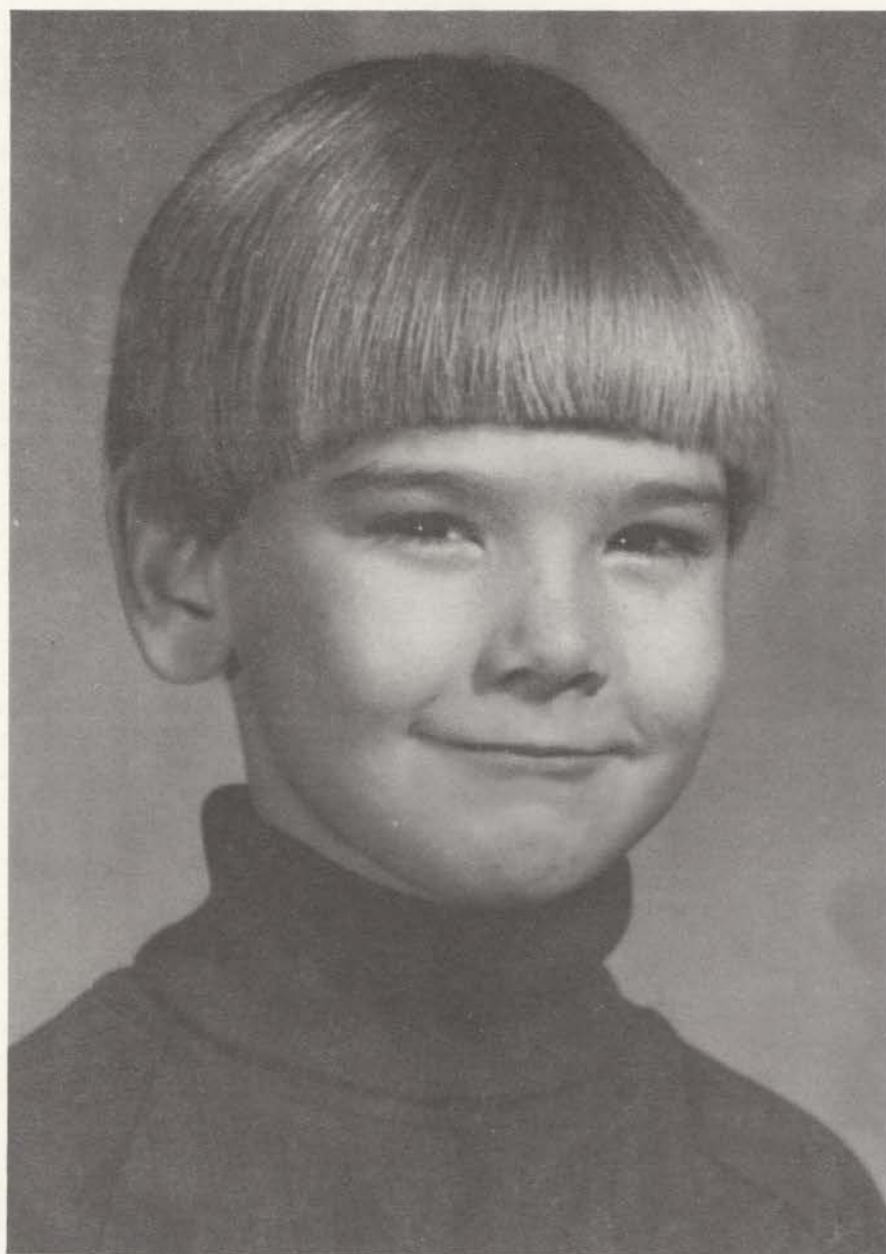


Pop Culture ▼ Humor ▼ Trivia ▼ Fun

# Chip's Closet Cleaner

Number 11

Four Bucks



Really **Weird Sex!**



Almost **Dirty Words!**



My **Girlfriend** Wears  
My Favorite **Tees!**



Unseen **Spinal Tap!**



**Scary** Products!



**8-Track** Madness!



4,487 Rippin' Book  
and Zine **Reviews!\***



...And Much More  
Than You Can **Chew**  
in One **Bite!**

\*give or take a few

# L e t t e r s

I ENJOYED YOUR ZINE. If you took out a few scatological words, I'll guess that parents would think about giving their teenagers a subscription. My 32-year-old enjoyed it.

*William Diefenbach  
International Sand Collectors Society  
Old Greenwich, Connecticut*

IT'S NO SECRET THAT SUCCESS has ruined Chip's once funny and innovative zine. Or perhaps we have only grown tired of the same Chevy Chase-esque schtick issue after semiannual issue. Chip's glib review of ecdysis revealed his true side. Personal attacks are rarely warranted in these politically correct times, yet Chip manages to insult and demean both myself and Mary Kay. This coming from a man who, though a member of our wedding party,

extended his generosity by going in with his parents on a set of incorrectly monogrammed towels.

*Matt Wolka  
ecdysis, "Scathing Review Issue"  
Chicago*

[I thought those towels were pretty cool.]

I loved "Sheer Collecting Madness" (#10). WHAT was up with the Hot Wheels guy? Spooky. The 8-Track guy seems cool, though.

*Erin Smith  
Teenage Gang Debs  
Bethesda, Maryland*

WHY DO YOU ALWAYS use photos of you and Carrie?

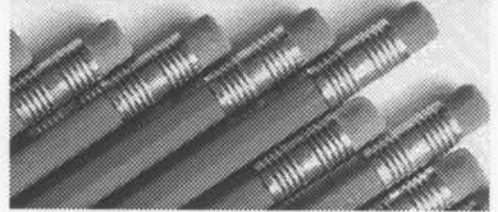
*Chad  
Little Brother*

"SHEER COLLECTING MADNESS" was mucho fun, although I was sorry not to see beer can collectors. I have always admired them.

I loved your survey of film dentists. I thought it was so great you included Herbie the Elf from "The Red-Nosed Reindeer." I was watching this on TV a couple of years back, and during the scene when the young bucks taunt Rudolph for his nose and Coach Donder encourages them, my roommate Ray glanced up from his book and said, "Those reindeer sure are assholes." But how could you omit the greatest dentist film of all time, "Greed"?

*Mark Harris  
Rediscoveries Newsletter  
Chicago*

THE PICTURES OF YOU and your sister are really cute (#10). My sister has been home awhile. Good thing she goes back to college tomorrow. She's been getting on my nerves. You have cool handwriting. I like it cause it



reminds me of my 4th grade English teacher's writing. He made us write a lot of creative writing.

*Mary Susan Littlepage  
Waco, Texas*

THIS YEAR I'M WRITING Christmas letters instead of cards. Actually this is the first year I'm truly celebrating Christmas for what it is, a commemoration of the birth of Christ.

After our conversation back in the summer, I've often thought (and prayed) that you will rededicate your life to Christ. He will take care of your doubts about Him, but only if you make Him the Lord and center of your life. Get yourself back to reading the Bible, brother!

Are you still at the same job? I'm still bored with my job, but I've submitted that to God and I know He'll move me out when the time is right.

