasty zombie who loses large chunks of his face on a daily basis, all while retaining the rhetorical skills of a dementia-ridden rest home casualty, the word on the street must be that Obama is the man of the hour; a champion not only ready to lead, but one who is cocksure, confident, and all but bestowed with the nation's highest honor. Instead, we get assorted hems and haws, twists and evasions, and the typical egomaniacal ravings we've come to expect from the 20th century's most overrated chief executive.

So, despite being an avid supporter since the very beginning, I've turned the corner. Fuck Bill Clinton as a man, yes, but fuck him as a president. Obviously, his impeachment was a ridiculous, hypocritical affair that smacked of a bloodless coup, but at long last, it can be said that everything his critics said about him was true. And

then some. Bill Clinton is a fundamentally dishonest man, not so much a liar as a sociopath with full-tilt delusions of grandeur. We've seen swelled heads before in Washington—LBJ, for one—but at least Johnson used his powers to bring about ambitious changes to the party and the country he led. LBJ did as much for his own manhood as he did America, but no one did it better, and when he grabbed you by the lapels or poked his oversized digits into your chest, he had grand schemes at the end of such intimidation. War ended his utopian swagger (as it always will), but he had no less than the continuation of FDR's revolution as his end goal. Clinton, on the other hand, came to destroy the very party he claimed to love, forever consigning it to the scrap heap of retreat and accommodation; a party that flexed its muscle by co-opting conservatism and recasting it with a less aggressive posture. But conservatism it remained, and the Clinton years, for all of their assumed glory, were as much a rightward tilt as the previous decade-plus of Reaganism. Clinton's relative success at the polls also created the expectation that whenever a Democrat runs for higher office, he must abstain from any real form of liberalism. "The era of big government is over," he once said, which may as well have been submitted on a post-it from Newt Gingrich himself.

Yes, fuck Bill Clinton. From the signature affixed to the heinous Telecommunications Act of 1996 to his Defense of Marriage Act love fest, Clinton proved over eight years that elections do matter, so long as you don't mind uninterrupted Republican rule regardless of party label. His appointments to the Supreme Court were, needless to say, far better than would have been installed by a second term of Bush the Elder (or maybe not, given

Souter), but for all their leftist leanings, both Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer are, as a New York Times piece pointed out a few months ago, unapologetic corporatists. They'll defend porn and abortion and affirmative action, but in matters of business, their philosophies differ little from the more reactionary members of the Court. Breyer is no Scalia, but this only goes so far. After all, there's a reason both appointees received near-unanimous approval from the Senate. The same aw-shucks affection would not have been given to someone from the William O. Douglas school of judicial activism, though it's hard to imagine anyone of that ilk ever making it to the federal bench again. But Clinton could have had the world in those two years before the worm turned, and he went to the center as usual. Perhaps we're better for it, but it's the sort of reptilian compromise that defines the boy wonder's political life.

And now, at what should be a moment of historical transition, Bill has seen fit to slap his prick on the counter once again and make the election a referendum on his relevance. In his mind, he saved the Democrats from oblivion, when he merely made them a less fascist version of pure evil. In the pure light of reality, the 1990s were a madhouse of illusion and, in the words of then-Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan, "irrational exuberance," and the correction of 2001-2002 was less a shockwave than the expected chickens coming home to roost. It was a decade entirely on paper; no real money to back


### Fun Fact



it up, and the wild fiction that we could have it all, forever and a day, if possible. Without even bothering to check the ticker, it is no exaggeration to say that for every lasting job created in those years, twenty-five others appeared that had no possibility of surviving close scrutiny. Titles were carved out of thin air and assigned to any nitwit willing to borrow a few million for a silly dream. The dot-com economy, then, was the culmination of a decade's worth of schizophrenia writ large, whereby a people infected with the very greed they claimed belonged to a slicked-back decade prior used the proverbial shoeshines and smiles to bring everyone into a limitless tent of expansion. It was Clinton's love-in, and it helped foster the more damaging illusion of recent years that just-off-the-boat flunkies could in fact pay mortgages swallowing 80% of their take-home pay, or that starry-eyed newlyweds, often in possession of little more than unmarketable degrees, should inhabit that airless plane of the above and beyond. The money will come. Bill said so.

Clinton gave us guns and butter to be sure, only the guns were to our own heads. We bought the whole stinking lie, and he leaned back for his trailer park hummers while convincing us all that the ride would never end. And while lying about a blowjob—even while under oath—will never rise to the level of forced removal, it should be said that his reckless behavior at a time of bitter partisanship and pathological surveillance gives us an insight into his motivations far more than anything ever could. He didn't give a shit then, and he doesn't now, except to further his own needs and sense of self. I'm no scold, but if a party leader can't see fit to retreat to the shadows at a time when no one has asked for his advice or input, then he deserves to have his legacy remain forever tarnished and stigmatized by such ill-considered actions. We always get the leaders we deserve, and while Bush I would have been re-elected without Perot's spoiler role, it still stands that in 1992, we wanted to have a little fun again, and cared little who was picking up the tab. Clinton was as militaristic, cynical,

and exploitive as anyone who came before or since, and it takes little by way of imagination to envision his own Rose Garden ceremony celebrating the virtues of the Patriot Act had 9/11 occurred on his watch. He too repeated the bullshit of Saddam's apparitional WMD, and his own wife enthusiastically voted for the invasion of Iraq. It's impossible to imagine that he pushed her to consider the opposite view.

Fuck Bill Clinton. My instinct to come to his defense is no more, and I want nothing more to do with him. Respect and admiration came readily in the past, and now they flee with similar ease. No wonder Bill and Hillary formed such a formidable alliance: both are razor-lipped power junkies who would step on a gaggle of grandmothers to rise a sliver of a percentage point in the polls. They seek advice not to gain a further understanding, but to test the winds of political expediency. They lack any real courage or grit, and would change on a dime for a solitary vote. Hillary's easier to hate, of course, because she's little more than a shrill, shrieking cunt in a pantsuit, but Bill has proven to be just as despicable in the end. The naysayers understood after all: no core, no principles, no conviction not up for sale to any bidder, high or low. All of it to stuff down his pants and leave the rest to chance. No liberal, he's not even a friend to liberals, and is so racked by jealousy and childishness that he can't stand the thought of a party being held in his absence. Admittedly, the charges of racism are ridiculous on their face, because racism requires a stand, and I'm not sure Bill wants to go on the record with anything definitive. And while he didn't blatantly ruin the country like the frat boy fuck-up extraordinaire who followed in his footsteps, he did so rock the nation to sleep that we didn't seem to mind when the Constitution withered away under a relentless assault of excrement. After the Clinton years, we were primed and ready for a comforting idiot to pilot our Hindenburg, and we gave him the keys with apathy and indifference. And now Bill is back, trying to kill a candidacy in its crib lest it outshine his own compromised years in power. So fuck you, Bill Clinton. Hard, sans lube. And when the crypt opens before you, grab the hand of the missus and go quietly. For once. 