*Sarita  
Libertyville, Illinois*

P.S. I think it would be best if you don't send me the Closet Cleaner anymore. Please don't take that personally.

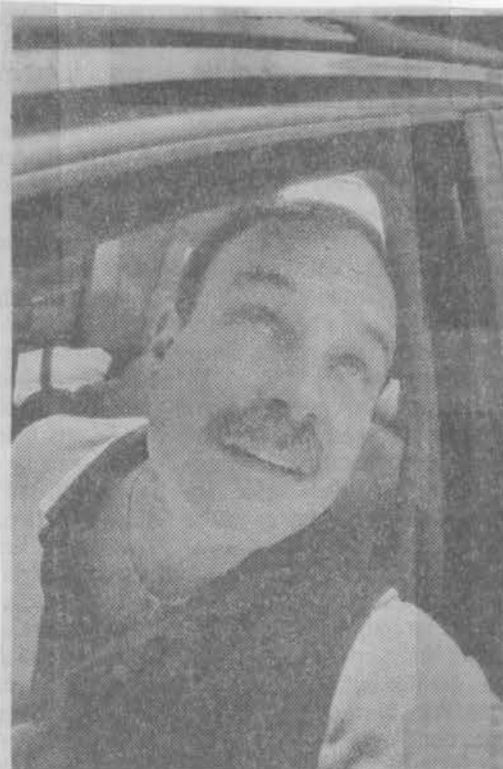
[Snap out of it, Sarita]

I'M READY TO START my own newsletter! I still have the little cartoon books Matt Groening used to send me when I was at City Paper. I'm going to do a Harley Davidson column and recipe corner!

*Leslie Bates  
Wappinger Falls, New York*

[You go girl!]

THE CURRENT SEMI-HIP collecting craze



BY BILL O'LEARY—THE WASHINGTON POST

Philip Bayer, of Fair Oaks, says he thought he felt raindrops through the roof of his car but found that it was human excrement.

# L e t t e r s

over here is Prostitutes' Cards. They're like business cards only larger and are scattered in phone boxes throughout London. They're getting more elaborate, colourful, and strange.

*Nigel Gardner  
Slubberdegullion  
Leeds, England*

THANKS FOR THE WRITE-UP and the magazine. Very interesting--about collecting.

*Merelaine Haskett  
and frogs & frogettes in the Frog Pond  
Beech Grove, Indiana*

I CAN'T THROW ANYTHING out, either ("One Man's Junk is Another Man's Junk Plus His Own Junk," #10). Some 2,000 lps, scores of comics, back editions of Life, Look, the National Observer, etc. crowd the Erie home. Here footlockers of videos are all over the apartment. I have a friend who's worse--TV Guides going back ages, 1,000s of 45s, etc. It's insane.

*John Kupetz  
Evanston, Illinois*

I LOVED CCC! It was the best one yet.... ever!

*Michelle Anderson  
Traverse City, Michigan*

[Michelle was an English major.]

I'VE AN ARTICLE IDEA for you--it's about the lurid, raunchy adult video market I attended recently. Every corner I turned led me bang straight into a poster with two tits etc. etc. As you can imagine, all the women were stark naked. If you like the idea, let me know.

*Juliana Koranteng  
London*

[Juliana, you're my kind of girl!]

WE ARE GLAD that our commercial caught your attention. Obviously, it was our intention that using the number 2000 in connection with body parts would help us reinforce our product name and the fact that Lever 2000 is milder to the skin than any other antibacterial or deodorant soap on the

market; it is formulated for use on the entire body.

Enclosed is a coupon for two free bars of Lever 2000. Thank you again.

*Rosalie Flax  
Consumer Representative  
Lever Brothers*

[Rosalie Flax? Is that a real person? This was the official Lever Brothers' reply to the following letter I sent them: "My girlfriend and I were watching TV the other day and saw an ad for your soap. You say it can clean "all your 2,000 parts." My girlfriend could only tally 88, but maybe we're not counting correctly. Do you count breasts, for instance, as one or two? Is each finger one, plus the hand? Is it butt (one), or buttocks (two)? Can I count each eyelash? If a woman is pregnant, does she have double parts?"]

AT THE MOMENT I'm sitting under the shelter of a restaurant because it is raining. Just a few minutes ago I was sunning myself on the beach. Oh, the trauma. My biggest problem each day is whether to get prawn or chicken with my fried noodles. I left Nepal with only one regret: I never got a Dali Lama key chain.

*Stephanie Cole  
Koh Phangan, Thailand*

I WAS OVERWHELMED by your zine. The Weekly World News index (#10) is brilliant, one of those things that one distinguishes himself on simply by GOING TOO FAR. (That is, in the highest tradition of Andy Kaufman, you have taken a perfectly fine, hilarious, sophisticated concept, and run it into the goddamned ground simply by executing it—and then,



not content to execute it, you have overexecuted it.) Verrrrrry impressive. Very fucking impressive!

*Chuck Shepherd  
News of the Weird*

HERE'S A FEW MORE WAYS to get out of jury duty (#9): 1/Keep saying very loudly, "Hey, who's frying baloney?", 2/Say you're looking forward to hearing judge sing--like on "Cop Rock"; 3/Ask if there will be opportunities to examine bloody undershirts; 4/Tell them you've already done jury duty on "Matlock".

*David Letterman  
Reading from Still Another Top Ten Book*

HOW ABOUT AN ARTICLE about odd people who collect normal stuff? I qualify for that too! If you're looking for something equally bizarre, allow me to tell you about my crusade. My thesis--unproven--is that people who write a capital Q like a big 2 should be hospitalized.

*Warren Harris  
Thermometers Collectors' Club  
Carmichael, California*

ONE OF MY KIDS AT SCHOOL was talking about the Flintstones and the fact that there is no Betty vitamin. I asked him how he knew that and he said he saw it on "Secrets Revealed." When I told him I knew you, he was really impressed.

*Ricki Levenberg  
Philadelphia*



# Thoughts & Comments

"The true measure of generosity is not how much one gives but how much, after giving, one has left over."

Joseph Epstein

A frightening TV program caused classic symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder in two boys, according to British psychiatrists. "On Halloween, a program with the title 'Ghostwatch' was shown on television," they wrote in the British Medical Journal. "Four months later two 10-year-old boys were referred to the child psychiatry unit. One of the boys expressed fear of ghosts, witches and the dark, constantly seeking reassurance. He suffered panic attacks, refused to go upstairs alone and slept with the bedroom light on. The other boy had similar symptoms." wire report

"The American population is getting uglier with the passage of time."

Jonathan Haynes, convicted of killing a plastic surgeon in Chicago because he was giving people "fake Aryan beauty."

"Every day some new do-gooder is trying to save us from ourselves. We have so many laws and safety commissions to ensure our safety that it seems nearly impossible to have an accident. The problem, though, is that we need accidents, and

## SAVE SOAP DEAR HELOISE:

It bothers me to throw away the last 10 percent of a bar of soap when it becomes too small to use, so I try to stick it to a new bar.