*Matt Cale normally rants at ruthlessreviews.com*



# Waxy BEAST

BY ERIC LINGENFELTER



## Jay Reatard, *Singles 06-07 (In The Red)*



I'm sure everyone reading this knows at least a couple of people, be they family members, friends or what have you, who are such insane overachievers that we simultaneously love and hate them.

We admire them and we're oh so proud of everything that they've done with their lives and we really do wish them all the best with whatever they decide to do next. We also secretly resent them because, goddammit, they make our lazy asses look bad!

Enter one Mr. Jay Reatard, one of punk's ultimate workaholics.

Reatard self-recorded and played all of the instruments on every track that makes up this compilation, which covers his solo output from the tail end of 2006 through most of 2007. I know that writing and recording 17 songs over the course of one and a half years doesn't sound all that impressive even if he did do pretty much

everything short of pressing the vinyl by himself, but sit tight and hear me out.

In '06 and '07, he also did all of this:

He recorded his 2006 solo debut LP, *Blood Visions*, which he also played all of the instruments on, save the bass and backing vocal tracks on a cover of the Adverts' "We Who Wait." He did a one-off collection of electro tracks called *World of Shit* under the name Terror Visions. He played drums in the Final Solutions, who released their second full length LP in 2007. He played bass for a bit for retro-thrashers Evil Army. And he did all of these things while touring extensively throughout North America and Europe with his solo band.

Still not impressed? Before 2006, Jay Reatard was in three other much-beloved bands: the Reatards, a bunch of filthy garage-dwelling brats, the Angry Angles, a minimalist art punk project with then-girlfriend Alix, and the Lost Sounds, the official new wave band of the coming apocalypse. Between these three bands alone, Reatard wrote for and played on eight full length albums and eighteen singles. And that's not even counting all of his past one-off projects and collaborations with various denizens Memphis' rich and varied scene.

Still not impressed? Think about this. *Jay Reatard is only 26 years old.* He started at 16. He's only 10 years into his career and he's already done more than most of the prima donnas in the music game do in 20.

It's fucking sick. Who the hell does this dude think he is, saturating the market with all of his odds and sods? Indeed, his ubiquity would put me off if it wasn't for one thing: damn near everything this guy puts out is fucking golden.

He has an incredible knack for firing off catchy tunes that blows right past this cranky bastard's defenses almost every time. And even though someone who releases material as prolifically as Reatard can't help but misstep on a few rare occasions, he just keeps getting better and better overall.

This here collection is as good a place as any to start if you're looking to hop on the Reatard bandwagon. The tunes range from pretty good to absolutely mindblowing and are an excellent representation of this stage of Reatard's musical development, wherein he spices up an Undertones-like pop sensibility with a dash of Wire-ish experimentalism. (Translated for any non-music nerds: it's melodic enough to catch your attention and stick in your head but weird and unique enough to hold up to repeat listens.)

The only thing that I can really hold against this slab of wax is that six of these tracks are either rough cuts or alternate takes of songs from the *Blood Visions* LP (which I give my highest recommendation to, if you haven't picked it up already). That said, these versions are different enough that it isn't a huge deal.

So? What are you waiting for? Get off your ass and go get it! And as for you, rest of the punk rock world, why the hell can't you be more like your brother Jay-Jay, here? Ugh. You kids'll be the death of me, I swear...

*Singles 06-07* gets a rating of one long-overdue demand from an irate father to get your shit out of the basement and get the hell out of his house. You're 30 years old, for fuck's sake! Get out there and make something of yourself!

*Punk's Not Dead*  
(DVD), directed by Susan Dynner



Is punk dead? If you have to ask, you're either not looking hard enough or not looking in the right places.

Susan Dynner, I'm looking in your direction here, so pay attention.

Now, I don't mean to crap all over the entirety of her exploration of punk culture in a brave new world of MTV airplay, platinum records, festival tours and mall chains. Some parts are fairly entertaining. I enjoyed her depiction of the continuing adventures of still-kicking old timers like the Subhumans,

the U.K. Subs and the Adicts, as well as the notable guest appearances by Mike Ness of Social Distortion, Keith Morris of Black Flag and the Circle Jerks, Captain Sensible of the Damned and a handful other guys and gals who were there when it all started.

These people defied odds and aged somewhat gracefully while most of their contemporaries died, quit or turned into embarrassing caricatures. It's cool to hear their perspective on the way things are going now, rather than having them wax poetic about the past like most of these docs would have them do.

I also enjoyed the parts that centered on modern punk's Faustian bargain with corporate America, with the old and new schools sparring over topics like the Warped Tour, Hot Topic, mainstream acceptance and what it means to play "real punk rock," even if the whole debate did sort of degenerate into the old guys kvetching, "Yeeeargh! The corporations are just using you to make money!" while the young guys whined, "Nyaaaaah! We're using corporate channels to spread our message to the widest possible audience!" without any deeper exploration as to which side was closer to being correct. But that would probably be a subject that would take up an entire documentary of its own, so I let that slide.


The thing that really turned me off, though, was the barely-there exploration of North America's underground scene. Yeah, she pays it lip service by throwing in some footage of Echo Park gutter punks drunkenly playing Exploited-lite garbage and vomiting all over themselves and she shows some other pubeless bastards playing crap versions of the same stuff that the old timers were doing back in the '70s, but that's not enough.