For years I used soap lather to accomplish this and had varying degrees of success. I kept wishing that someone would invent a glue for soap. Then I discovered that someone already had! It's called liquid soap.

A small amount between the old and new bars forms a strong bond when it is allowed to set for several hours. I also discovered that hair shampoo works the same way.

Kay Dundas  
Hutchinson, Kan.

lots of them.

"Danger is nature's way of eliminating stupid people. Without safety, stupid people die in accidents. Since the dead can't reproduce, our species becomes progressively more intelligent (or, at least, less stupid)."

letter to the Arizona Republic

"Wrapping a penis in a condom as a Christmas present is an inappropriate reference to a religious holiday."

School Superintendent Allan Alson, on why he pulled an ad from the school paper that featured cartoon figures with giftwrapped penises.

"No one I heard or read suggested that maybe killing himself was a sensible act, that by shooting himself in the head Kurt Cobain might have resembled those stout heroes who show up at hospitals having sawn their own mangled arms free of grain augers with penknives to save themselves from bleeding to death.

"There is no obvious reason why we should assume that a depressed person does not see the truth of his or her situation clearly. Indeed, one of the reasons so many depressives are also creative is that they see more than the rest of us, not less. That is why they are important to us, why we expect them to bear that burden of seeing for us and why we mourn them when they are gone."

James Krohe Jr, in Illinois Times

"Can IRS forms written in English be far off?"

tax lawyer Conrad Teitell's reaction to an IRS announcement that it would be printing Form 1040A in Spanish (WSJ)

"Stupid Microwave Tricks: Lightly grease your microwave with sunflower oil. Position as many grapes as there are players on one side of the oven, stem side fac-



ing the wall. Close the door, hit Start, and place your bets as the grapes, thanks to the physics of heat transfer, skate across the hot oil. As with Formula One racing, the best part is when the cars explode."

Wired

"Father George Coyne, director of the Vatican Observatory, told the London Daily Telegraph last fall that if the Vatican comes across life in space, the Church 'would be obliged to address the question of whether extraterrestrials might be brought within the fold and baptized.' The Church would ask any new beings it stumbles across in outer space whether he/she/it 'knows a Jesus who has redeemed you.'"

New Times

"The main [joke God played in evolution] is to propel the process through catastrophic episodes of mass extinction. Another is to give us consciousness but then saddle us with so many unwanted legacies from the past, like dealing with an enormous sexual drive, or having the kind of emotions that make us very upset when we realize we're going to die. The third one is to give us the kind of mentality that makes us think we're the most important creatures on earth when we're surrounded by insects and bacteria who are doing much better than we are."

Paleoanthropologist Stephen Ray Gould

"We had a 6.6 earthquake that broke less eggs than you guys do when you're working."

Manager of nation's largest chicken farm, in California, to his employees after an earthquake caused only a few empty pallets to topple

# ∞ Infinite Loop ∞

It was one of February's crisp days, just after the first ice had come and thawed, and us two guys were in my Honda with the bent weather strip on the back left door, cruising northeast toward Lancaster, Pennsylvania. We were talking about the Internet, and bad movies, and Malcolm's band, Gumball. We ate some pretzels, guzzled some Pepsi, and saw what we could passing by the Harley Davidson plant outside Lancaster. The York Barbell factory wasn't far off, with its huge rotating strongman on the roof.

There wasn't time for that particular bit of kitsch, however. Malcolm and I were on the way to see something bigger than any cast iron carnival act. Waiting for us in Lancaster, piled chest-high on the third floor of an abandoned candy factory, was a mountain of infinitely looping, colorfully packaged, plastic-shelled, cheese-o-riffic 8-track tapes. Twenty-five thousand of them. Twenty-five *fucking* thousand of them.

I didn't realize it at the time, but I would never see music in quite the same way. That pile of 8-tracks would teach me invaluable lessons about my humanity, about the loops we all find ourselves stuck in, about how no matter how far we wander, no matter how much we change, no matter how desperately we push and punch the shrink-wrap we call our daily lives, we always return home like a magnetic tape hissing and kerchunking inside the walls of a dead musical format.

Don't worry. I'm just kidding.

The 8-track mountain is stored in a practice space rented by Gumball, which is Malcolm from Takoma Park, Don from New York, Jay from Harrisburg and Eric from Pittsburgh. They gathered here last year to prepare their new album, due out soon. They wanted to promo it on

8-track, just as Rage Against the Machine did with their album, but Gumball's label, Columbia, gave them the choice between releasing an 8-track promo or a release on vinyl. They took the vinyl.

Malcolm and Don and Jay were longtime members of the Velvet Monkeys, a D.C. band from the '80s who put out a few records (but no 8-tracks). The guys in Gumball are devoted to LPs, with 8-tracks as a sideshow collection that until July 23, 1993, consisted of a few thousand 5 1/4-by-4-inch titles stacked on metal shelves.

I have to say, I've seen a lot of sights: babies born, dead bodies, sunsets, dwarfs, UFOs.

But I have never seen anything like the 25,000 8-tracks heaped in the band's Lancaster space. Malcolm climbed the mountain so I could snap a photo for scale, and he stumbled, and I thought he was going to pitch forward and send tapes tumbling like stones to my feet. But he recovered, and stopped to examine a case here and there, as if he were picking wildflowers during a hike.

The 8-tracks came from a junk store, Porter's Furniture, which is a couple of right turns on the way out of town. Mr. Porter's kid did the deal.

The band was scouring for tapes one Friday and was disappointed by the selection and prices (Porter charges a buck apiece, which is no garage sale price, that's for sure). Shorty, the guy who scurries the busted chairs, wobbly tables, gummy typewriters, locked trunks, dirty mirrors, pink mattresses and thousands of other overpriced items between Porter's four floors, mumbled something about 8-tracks. It didn't sink in with the band; after all, Shorty mumbled a

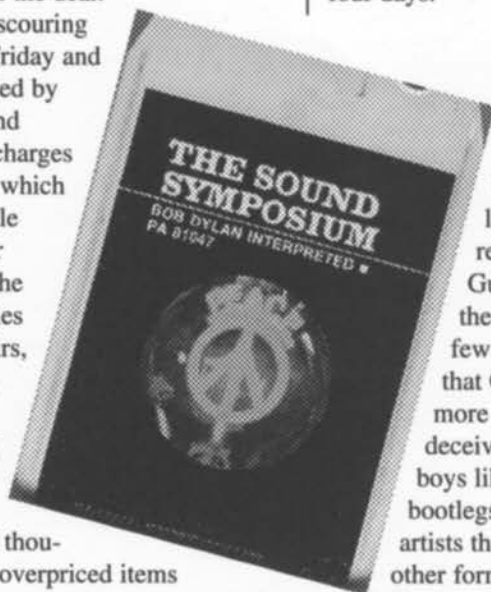
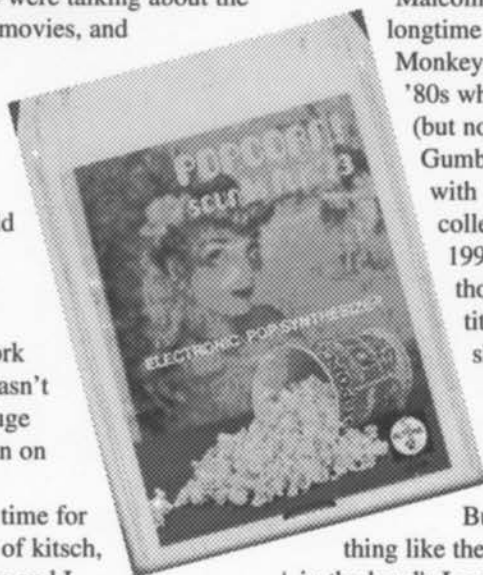
lot. But then Mr. Porter came by. He was always coming by, making a pitch or eyeing the boys suspiciously, one or the other. "You guys lookin' for 8-tracks?" he cawed. "I got 8-tracks."