Let's get this perfectly clear: North America's punk rock underground did not just shit itself and die in the early '90s only to be cannibalized by a bunch of jackass kids who look, act and sound like copy/pastes of scans of photocopies of ditto sheets of sketches of Polaroids of overgrown street urchins with 2-foot-tall mohawks playing shitbox pubs in London circa 1982.

The underground is thriving. It's vibrant. It's vital. But, unfortunately, no one is going to do the legwork for you if you want to find that out for yourself. Crack open an issue of *Razorcake* or *Skyscraper*. Go to some shows. If a band's name looks interesting, check their website. Ask people what's cool.

You may run into some uppity "scene guardians" along the way, but remember this, young adventurer: a pitcher of Pabst Blue Ribbon, a couple bumps of coke, a good vegan cupcake recipe or a quick jab to the bridge of the nose are all excellent tools for rendering even the douchiest hipster as docile as a sleepy kitten.

It's not all suburban posers, crusty homeless kids and Pete Wentz wannabes out there. Trust me. Now, go forth and explore!

*Punk's Not Dead* gets a rating of one packet of Knox gelatin and a jar of Manic Panic Deadly Nightshade, the punkest shade of the punkest hair color on the planet. 

## Fun Fact





## Greetings, Olympic sports fans!

You are out there, aren't you? NBC Universal sure hopes you are. Because if you aren't, and you decide to spend the next three weeks watching *anything* except the hammer-throw quarterfinals, heat six of the women's 4-x-400 relay, and profiles of the Hungarian dressage team, there are going to be some TV executives committing suicide. Well, assisted suicide, maybe. If you're a Nielsen viewer, there might even be a camera in your house — and if it catches you switching to *Greatest American Dog* during the trampoline semifinal, an animatronic chain will yank a pin from a grenade crammed in the mouth of whichever NBC marketing executive promised a 17 share to the suits upstairs at *30 Rock*.

So, lives are in your hands. No one is telling you what to do, but think twice before you turn on *Don't Forget the Lyrics!*, or any other non-Olympic programming for that matter, next week. Besides, it's not like the Olympics are *completely* boring. True, the actual sporting competitions have lately taken a back seat, drama-wise, to the question of whether terrorists will strike during the Games, or whether the budget can be managed by the IOC without two dollars out of every three ending up in mysterious accounts in Antigua, or whether Chinese guards will bayonet free-Tibet protesters along the torch route, or, indeed, whether NBC will be felled by yet another disappointing

ratings showing. But that's not to say the athletes aren't providing some sordid entertainment themselves. In fact, just like regular athletes, Olympians frequently rack up ugly arrests. Who can forget *these* anti-heroes of sports-crime?

### ***The lover's lane rapist***



This was a recent one, actually. Alvin Henry was a one-time Olympic sprinter, a New Yorker who ran for Trinidad and Tobago. He went to the 2000 Olympics in Sydney on the T&T 4-x-100 team, but never actually ran in the Games. He returned to America, however, and did some running there. This past month, Henry was arrested 16 days after a rape in Brooklyn's Prospect Park, when the victim identified him while riding around the park with police. Henry had allegedly raped the woman at gunpoint and was a suspect in numerous other sexual assaults dating back to 2003. The unknown serial rapist had been called the "Lover's Lane Rapist" because he frequently targeted women he had seen having sex with their boyfriends in the park — he told one of the victims he had taped her in the act. "I knew something wasn't right with him," Henry's cousin told New York papers. No kidding.

### ***The shootist***



Folks here in the states didn't hear too much about this: Alexander Tikhonov — a member of four gold-medal biathlon teams for the Soviet Union between 1968 and 1980 — was convicted of a murder plot some years back but won't be going to jail for it. (This is the kind of story that only makes sense if you've lived in Russia.) In 2000, Tikhonov got involved in a dispute between metals magnate Mikhail Zhivilo and ham-faced Kemerovo province governor (and former presidential candidate) Aman Tuleyev. In Russia, the most dangerous people alive are the owners of aluminum companies — those guys come out of the womb drunkenly waving Soviet TT pistols around the delivery room. Zhivilo was no exception, and he hired Tikhonov to assassinate Tuleyev. Tikhonov gave his brother the job; the brother hired two yahoos, who went straight to the ex-KGB to rat him out; and everybody (including Zhivilo) was arrested. Then a weird thing happened. Tikhonov got furloughed to celebrate (and I'm not kidding here) the 55th anniversary of Russia's victory over the Germans in World War II. He then took off for Europe for a few years because he wasn't "feeling well." When he came back, it was decided he didn't need to go to jail after all. So that's where

he is now, retired and — as the Russians would say — picking strawberries.

### The spy who fenced me



Jerzy Pawlowski was among the few athletes to ever be arrested for espionage, and to this day it's not entirely clear what happened. Pawlowski, a champion fencer who won the gold for Poland in 1968, ended up getting arrested and serving time there, convicted of spying for the CIA, although some accounts insist that all he did was refuse to spy for Poland. Who knows?

There are others, of course, including American notables Marion Jones and Michael Phelps (juicing and perjury; DUI, respectively), as well as some other more troublesome cases. Canada's Myriam Bedard was arrested for child abduction when she took her daughter to the United States without informing her ex-husband; she was at the time living with her boyfriend, Nima Mazhari, who had been arrested for having 20 stolen paintings worth \$100,000 in his home. Then there was boxer David Reid, an American who got to stay on the 1996 team despite beating up his girlfriend. That team also featured Lawrence Clay-Bey, who had previously been arrested for sexual assault.

The Olympics are almost always good for one during-the-Games scandal. We're actually getting started early this year,

with the suspension this past week of veiny-necked Russian track star Yelena Soboleva and six of her teammates, in what is being described as the "Russian BALCO." Tune in next time to see who else gets humiliated on the world stage, and whose boyhood/girlhood hopes and dreams of Olympic glory will go up in a black cloud of post-arrest ignominy!

### The bicycle thief



Then there was George Tajirian, a bicyclist on the 1968 Iraqi Olympic team. Tajirian moved to Mexico City later in life and started a tourist agency, which he used for a couple years to smuggle illegals into the US in the late '90s. Dude was flying around the world, charging people 10 and 15 grand for phony documents. Anyway, the Justice Department nailed him and seven others in El Paso. Maybe he'll be the star of the next Iraqi-prison version of *Breaking Away*. (Incidentally, the upcoming Games will feature an athlete caught in a vaguely similar offense — Ethiopian-born Ayele Seteng, a 53 year old who will be running in the marathon for Israel, was busted recently for defrauding two tourists by taking money from them in exchange for transport to Israel that never materialized. Israeli sports minister Raleb Majadele said the government will do all it can to intervene for Seteng — not for the athlete, but "for the sake of sport.")

## 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



Supernatural  
quantities of  
pot



Incident involving  
"baby momma"



Burglary/theft



No Contest Plea

The official sponsor  
of the 2008 Olympic  
Chinese Women's  
Gymnastics Team!





So, those plot details. Cage plays a lonely hit man with a bad dye job musing about how killing people for a living doesn't afford much room for a social life. He kills without question, hesitation or mercy. But his pussyness creeps in when he gets a case of yellow fever for a 9-year-old boy or girl (it was really hard to tell in this trailer), mentors a street punk and throws a job. By doing so, some kind of *On the Waterfront* parallel is drawn and the bile starts creeping up in your throat.

It goes without saying that those who paid for the hit don't appreciate this kind of shoddy workmanship none too much. Cage and his sudden sense of morality combat their mortal adversaries while tearing up Thailand and blah blah blah. Seeing *Bangkok Dangerous* in action just reminded me that I should really watch *Shoot Em Up* again sometime soon. Although I should stop to raise the point that the best Nicolas Cage movies are definitely the ones where he's got bad hair. *Adaptation*? Now that I think about it, his hair's usually bad. Forget I brought it up.

**Bangkok Dangerous**



**The Women**



**Nicolas Cage: full-retard by default**



**Retard with poo on her face**

Nicolas Cage puts on his worst hairpiece, or best drowned rat hat, to date in *Bangkok Dangerous*, a remake of what was probably a much better Thai film from 2001. Before I get into the plot specifics, who names these goddamn things? Really. Is this supposed to be broken English? Broken Thai? What? What is this? Was the title of this movie created through a poorly-executed madlib made

up during a recent *Tropic Thunder* picket?

No, no. Let me try! Let me make one up! How about *Anus Coleslaw*? *Fresno Sepsis*? How about *Allegheny Complacency*? *Missoula Surprise*? *Translucent Ding-Dongs*? So maybe it's not so easy, but did they have to stop at *Bangkok Dangerous*? It makes you think the story's point of view will be coming from a full retard.

Here we go. Get a bunch of talented or somewhat likable actresses together, make them all play crazy people, find a classic movie from 1939 to defile, and suddenly the seemingly endless wait for



the *Sex and the City* movie on DVD doesn't seem like the hellish eternity it once did.

The wax museum comes to life when Meg Ryan and her freakishly unnatural new lips get cheated on by their husband. Annette Bening as the older classy best friend, Debra Messing as the professional baby machine, and Jada Pinkett-Smith as the token black girlfriend, all get involved and plan some kind of big comic intervention/confrontation on Ryan's behalf.

But Meg Ryan knows the other woman and it's Eva Mendez. Eva Mendez. With that mole, she looks like she's got syphilis on her face. Or poop! That and I always feel like I have to look closer because it looks like she never bleached her upper lip. She's not that hot. She looks like she takes big shits too. Big, greasy corn-throttled shits. Hell, I bet she'd clog up your toilet as soon as look at you. Granted, it wouldn't take much to get me to cheat on Meg Ryan, but if there's a definite possibility of getting my ass handed to me in a divorce it's not going to be over Eva Mendez. Natalie Portman, sure. Megan Fox, Tina Fey, Julianne Moore, Kristen Wiig, Winona Ryder, the one girl on the Taco Bell commercial, Kate Winslet, Cloris Leachman, Monica Bellucci, Jenna Fischer—all yeahs. All

hell yeahs. But Eva Mendez? She's got poop on her face. And that's gross. That's really gross.

### Burn after Reading



Half-Retard

Earlier this decade the Coen Brothers fell into a total rut of boredom, self-indulgence and an apparent painful lack of enthusiasm. We sat through a static

film noir flick, a dud of a romantic comedy and a top-heavy remake which cleared the way for the mammoth *No Country for Old Men*. And I think that last one qualifies as atonement.

But after wiping the slate clean, it looks as though the Coens are ready to make us laugh again. How the hell are you not going to laugh at *Burn after Reading*, a movie whose major elements are the CIA, physical fitness and internet dating? Brad Pitt finally stops taking himself seriously by playing a total cheesedick with an affection for tall hair and iPod armbands. Frances McDormand and Pitt blackmail a CIA agent played by John Malkovich with a CD of his memoirs or secret files or something. I'm guessing George Clooney plays some kind of fixer who's sleeping with Tilda Swinton, JK Simmons is some kind of middle management type and Brad Pitt gets what appears to be a broken nose.

Now I'm not saying I saw *The Big Lebowski* here, but I have definitely missed that Coen Brothers brand of humor. Sorry, it's harder to rip apart the ones that actually look good.

### Miracle at St. Anna



Actual black people—in the movies!

Remember a few months back when Spike Lee opened fire on Clint Eastwood for not having any black characters in *Letters From Iwo Jima*, *Flags of Our Fathers* or *Whatever the Fuck?* Then you may also remember Clint telling Lee to "shut his face." And when Clint Eastwood tells you to shut your face, you shut your damn

## KINO KLEE-SHAY LEGEND

 Betrayed by Those Who Trained Him	 Impossible Science	 Noble Retard
 Evil Genius	 Washed Up Hero Gets Second Chance at Glory	 Gratuitous Christ Imagery
 Mind Fuck	 Likable Thug	 Enchanted Object
 Special Effects Circle Jerk	 Chick Flick	 Stockholm Syndrome Romance
 Nauseatingly Cute Children	 Ordinary Person Pushed Too Far	 Simplistic Epiphany
 Embattled Loser Overcomes Obstacles	 Crappy Remake	 Glorification of Law Enforcement Bodies

face.

And if you see the trailer for Lee's newest, *Miracle at St. Anna*, you just might think that Lee's face should've stayed shut. Some old black guy guns down an old Italian guy and it turns out it has to do with something that went down during WWII. Then we get into the dealings of an all-black platoon behind enemy lines in Italy. Some head taken off a marble statue somehow heals people and it's worth a shitload. Part mystery (why did the old dude gun down the other old dude?), part war story, all avoidable. And I've just been taken over by a complete and total lack of interest in this movie. Good night.