He led the gang around the corner to a garage and pulled the doors wide. The air was filled with the stench of cat piss, but the boys were too stunned to notice. There, stacked on shelves and in wooden kitchen cabinets and cardboard boxes and garbage bags, were thousands upon thousands of 8-track tapes. More 8-tracks than the children had seen in their whole lives!

The boys offered Porter a hundred bucks for 1,000 of their choosing. The old man stuck his hands in his pockets and shook his head. No dice. He had stored these tapes for come near a decade, and he wasn't about to let some rock-n'-rollers mine the gold and leave him the dirt. But then his kid, Porter Jr., said "You can have 'em all for \$450," and that was that. Malcolm threw in \$125, Jay the same, and Don \$200.

They put on work gloves and began dropping 20 tapes at a time, held like an accordion at full bellow, into black plastic garbage bags: Open the bag, lift, pivot, dump. They borrowed a pick-up and drove to the candy factory and hauled the bags up in the freight elevator. They worked four or five hours a day. It took four days.

Eight-tracks, needless to say, are no longer state-of-the-art. If you can remember when they were, you are also no longer state-of-the-art. The reason Malcolm and Gumball enjoy 8-tracks isn't the sound quality, although a few diehard collectors insist that CDs and cassettes are no more than blatant attempts to deceive you and your ears. The boys like 8-tracks because of the bootlegs, rarities and obscure artists that will never appear in any other format. (Malcolm calls their collection "a musical Bermuda Triangle.") They like them because you can get a lot of music for a dime or a



## Infinite Loop ∞

quarter, and 8-track players, of which they have 30, can be had for \$5 to \$30. Sometimes people will just give them away, if you can believe that. The band also owns portables that they drag along on tours. They use an 8-track, the pumpin' electric soundtrack of the movie "Cool Breeze," as the intro to their performances.

The band tried to tame the 8-track mountain, but soon gave up. Along one of the red brick factory walls is the skeleton of their filing system, short stacks of tracks, A through Zed. Beyond that, in a corner listening pad (a scrap of yard sale carpet flattens the acoustics) sit boxes of Bootlegs, "an amazing amount" of Jazz, a few Homemades. Those are Malcolm's favorites. "It's a time capsule," he says, holding up a tape with a handwritten playlist of Linda Ronstadt songs on the label.

There is no Beatles in the bunch, no Zeppelin or Mozart. This is Grade B material, so far, although they haven't seen the tapes at the bottom of the pile yet. Many of what they have sorted are duplicates, which wasn't unexpected but still disappointing. What can you do with 103 copies of a record by the Andrea True Connection? (Andrea True was a porn star who became a disco singer, and that's interesting, but her music is not.) There's Captain and Tennile if you want them, and Tammy Faye Bakker singing corny gospel, and nearly the entire Misty Label catalog with selections such as "Feelin' Groovy" by the Rock Revival, and albums by Kiss and Journey several times warmed over. There are "tribute" albums such as Malcolm's prized "Excerpts from the Rock Opera Tommy by 'The Who', Vol. 2" with the disclaimer that the album is actually "Played by the Decibels." Other 8-track bands would take names like "Rubber Soul" (after the Beatles' album) or "The King" (Elvis) to prod buyers into thinking they were somehow karmically in possession of the real thing.

The Grade A stuff, as in any format, is hoarded and sought after, although the boys aren't complaining about the Miles Davis, Roxy Music, King Crimson, Sun Ra, Charlie Parker, Jethro Tull, and Captain Beefheart material they've rescued. And Malcolm considers any tape

offered in quadraphonic a prize. These tapes might have been mixed, say, with the drums in speaker one, the guitar in speaker two, the bass in speaker three, and the organ in speaker four (the Pink Floyd concerts this summer were presented in quad). Trouble is, Malcolm hasn't been able to find a quad player. When we visit Porter's later, he weaves up and down the aisles searching, searching. He says he once found Emerson Lake and Palmer's first album in Quad while exploring the mountain, but he set it down and hasn't been able to find it since.

A week after the band bought the trove, the boys were looking through Goldmine, a newspaper for record collectors. Malcolm spotted a classified ad that read, "STUFF CHEAP! 25,000 8-tracks. All Styles. All Sealed. Asking \$450. Lancaster, PA." Old Man Porter had been advertising! It made their find all the more exciting, knowing how easily other trackers might have beaten them to the loot.

But when Malcolm called the number in the ad, Porter didn't answer. Someone at the cafe next to the Lancaster Domino's did. His name was Keith, and he couldn't believe the boys also had 25,000 8-tracks.

"50,000 8-tracks in Lancaster, Pennsylvania!" Malcolm exclaimed. They'd located the 8-track center of the universe!

Keith had been an 8-track wholesaler once, and he'd squirreled away his stock after the format began its long, slow death. As it turned out, he'd sold half his stock years ago to Old Man Porter, which is how Gumball eventually got them. Now Keith was moving, so he'd sell the other half of the locket for \$300 if the band would haul the stash away.

Because the band was heading to upstate New York to record their album, it couldn't close the deal. Keith moved the tapes himself, and it was a goddamned hassle, as the band could imagine. So when Gumball came back after a month of studio work, Keith wasn't in the mood to negotiate. The band hasn't given up on

buying the tapes, and Malcolm would have paid a courtesy call on Keith at the cafe the day we drove up there—except that the Domino's next door had just burned down, and there were police lines *everywhere*.

**T**hey still make 8-tracks, country and western mostly, for truckers. The last plant is located in Nashville, Tennessee.

The technology behind 8-tracks is simple enough; Malcolm snapped open an Engelburt Humperdink to show me the guts. There's a 300-foot loop of magnetic tape which winds infinitely back onto itself and plays up to 80 minutes of analog sound. It feeds from the inside of the roll, passes over a pinch roller and capstan and tape head openings and under two pressure pads, and then wraps itself back around the outside of the roll.