### Righteous Kill



**"Hoo ah! Yeah, yeah. Hoo ah! Yeah, yeah. OK, where's our money?"**

Remember when the prospect of Robert DeNiro and Al Pacino starring in a movie together was enough to send even the most casual filmgoer into a raging tizzy? A brief transitional shot with the two of them in *The Godfather II* was the only brief taste we as fans had, until 1995's epic crime drama *Heat*. Even then, all this clash of the titans resulted in was a few-minute diner scene and a final chase/showdown sequence between the two. As great as *Heat* was, we couldn't help but want more than about 10 minutes of

shared screen time.

Those scenes were kind of like seeing a commercial for something you wanted for Christmas when you were a kid. You're psyched, then Christmas morning comes and DeNiro and Pacino are nowhere to be found. So you try again next year. And the year after that. Hell, let's say you wait 13 years total! You care a little bit less with each passing year until you eventually forget about it. Then Christmas morning rolls around and you open a box of Spider-Man pajamas like the ones Richard Pryor wore in *The Toy*. Great, but you wanted that nose hair trimmer from the Sharper Image catalog.

The only thing more overdue in my life at this point than those Spidey PJs is a movie starring DeNiro and Pacino. *Righteous Kill* has the pair starring as veteran homicide detectives who investigate a series of murdered criminals they took down but went free. Before you start wondering

old poking you on the forehead asking if you're his new daddy.

### My Best Friend's Girl



**Retard<sup>3</sup>**

Oh fuck me. Fucking Dane Cook. God, I hope he goes away soon. He's spent, stolen or borrowed all the stand up material he could, then when the well ran dry he started acting. He's not bad, and is actually even somewhat tolerable, if he's in the background with less than 15 minutes of screen time. But some goddamn mongrel decided to put him behind the steering wheel and it's been a road trip to Douche City with no pee breaks whatsoever since. Cook won't shut the fuck up, but you're finally getting to the point where you can almost completely tune him out.

Then he does a movie with Jason Biggs. If the name doesn't ring any bells for you, the word *piefucker* might put things into perspective for you. *Oh, him!* Yeah. It's as if Adam Sandler did it with a hermaphrodite and Biggs got pooped out shortly after. He wasn't a cute baby either.

So Cook and Biggs are in *My Best Friend's Girl* together. Biggs is his usual wussy self, who somehow manages to date and eventually scare away a not-so-repellent Kate Hudson. But Biggs' best friend Tank (yeah, *Tank*), played by Cook, specializes in scaring girls back into dating their exes by making a complete and total dickball out of himself.

The gags are a series of yawns and the only things going for *My Best Friend's Girl* is the fact that Kate Hudson is kind

of... cute in it and the impression that Alec Baldwin is going to dole out some comically bad advice. ("Guilt is just one more thing trying to asphyxiate us during sex.") Being asked to sit through Cook and Biggs for the sake of Baldwin and Hudson is like being lured to a female-oriented sex toy party with cake. I'm sure it'd be penis-shaped, but cake is cake. As long as it doesn't smell like a public men's room after dark, what can go wrong?

### Lakeview Terrace



**"Sir, you were exceeding the chromosome limit. I clocked you at 47!"**

About 15 or 16 years ago, I kind of had a thing for Madeline Stowe. Something about her did it for me in *Last of the Mohicans*. Then it wore off after a couple of years and that was that. But during my Stowe phase, she was in a movie called *Unlawful Entry*. She played one half of a couple who was being stalked by a crazy cop played by Ray Liotta. I want to say the cop was obsessed with Stowe's character, but who really gives a shit? Seriously.

This was the first thing I thought of when I saw the trailer for *Lakeview Terrace*. So now *Unlawful Entry* is being remade, but the producers will never admit to this. If you called those clowns out on what we'll call "the abundance of parallels"

between *Unlawful Entry* and *Lakeview Terrace*, they'd surely whitewash the whole thing by feeding you bullshit about social relevance making it a completely different movie. And if one of those pricks had the ass to use the words "post-9/11 world," I swear to God I'd rip their endocrine system out of their body Gary Busey-style.

If you take the time to watch the trailer for *Lakeview Terrace*, you'll notice the tried and true "crazy neighbor starting shit" stencil has been pulled out and dusted off. An interracial couple moves in to a fancy LA neighborhood and their crazy neighbor Samuel L. Jackson goes from passive-aggressive prick to full-

### Eagle Eye




**Does LeBeouf have LeDown's Syndrome?**

The last Indiana Jones movie (of which he was one of the few highlights) was a clear indicator that the tidal wave of Shia LaBeouf may or may not be on the way. I'm guessing between the guy's ability to flip over a sport utility vehicle while half in the bag and the fact that he's just so damn likable, we'll be seeing a lot of him. But not if he keeps this shit up.

I'm talking about *Eagle Eye*. It's about a streetwise hustler who gets inexplicably framed as a terrorist. Afterward, he's pushed in the direction of his mother and the pair is forced through a gauntlet of peril which will ultimately force them to do the unthinkable. What the unthinkable is, I don't know. That's why they call it the unthinkable. You can't think of what the hell it is. Think about it. I haven't.

That I've got no problem with. But what's sticking in my craw is the whole digitally-disguised voice spouting cryptic and apparently omniscient instructions like it's *The Matrix*. That malarkey is sure as shit going to make the eyeballs roll, but that's by no stretch of the imagination the worst of it.

Look, I'm in no frame of mind to think about or deal with this right now. I'm vaguely interested in *Eagle Eye* but if I were watching this trailer in a theater, I'd be twitching in my seat until the projectionist started up *The Dark Knight*. 

## WHO 'CAME' FIRST?

men and women ARE equal  
Men 'came' from women.. even jesus  
Anonymous

Dear Anonymous,  
We're racking our brains here, but we just can't figure out what it is you're responding to. Not that women aren't equal to men (barring propensity toward criminal violence), but your logic here is flawed. Men 'came' from monkeys too; does that make them equal?