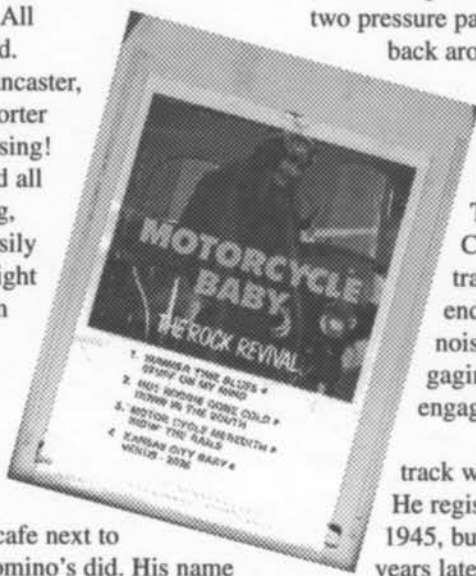
Four "programs" of stereo are recorded on each tape—4x2=8—hence the name "8-track."

The signature "ker-CHUNK!" sound the 8-track player makes at the end of each program is the noise of the tape head disengaging from a program and engaging the next.

The inventor of the 8-track was John Lear of Lear Jet. He registered his first patent in 1945, but his big break came 20 years later when he convinced the Ford Motor Co. to offer in-dash players as an option for their 1966 models. Until then, auto's audio cutting edge had been FM radio. Once RCA Victor and Capitol began releasing their catalogs on 8-track, Chrysler and General Motors joined the fray. The carmakers would usually toss in a corny sampler of rock, classical and jazz music to whet your appetite.

The 8-track's heyday ended around 1971, when the first car auto-reverse cassette decks appeared. The boxy tapes were a big pain in the butt, with all their hissing and kerchunking and jamming, and they still are for those who keep the dream alive. If you're not careful, the rubber roller can melt from the friction of the tape, spewing a tarry substance that destroys the 8-track and clogs your player.

Radio Shack hasn't offered an 8-track player since the 1990 catalog, when item number 14-935 went for \$9.95. You may



still find blank tapes or head cleaners at some Radio Shacks—the ones nobody visits much—but the company doesn't stock them officially. Mail-order record clubs offered the format until as late as 1988, which explains the Madonna 8-tracks every car built before 1975 seems to have in its glove box. A few devoted trackers still cross out "compact discs" on the club's postage-paid membership cards and mail them back with "8-tracks" scribbled across the top instead. The clubs reply with form letters.

**T**here are three 8-tracks that get you invited to the ball. The first is Lou Reed's "Metal Machine Music," the fingernails-against-the-blackboard release, which Lou claimed he made to satisfy the record deal he wanted out of. Malcolm calls it "the Holy Grail of 8-tracks." Don has a copy and got Lou to sign it. So Don gets an invitation.

The second tape is "The Yardbirds Live with Jimmy Page" (with its smoking version of "Dazed and Confused" called "I'm Confused"). The third tape is the Sex Pistols' "Never Mind the Bullocks." A copy recently sold for \$100 at a Dallas record store, which caused a gnashing of teeth among heavy duty trackers. The store owner, Mr. Bucks, who got started with his own collection by assembling the entire Beatles catalog, said he had put the \$100 price tag on "Bullocks" because he *didn't* want it to sell. One day some kid came in while Bucks was at lunch. Didn't even try to bargain the clerk down.

This transaction set off a panic among the readers of 8-Track Mind, the quarterly bible of the tracker community (\$2 from POB 90, East Detroit, MI 48021). Trackers are worried that the high-end sales of Bullocks by Mr. Bucks, like that of baseball-card profiteers who sent the cost of Mickey Mantle skyward, might drive 8-track tapes beyond the \$1 to \$5 collectors were paying for premium titles. 8-Track Mind, which is edited by a color copy consultant named Russ Forster, has

100 subscribers. During its heyday, when 8-tracks were still alive, the 'zine supposedly had thousands more. Russ can't be sure. He took over from the founding editor in 1990, at issue 69, and has lost track of him.

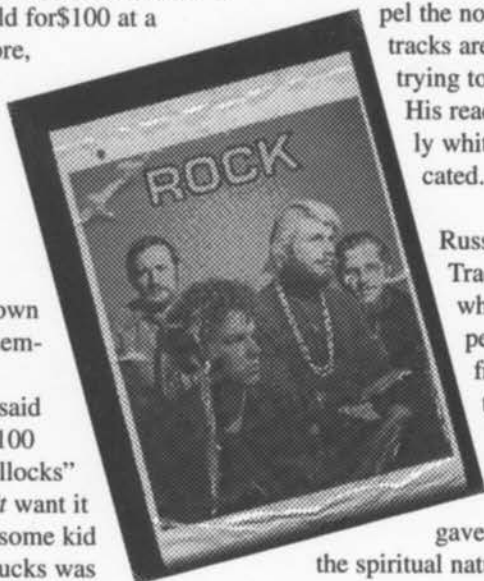
Malcolm writes articles for Russ once in a while, mostly on his specialty, bootlegs. When Malcolm wrote to tell Russ about the band's 25,000 tapes, Russ's response was "My head is spinning."

Russ, who owns about 500 8-tracks and many more albums, is shooting a 16mm film on trackers and life. He hopes the film, which took him from Seattle to Dallas to New Orleans to North Carolina to Washington to Lancaster to New York to Cambridge, will "dispel the notion that people into 8-tracks are beer-bellied ex-hippies trying to relive their glory days." His readers, he says, are generally white, middle-aged and educated.

A few years back, Russ helped organize an "8-Track Fest" in Chicago, which was an evening of performances by some artist friends. They performed thematic interpretations involving 8-tracks. For his act, Russ pretended he was a professor and gave a long-winded lecture on the spiritual nature of 8-tracks. "People said it was really realistic," he says. "I don't think that was a compliment." Russ laughs remembering that, mostly because he doesn't take 8-tracks *that* seriously. Just seriously enough to compose a list of the "noble truths" of tracking, but no more than that:

- 0/ Understanding one's fate leads to greater acceptance.
- 1/ State of the art is in the eye of the beholder.
- 2/ Society's drive is on attaining rather than experiencing.
- 3/ In less than optimum circumstances, creativity becomes all the more important.
- 4/ Progress is too often promises to get you to buy,

- buy.
- 5/ "New" and "improved" don't necessarily mean the same thing.
- 6/ Naive is not a dirty word.
- 7/ In seeking perfection, has the obvious been overlooked?
- 8/ Innovation alone will not replace beauty.



Russ says the Chicago band Big Black has a compact disc called "The Rich Man's 8-Track." "That really hits it on the head," he says.

**O**n our way out of Lancaster, Malcolm and I stopped at Porter's. Just inside the door, we admired a liquor cabinet/minature bar/8-track system unit, priced not to sell at \$375. The cabinet had a serving rack for eight shot glasses, and below it a fireplace with a plastic log facade and a rotating orange light to stimulate heat. Endless drinks, infinitely looping music, a fire that never goes out—it summed up an entire decade.

We laughed at that thought, but then, abruptly, Malcolm's eyes widened with betrayal. Sitting next to the cabinet was a box of shrink-wrapped 8-tracks.

"They held some back," he said, picking up a copy of Funkadelics' "One Nation Under a Groove" and turning it over in his hand. Shorty rounded a corner just then, and Malcolm had flash of fire in his eyes, as if he might gather him by the scruff of the neck and shake him until he confessed. But he caught himself, and his shoulders fell, and he flipped the tape back into the box. Soon Malcolm—and Gumball—will be the undisputed 8-track kings of the world, and no piddly puddle of tracks in a junk store in the middle of Pennsylvania would be able to topple them.

## Word Quiz

by Matt Wolka

Who of the following is a famous cellist?

- A. Yo-Ma Yo
- B. Ma-Ma Yo
- C. Yo-Yo Ma
- D. Ma-Yo Ma

# Language Watch

Oh sure, I try to keep it clean, but sometimes a good fuck! or shit! provides just the emotional release I need. Say you drop something heavy on your foot. "Gosh darn it!" doesn't cut it. And why should it? I hate those language Hitlers who say anyone who swears doesn't have sufficient mastery of the language to come up with something better. Well, *bullshit*, you four-eyed nimrod. Try invoking Shakespeare when someone cuts you off in traffic and see how fast you get through town.

Some folks can probably remember when they first heard the word "fuck" or "shit." I can't. I do remember, though, being utterly convinced that saying "fuck" aloud would send me straight to hell, where you can cuss to your heart's content as demons stick red-hot poker up your ass. At one point I was such a twisted goody-too shoes that I blackened out the single instance of the word "fuck" in a book of comic monologues by Steve Martin. I've probably been fucking over-compensating every since.

Swearing, cussing, taking the Lord's name in vein—all have been frowned on for centuries (they used to call it "blasphemy," and they crucified Christ for doing it! Small world, eh?). In colonial times, George Washington once told his troops to refrain from "the foolish and wicked practice of profane cursing and swearing." Yeah, you spend your days getting butchered by better equipped Brits and watching your fingers and toes fall off in the cold. Can you just see those poor American troops after getting Washington's directive? "Fuck you too, ya Wigtop, and the horse you rode in on."

Public swearing has been on the increase during recent decades. I never heard my mother or father say anything worse than "shit," although I remember being about ready to burst several times after I learned the power of the letters f-u-c-k, because I wanted to use them so desperately to tell my mother off for grounding me, or whatever. But I also knew that were I to yield to that temptation, I'd be shitting soap for a week. I once interviewed a professor who studies cussing in modern culture and has his students count "bad" words in the movies. His findings weren't surprising: movies during the

1980s contained an average of 81 cuss words, up from 24 during the 1960s and 1.5 in movies before that. Is that really an indication of some kind of decline in our society, or is Hollywood just making better movies? War movies are more realistic when they've got a lot of swearing, because that's how it was, and war is an obscenity itself and not some goddamned action-adventure movie. And even in the classics like "Gone With the Wind," do you really think Scarlett O'Hara was shaking her fist at the sky saying, "Goshdarnit, I've lost everything and might die here of starvation?" Hell no. She was spitting, "Fuck those Yankees." But nobody gave a damn.

What really gets me is how hypocritical Americans are about swear words, which in the scheme of horrible events and attitudes of the world are relatively harmless. Richard Nixon, who died recently and was eulogized as some kind of god, swore like a bat out of hell on the Watergate tapes. I wish one newspaper had had the guts to print some of those

transcripts with the expletives not deleted to demonstrate that Nixon was not only an asshole, he had no talent using cuss words.

If you're looking for morons, consider the guy in Tennessee who filed a complaint with the FCC against National Public Radio because it aired FBI surveillance tapes of John Gotti during a news program without editing out the cussing. Mr. Gotti was a MOBSTER, ya idiot. They cuss and kill. This nut complained that within 110 words uttered by Gotti, 10 of them were "variations of the f-word...to modify virtually every noun and in one instance even a verb." (I love swear words—they're so versatile!)

Another example of lameness: The New York Times' rejected an ad in which the headline read, "Lies. Damned Lies. Statistics" (based on a phrase uttered by Benjamin Disraeli in the 19th century). The Times would only run it after it was changed to "Lies. More Lies. Statistics."

And another: Entertainment Weekly prints an interview with radio shock jock

## Words Near Swear Words in the Dictionary

**fuchsine** *n* [F *fuchsine* prob. fr. NL *Fuchsia*; fr. its color] (1865): a dye that is produced by oxidation of a mixture of aniline and toluidines and yields a brilliant bluish red.

**shittah** *n, pl* [Heb *shittah*]: tree of uncertain identity but prob. an acacia from the wood of which the ark and fittings of the Hebrew tabernacle were made.

**mother country** *n* (1587) 1: the country of one's parents or ancestors, 2: the country from which the people of a colony derive their origin, 3: a country that is the origin of something.

**asseverate** *vt* [L *asseveratus*, pp. of *asseverare*, fr. *ad-* + *severus* severe] (1791): to affirm or aver positively or earnestly.

**godchild** *n* (13c): a person for whom another person becomes sponsor at baptism.

**helix** *n, pl* [L, fr. Gk; akin to Gk *eilyein* to roll, wrap] 1: something spiral in form, 2: the incurved rim of the external ear, 3: a curve traced on a cylinder or cone by the rotation of a point crossing its right sections at a constant oblique angle.

**dammar** *n* [Malay *damar*] (15c) 1: any of various hard resins derived esp. from evergreen trees of the pine family, 2: a clear to yellow resin obtained in Malaya from several timber families and used in varnishes and ink.

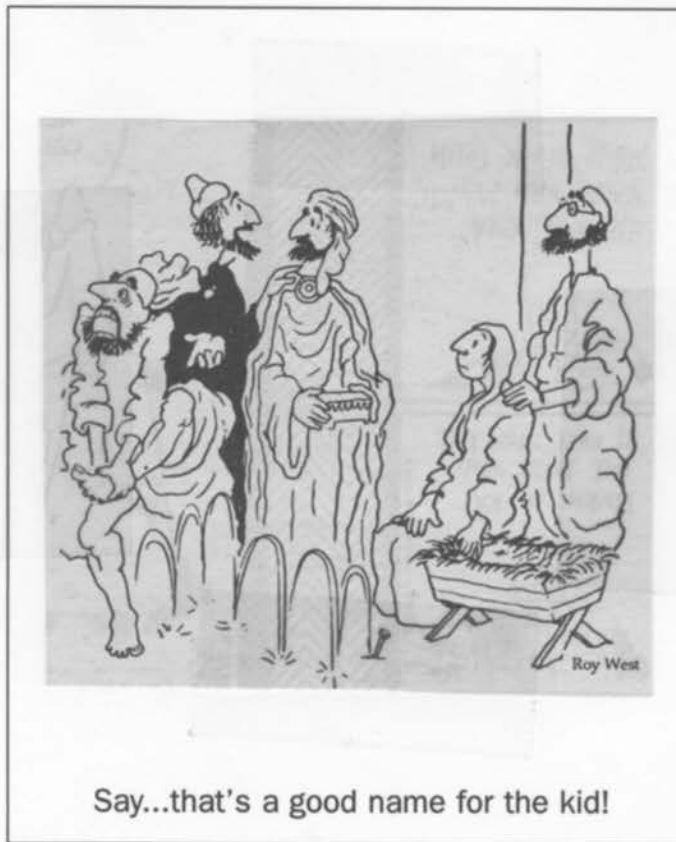


Howard Stern in which they used dashes to obscure words like asshole and fuck in the transcript so as not to offend readers. But in the intro to the interview, the magazine describes incidents to show how gross Howard's show can be: The one I remember is the graphic description of one of Stern's writers sticking his finger up the butt of another writer. I wasn't grossed out by that, but thank God asshole wasn't spelled out.