## TIPPY CANOE

I can't decide whether to praise you for the story [Ian Murphy, "Terror Alert," issue 129] or plead with you to commit yourself for complete idiocy for going out with a canoe under those conditions, and with such a poor understanding of the currents at the mouth of the Niagra river. It's a wonder we're not reading your obituaries!

Having said that, congrats on a wonderful and insightful expose of the sham and boondoggle, totalitarian power grab and general corporate rip-off that is the "Global War on Terror".  
Eric Gallion

Dear Eric,  
It would have been fun to buzz the "Maid of the Mist," on the way down, though. "Nice raincoats, dickheads!" SPLAT! There's one for the museum displays.

## DEBT THREAT

Great piece. the illogic of this terror war is frightening. I recently tried to go to Canada and was denied access as I had been arrested a few years ago for failing to show up for a restitution hearing that I didn't know about. I owed a guy \$400 for an accident and they arrested me on a warrant and it cost me \$14,000 dollars for bail. The court apologized but won't give me my money back. Now I am an international threat and can't get into Canada for five years! Your national security tax dollars at work.  
Sam Weller

Dear Sam,  
Can't get into Canada? Sure you can! If you need a canoe, we've got one for sale!

## LIVE & DEAD

Uh, hey dumbshit - Carlin was and continues to be a regular on HBO [Allison Kilkenny, "7 Words You'd Never Hear Today," issue 129].

But maybe you don't get that in Loserville



- er - I mean Buffalo.  
Bob

Dear Bob,  
"Continues to be?" Just a thought, but we have a feeling his ratings will drop after the novelty of his new "lying in a crumpled heap while flies buzz around me" act wears off. But you know HBO, always giving the cutting edge a chance. Hey, we just had a great idea for a series to pitch them, entitled "Loserville." It's about a guy who incorrectly thinks a writer lives in Buffalo when she's actually in New York City. It's a little thin, but we can pad it out with a discussion about how premium cable channels are obviously allowed to show whatever the hell they want, and that it generally goes without saying that they aren't meant to be included when people say you can't do or say something "on television," because they're not subject to the same FCC regulations. Then again, that would be fairly obvious to anyone with half a brain in their head, wouldn't it? Oh well, back to the drawing board.

## CAMPAIGN BOT

McBush is the biggest flip flopper since the character created by the \_Swift Boat Veterans for "Truth"\_. He originally opposed indefinite detention of terrorist suspects until the Supreme Court reached the same conclusion. then he called it "one of the worst decisions in the history of this country."

McBush was also once for kicking Russia out of the G8 before he was against it.  
PileofBonez

Dear Pile,  
Wow! You know, we were planning on voting for McBush—oops! We meant McCain! It's amazing how repeating that trope has tied McCain to Bush in our minds! But now that we see McCain is like Bush, it's like a whole new world! Thanks for regurgitating at us!

## IMAGINARY BEATDOWN #8,473

you know you guys are real fuckers. if i saw you out at my bar me and my biker buddies

would kick you fuckin asses faggot! jager bomb yow!!!  
brian Hurtubise

Dear Brian,  
Yeah yeah, you and your buddies blah blah. If we had a nickel for every empty threat we've received, we'd put them in a sock and carry it around whenever we went to biker bars, just in case. One question, though: When you fantasize about beating up faggots, do you get an erection?

## HAMMER & FICKLE

I've written in to complain before. I said you have good issues and bad issues. There have been a couple of shitty ones for a bit, not gonna lie. But this article [Allan Uthman, "Top 10 Idiociess of the General Election .. So Far," issue 129]. Man. This is a great one. Rarely does reading such terrible news make me feel so warm and happy, but when it reaffirms my belief that I haven't gone in sane, I can't help it. It was well cited and had a whole bunch of facts I'd never heard. Even the daily show attacked General Clark for his comment. That has to be the most out of context line I've heard in months. keep up the good work.  
andrew gross

Dear Andrew,  
You see? We give you a good issue, and now you just want more. We don't know why we even bother.

## JEW YORKER

Bingo on lots of these points, but you are dead wrong about the New Yorker Cartoon, and I resent being cast by you as a unsubtle dolt who doesn't get satire (I have a PhD in lit and have taught courses in and on satire.)

This NYorker piece was crude and stupid: I write to insist that they follow the same principle which they use in their defense and show a bunch of Israelis, sitting with American Jews (they'll all have huge noses), counting their money and reading a huge tome entitled "How to take over the World." On the wall will be pictures of Hitler. Think New Yorker will ever do such a cover to mock the ugly stereotypes of Jews? Yeah, that'll happen,

So knock off this condescending "context is everything" and admit that this feeble attempt at satire from these sophisticated eastern types was complete and utter bullshit and that those who say so are hardly dimwitted dolts too unhip to understand how satire works.

**george K**

Dear George,

*That would be pretty damned funny though, wouldn't it? Yeah, we bet your satire courses are a friggin' riot, though.*

## CATCH 72

Hey, we're forgetting that John McCain's rise to "war hero" status was based not so much on having been "shot down", but primarily on his enduring torture while being held captive for years against his will. The GOOD NEWS, Americans, IS, he really was never "tortured"!

How do we know he wasn't tortured? The President told us so! EVERYTHING that McCain endured, the US is now doing to our captives (enemy combatants) held at Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib, in off shore ships?, God only knows where else. But, our President has assured us that "We do NOT torture"!! So, there you have it! By the President's definition, McCain was not tortured either. Oops, there goes the "war hero" status. Wait! Not having been tortured, McCain's "confession" to his captors was therefore, of his own volition, not the result of coercion..oopsy again! Could the President please elucidate us with his definition of a traitor? Thank God we'll soon know the truth!  
Season

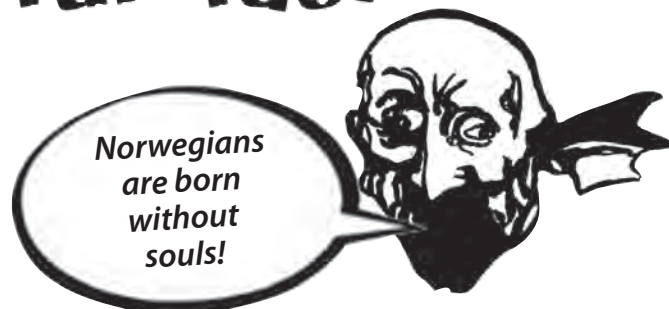
*Dear Season,  
This is flawless thinking. Call the DoJ and talk to Mike. He'll certainly understand your rationale.*

## EMENY AMMINATION

Why in the hell do you call McCain a war hero?  
If you call giving the enemy propaganda ammination, then that might be true. The news media put this false praise on him and it is said so much that it has become a truth.  
Tell it like it is. Think!  
Dewey Funkhouser

*Dear Dewey,  
Well put!*

## Fun Fact



## UNCLEAR ON THE CONCEPT

The New Yorker cover was stupid. It was obvious. It was rude. It was an insult to New Yorkers. The idea that it was somehow too hip not to offend is insulting. Some things are too not hip to be hip about. The readers of the New Yorker deserve better, expect better and demand better. If I want to watch Butthead and A\*\*hole on MTV, I'll go there.