My favorite example lately of prudery has to be from Men's Health. In one issue, the magazine runs this graphic story about prostate cancer, which includes a description of the common procedure to check for lumps, which is pulling on a white glove and having the patient bend over. So the next article in the magazine—which is written for *men*, mind you—is about how humor can help reduce stress, and they quote Robin Williams on how to tell a good joke, and he says that if all else fails, "Go for the d--- joke." Can you believe that? They blanked out the word DICK in a men's magazine. That'd be like Woman's Day running a story about b----t cancer.

I would have called on the father of cuss at this point in the article, the former university professor Reinhold Aman. He used to publish an amusing newsletter called Maledicta (Latin for "bad words") Monitor. But recently Reinhold got a jail term in Wisconsin for threatening his ex-wife, the judge who handled their divorce, and his wife's lawyer. Reinhold used to rail about "newspaper censorshit" because so many publications will do that lame shit like Men's Health and spell fuck as f--- or f--k. Are we supposed to guess what the word is? Find? Food? Fork? You'll show us the dead strewn all over Rwanda, but if someone says, "This is bullshit you all won't help us," we have to read, "This is bulls--t."

This is why, to get to the point, I have decided to launch the Society to Highlight Ingrate Terms (SHIT). Just as the National Rifle Association believes that a good gun owner is an educated gun owner, SHIT hopes to remind Americans that cuss words can be valuable survival tools in today's stressful world, but only if used prudently and with respect for their power.



Say...that's a good name for the kid!

This means that you don't waste words like "fuck" by employing them as adjectives before every word you utter while walking down the street (pay attention, bands of teenagers at the mall). You reserve swear words for when you stub your toe on a nail or slam your finger in the car door, something serious like that.

SHIT will also distribute simple guidelines (not "regulations"—we must each decide for ourselves what role swearing will play in our lives). For instance, "shit" is much more of an all-purpose word; cussers should use it when failing an exam, for instance, or watching a favorite team cost you \$10 by blowing a huge lead (if you lose more than \$10 on a game, that's a "fuck"). If you're dealing with the IRS, that might be a "shit" or a "fuck," depending on who did your taxes; if you're dealing with the FBI or, worse, the ATF, that's always a "fuck."

As for other common cuss words, "asshole" is good for the boss or that moron coworker or in-laws, but

"motherfucker" should be reserved for more serious situations, such as when a mugger who shoots you even after you give him your wallet, or you realize you're slipping off the edge of the Grand Canyon as you back up for a family photo. I hear motherfucker invoked much too often for the simplest of transgressions, such as a foul during a basketball game. No, no, no! "Fuck you" will work just fine, or maybe a "What the hell?" Motherfucker is a pretty serious accusation, after all, if taken literally.

Membership in SHIT is free, but we do expect members to uphold the standards of the society. That means *controlled* cussing (unless you're on the battlefield or in a locker room). Cuss words must always be spelled out, and publications that don't do so should be notified in writing by requesting that they inform you what word they were referring to.

Children must be allowed to use cuss words on their own, without prompting from their parents (if a toddler wants to say "shit," when he falls flat on his face, he'll say it. Give them time). We do not swear at police officers, because they have guns. And finally, although swear words exist in all languages, SHIT uses the English standard. Members are, however, allowed to say, "Pardon my French."

Should you find you lack the self-control to only use cuss words when they are warranted by circumstances, you may suspend your membership in the society by saying aloud in front of at least two witnesses, "Fuck SHIT." Remember to burn your membership card.

# SHIT

**Society to Highlight Ingrate Terms**

This certifies that

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your name here

is a member in good standing of SHIT.

**Please notify the society if this member uses fuck, shit, asshole, or any other cuss words in an improper manner.**

# "Spinal Tap": The Lost Footage

This 1983 "rockumentary," directed by Rob Reiner (who later made "The Princess Bride," "When Harry Met Sally..." and "A Few Good Men") may be the funniest film ever made. Recently I viewed a third-generation bootleg of a late edit of the film that includes at least two hours of unseen footage.

There's a good reason it's unseen: Since much of the film was improvised, the unedited scenes can go on and on until you're begging for a resolution. Case in point: the "mime is money" cameo line by Billy Crystal was actually followed by two much duller exchanges, one in which the limo driver tries to get Crystal to pass on a message to the band and another where Reiner quizzes Crystal about how he was inspired to found his catering company, called Shut Up and Eat.

Most of the scenes from the movie were included in the bootleg, although all included additional unseen footage. For instance, when the band gets lost in the bowels of some auditorium and can't find the stage, they split up at one point with Nigel acting as a beacon, chanting "hello, hello, hello." And in the pre-release version, Derek yells, "Hello D.C.! Hello D.C.!" instead of the "Hello Cleveland!" dubbed in for the theatrical release.

Many of the "lost" scenes have a darker edge, showing keyboardist Viv stoned out of his mind, Nigel in bed with a busty nude groupie who has lost her contact lens, everyone with cold sores on

their lips (not just David and Nigel) or generally the band looking like miserable scuzzballs rather than comic foils. Reiner may have realized this and chopped out the explicit drug and sex references to give his masterpiece a lighter air.

The bootleg also has subplots involving misadventures such as Derek going through a messy divorce (his wife places an advert in a British music magazine listing her demands, prompting many overseas phone calls by the bassist) and David's teenage son from a relationship long past coming to see a show and being criticized by his dad because he's got tinted hair (the kid gets back at him by joking that his mother has become a lesbian). Here's some other memorable bits:

## Unseen Scene No. 1

After the limo driver delivers pizzas to the band in their hotel room, Nigel gets him to try some marijuana. Soon the driver is down to his underwear, giving his best stoned rendition of "All the Way" by Frank Sinatra. He then passes out.

## Unseen Scene No. 2

Before a recording session that ends in disaster, Nigel suggests the band has lost its edge. David laughs aloud at the suggestion, and Nigel accuses him of "making a joke out of [the situation]."

David shoots back, "I'm wasn't making a joke out of it. I was doing a sort of joke-like slant on the serious side of this."

## Unseen Scene No. 3

As the boys struggle to record radio promos in a hotel lobby with record exec Bobbi Flekman, Nigel's naked groupie reappears. Nigel announces that she's still looking for her contact lens, to

which Bobbi responds, "Does she need the lens to find her clothes?" Later, Bobbi tells Nigel, "Please put your hormones in your hip pocket for awhile and let's get on with this."