The accusations and character assassinations of politics are not laughable and it is not funny getting your face rubbed into it. It is just disgusting. It makes Giuliani look almost like a family man.

No, the New Yorker was not hip. It was just dumb. It was not funny. It was just dumb. If we as New Yorkers really have sunk so low that we are no better as a city than Caddy Shack meets Animal House Sex in the City, than New York deserves to be third or fourth behind Dubai and Shanghai and Putinstan.

I am ashamed that hip has become so valley. Isafakir

*Dear Isafakir,  
You do understand it's just called "The New Yorker," right? It's not like some representative city publication, edited by Michael Bloomberg or something. But why argue about humor with someone who doesn't like Caddyshack or Animal House? Maybe you really are a New Yorker reader. But no, probably not.*

## EGGHEAD

I want an elitist for President.  
I want someone who is smarter than me for President. I actually look at the intelligence of the person running and I give high marks for intelligence. I also give even higher marks for what I call social intelligence. Basically social intelligence is the ability to get along with people and know how they will react to you actions. For an example- bombing Iran. If we bomb Iran- what will

they do? They could attack Israel and kill thousands or millions, or they could take the blow and not react. People who want to bomb Iran suspect that they will do nothing. People who hesitate think there will be massive retaliation. This is an example of why social intelligence is so valuable for a president. Obama has it, Hillary has it, and McCain lacks it.  
DrSuess

*Dear Dr.,  
Clearly, you are a latte-sipping, chardonnay-drinking, ivy league faculty lounge effete liberal elitist. Haven't you seen Forrest Gump? Stupid people are naturally endowed with a magical power that enables them to know what the right thing to do is without actually thinking about it. This power is sometimes called "folk wisdom," or "common sense," or "alcoholic stupor." Learning is like kryptonite to this power, and if you learn too much, you may even come to believe that it is a myth, a figment of imagination that stupid people use to comfort themselves when confronted with complex problems that they are not equipped or inclined to fully comprehend. Obviously, you have reached that point, and can no longer be trusted to make important decisions for yourself. We suggest you seek help, perhaps by consulting with an illiterate farmer before you make any big moves. Ask him his opinion, and then have him bash you on the head with a shovel. Eventually, you'll come to understand the power of ignorance. And probably free markets too.*

## MAKE THAT 12

More ridiculous moments:

1. Bush in Beijing lecturing the Chinese about human rights abuses;
2. The John Edwards debacle, where the right, the left, and damn near everyone else in between got into a time and energy-wasting debate over Mr. Edwards' private life. Only in America do we make such a big issue of our politicians having to be saintly figures. We are in love with mythology.  
beautifulady2003

*Dear Lady,  
You just don't get it, do you? You see, China's violations of its people's civil liberties are worse than ours for a simple reason: They are foreigners. It's easy to tell, because they are wicked good at ping pong. As to Edwards, it's important to note that his wife's cancer was in remission, and he didn't have sex with any foreigners.*

## OF SNOPEs & DOPES

My sister (don't get me wrong, I love her. I just want to strangle her sometimes) keeps sending me anti-Obama stuff. I know she doesn't like the way things are going, either, but she goes to church regularly, so of course she will vote Republican like her pastor says. So she keeps sending me this crap.

Anyway, so often the stuff she sends is just sensationalized emails going around the internet that, of course, no one bothers to check. A recent one had the subject line of: **OBAMA TAKES FLAGS OFF HIS PLANE!!! HOW UNAMERICAN IS HE!!!!**

It started with the line: This is real! It's on SNOPEs! Check it out!

So, I did. Apparently, my sister and anyone else sending that tripe around did not. According to Snopes, the Obama campaign bought the plane from American Airlines. The flags that were removed and painted over were part of the AA TRADEMARKED LOGO! You know, that thing that if he'd left it there would have left him open for lawsuits for trademark infringement? The one flag that was on the plane not part of the logo was left on.

On the other hand, Snopes had a picture of McCain's plane, as well. Guess what? No flags on his plane! I sent an email back to everyone she sent it to that said: **MCCAIN HAS NO FLAGS ON HIS PLANE WHATSOEVER!!! HOW UNAMERICAN IS THAT!!!!**

My first line read: This is real! It's on Snopes! Check it out! Scroll down to the picture of McCain's plane and you'll NOT SEE A SINGLE FLAG!!!!!! While you're there, read the entire article as to WHY Obama removed the American Airlines trademarked flags...

Funny, she never answered me.

I'm not that thrilled with Obama. I'm less thrilled with McCain, though, so Obama it is unless a viable 3rd party candidate comes through.  
Paula H

Dear Paula,  
"Viable 3<sup>rd</sup> party candidate"? Why not just wait for a flying unicorn to shit diamonds all over you?

## LATE ON THE DRAW

Here is an open invite.

Please come down to Camp Lejuene and tell us: Fuck the Troops.

If you have the balls to shitbird.  
Gunny G

Dear Gunny,  
Well, we've already been invited to Fort Drum, Fort Bragg, and various other locations to be beaten to death, so you'll have to get in line. You guys really do all think alike, don't you?

## LOATHSOME HOPEFULS

please include every member of Coldplay on your "Most Loathsome 2008" list. oh and before i forget, put Brett Favre on there too. He's shaping up to take the Number One spot.  
a bitter Pennsylvanian

Dear Bitter,  
Singing in cheesy falsetto all the time and naming your kid Apple is pretty annoying, but wanting to make another few million dollars for throwing a ball doesn't really sound so crazy to us.

## THE REAL DEAL

pretend bad movie script:  
jim, "i would like to eat crunchy things".  
mary, "no".  
lovingly, mary passed the yogert. jim smiles and made eye contact with mary. the same look told the dog to wiggle and eat cakey

cake. the dog thought, although there is no way to verify this, 'my master is wierd.' he nibbled on the dame, but soon enough he decided the table tasted better. i left. she stayed, and after leaving, bought a scratch off ticket that won her 50 g. i. want my. food. unless you are an idiot, she won the money. not me, for i am a dog.  
john gallivan

Dear John,  
There's nothing "pretend bad" about that at all.

## FUNKYTOWN

Having only moved to Buffalo a couple months ago, I have have to ask: Why doesn't this city honor Rick James? He was a musical genius, and probably the greatest artist to ever come from Western NY. If not a statue, the city could at least name a street after him. Driving on the Rick James Expressway, imagine that!

Tim Russert will probably have both - and more - by the end of the year.  
Dave Campbell

Dear Dave,  
Probably something about the "burning a captive woman with a crack pipe" episode. But we're with you! If an AWOL cokehead can run the country, why can't one get a street named after him? It a hell of an idea!



# BEAST-O-SCOPES



BY ANDREW GULLERSTEIN

## Virgo (Aug 23 – Sept 22)

Jesus, Virgo! What makes you think you can shove some decomposing road kill into a box and call it Bigfoot? Its name was Tony.

## Libra (Sept 23 – Oct 22)

Libra, what the hell are you doing covering a couple hicks who claimed to have proof of Bigfoot? Oh, that's right, abdicating your role as the Fourth Estate. And no, you don't smell a Pulitzer. That's Tony.

## Scorpio (Oct 23 – Nov 21)

Look, Tony, saying that making fun of retards is tantamount to the kind of discrimination blacks faced in the '60s, women in the '70s and gays in

the '80s is just about the stupidest thing I've ever heard. Maybe you are a dead sasquatch, after all.

## Sagittarius (Nov 22 – Dec 21)

Your idea to create a dirty-dance craze called "The Pervy Musharraf" will go over only slightly better than last year's "T. Bone Pickens."

## Capricorn (Dec 22 – Jan 19)

Masturbating to the Chinese women's gymnastic team is so wrong, for so many reasons. Shame on you, Capricorn; you should be masturbating to American children.

## Aquarius (Jan 20 – Feb 18)

You know what, Aquarius? You're not Michael Phelps. Stop kicking in the tub. You're ruining the linoleum.

## Pisces (Feb 18 – Mar 20)

Your guard never drew a cross in the sand, you never gave your captors the names of the Greenbay Packers and you were never in the goddamn Cone of Silence. You need to stop lying—you're not even a Pisces!

## Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 19)

You may not have heard how the FBI can use the GPS in your cell phone to turn on the mic and listen to you even

when you're not using it, Aries, but that doesn't mean they didn't hear you singing "Wind Beneath My Wings" to your cat.

## Taurus (Apr 20 – May 20)

Hey, Taurus, you know how at the end of *Back to the Future* Doc Brown fuels the DeLorean with garbage he puts into the Mr. Fusion, but there's no Mr. Fusion in *Back to the Future II* or *III*? Well, you have Parkinson's. Sorry.

## Gemini (May 21 – June 20)

Granted, "Generation Kill" is a good show, but you need to stop reminding your coworkers to "stay frosty." You work at Taco Bell!

## Cancer (June 21 – July 22)

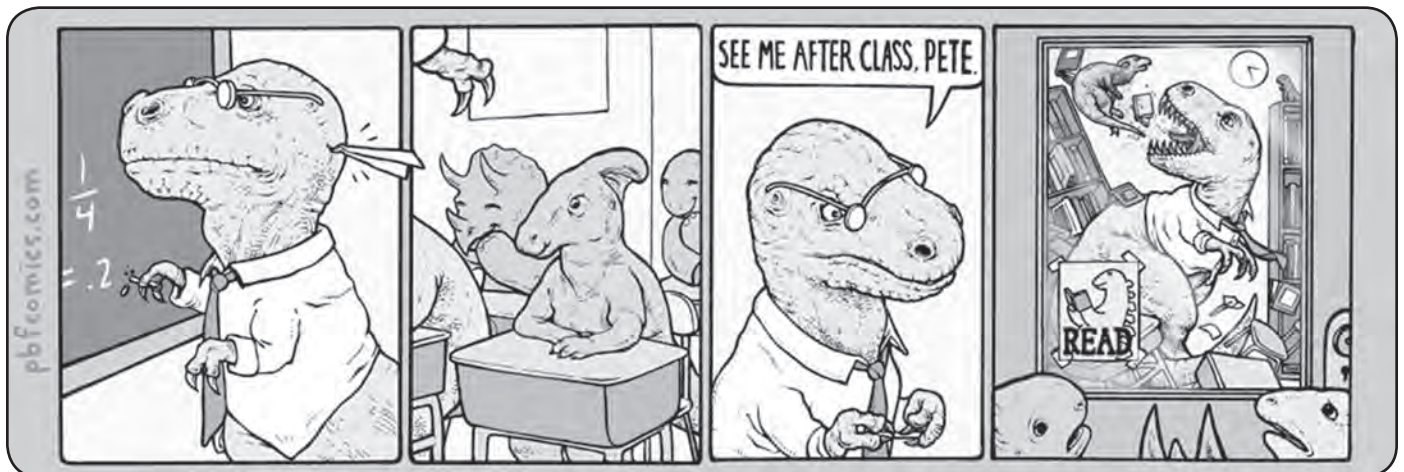
Sure, Cancer, Article VI Section III of the Constitution states there shall be no religious test for the office of the presidency, but you have to think of God's feelings, too.

## Leo (July 23 – Aug 22)

Unfortunately, Leo, over the past eight years your most paranoid fears about an impending American dystopia has come to complete fruition. On the bright side, you no longer have anything to be scared of—except spiders.

## THE PERRY BIBLE FELLOWSHIP BY NICHOLAS GUREWITCH

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