## Unseen Scene No. 4

At one point, standing on a hotel balcony, Nigel and David reveal their secret handshake, in which they make a horizontal V-sign with their fingers and interlock them. Later, on the bus, David, Nigel and Derek begin to make fart noises by sticking their hands under their armpits, and manager Ian suggests filmmaker Marty DeBergy (played by Reiner) turn off the camera. DeBergy insists on continuing, however, saying he's found a perfect example of the group's "prolonged adolescence."

## Unseen Scene No. 5

After Nigel leaves the band, David's girlfriend Jeanine (Tap's manager after Ian Faith quits) introduces Ricky, "the hottest lead guitarist in San Francisco" as a replacement. At their next gig, he proves himself to have ten times the talent and sex appeal of any member of Tap and upstages David with a Billy Squire-like rendition of "Hellhole." He's gone by the next show, and Tap has only to compete with a festival crowd after a puppet show, as we all know.



Spinal Tap's "Smell the Glove"



Isolation



Self Discovery



#### Unseen Scene No. 6

Jeanine, an amateur astrologist, tells Nigel that she's noticed his "Neanderthal look" on stage and thinks it works well with his "nocturnal glow." Nigel says he was "trying to make it subtle" and wasn't really "striving for caveman."

#### Unseen Scene No. 7

At an otherwise disastrous album signing at a record store, a lone fan shows up with "Smell the Glove." The band signs it but none of the signatures are visible because of the album's all-black cover.

#### Unseen Scene No. 8

Derek shows director DeBergy a clip from a movie he appeared in once. He played a trained assassin in a natty white suit who

is gunned down by the protagonist before the opening credits.

#### Unseen Scene No. 9

The camera catches Nigel watching Gumby on TV while scolding the bendable Gumby toy he keeps in his shirt pocket, "Do not bite me. You are my friend." Later, when Nigel storms

out of the military base gig, DeBergy tracks him down and interviews him at the home of "a famous TV star who plays a doctor," where he is learning to play tennis.

I had lunch earlier this year with Tony Hendra, who played Ian the manager and had more recently become editor of the doomed *Spy*. I asked him, naturally, if people still recognized him on the street from the movie. "All the time," he said. "They're always shouting lines at me, like I remember what I said in a film ten fucking years ago." He wasn't carrying a cricket bat, but he did pick bread crumbs off the table with the end of his finger and eat them.

## Reviews of Everything I Own (Part I)

**VIZ Magazine** I first came across this bawdy title while living in London, and now I'm hooked. It's filled with fart, vomit and sex jokes for the *mature* reader. Most of the magazine consists of page-long cartoons featuring a variety of unappealing but riotous characters who come and go with each issue: Felix and His Amazing Underpants; The Fat Slags (two rude, overweight scamps who always get laid in the end); Roger Mellie, the Man on the Telly (a nomad talk show host who's always saying the darndest crudities at the most inopportune times); and Yankee Dougal (a young boy who thinks he's an American, says "Aw shucks" and "Gee whiz," asks for root beer at tea time and wears Mickey Mouse ears). Many newsstands in the States sell current issues, which go for \$2.95.

**Is Sex Necessary? or Why You Feel the Way You Do** by James Thurber and E.B. White (1929) I picked this book up for 50 cents a while back and finally got around to reading it. It can only be described as brilliant, and funny. I read entire chapters aloud to my favorite girl. Here, for instance, is just a

smidgen from one chapter entitled "The Sexual Revolution: Being a Rather Complete Survey of the Entire Sexual Scene":

The sexual revolution began with Man's discovery that he was not attractive to Woman.... His masculine appearance not only failed to excite Woman, but in many cases it only served to bore her. The result was that man found it necessary to develop attractive personal traits to offset his dull appearance. He learned to say funny things. He learned to smoke, and blow smoke rings. He learned to earn money. This would have been a solution to his difficulty, but in the course of making himself attractive to Woman by developing himself mentally,



"There was an eighth dwarf, named Scuzzy, but we killed him."

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he inadvertently became so intelligent an animal that he saw how comical the whole situation was.

Charlotte's Web has nothing on this. Thurber did the illustrations throughout. They make no sense whatsoever but neither does sex, I suppose.

**Forbidden Love, More or Less** Our lives seem to ebb and flow in patterns. Lately, I've been encountering more than a few zines that deal with out of the ordinary sexual themes. (Don't act so surprised.)

**Round House Comics** celebrates the hefty beauties of the world, a welcome respite, really, from our obsession as a society with those waifer-thin mints they



call models these days. For two bucks, Victor Gates will send you a reprint of the first four of his mini-comics, which center on the ample

Maxine Geeperton and her husband John, proprietors of the Big Women On Campus sorority. When they're not busy recruiting new Fat Admirers, they're addressing the forbidden romance of a young black stud and one of their beefy sisters (552 Lancelot Dr., North Salt Lake, Utah 84054). If fat women are too much for you, there's also folks who like females with less. Amputees,

that is. **Fascination** offers stories and artwork about sexy heroines who have lost an arm or leg—sort of the Harlequin Romance set for gimps. There are also drawings—those department store newspaper ad females with an arm or leg etched out and replaced with carefully drawn stumps. But who are we to judge? Can you imagine the feeling you'd have if you found yourself attracted to women without limbs and suddenly came across a magazine devoted to the subject? It'd be very emotional. I think these folks deserve a hand (\$2 from 3949 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago 60618).

**Little Free Press** Ernest Mann's zine

really grows on you. He's a retiree who believes that we'd all be better off if we adopted a Priceless Economic System (PES), in which everyone volunteers. Okay Ernest, why don't you start by mowing my lawn? Seriously, though, his politics may be kooky, but his heart is in the right place. In the back of each issue of LFP, which he's been cranking out since 1969, he talks about adventures like building a raft to sail from Minnesota to New Orleans down the Mississippi River. He's tried six times, constructing rafts with a lady friend out of Styrofoam and plastic milk jugs, but never got much farther than the Greyhound station. Ernest also writes about driving to Mexico to get his teeth replaced (it's much cheaper there, but this was pre-NAFTA). I love how he bargained with the dentist over the price of pulling each tooth. Simple sentiments in a world gone mad (\$1 from Box 54177, Minneapolis 55454).

**The Oxford Book of Ages** chosen by Anthony and Sally Sampson (Oxford University Press, 1985) This is a nifty volume I found at a used book store. Why would anyone sell it, unless you were going to die? It chronicles quotes about each year of life from birth to 100. As Schopenhauer noted, "The character of almost every man seems to be pre-eminently adapted to *one* stage of life; so that in this stage he appears to the greatest advantage. Some are loveable youths, and that is all; others are active and energetic men, but age robs them of all worth; many appear most advantageously in old age." The book begins with Edward

Young: "Our birth is nothing but our death begun" and ends with Henry Miller's "Who wants to live to be 100? What's the point of it?" The ones in between aren't all so dreary.

**The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Sex** by Dr. A. Willy, Dr. L. Vander, and Dr. O. Fisher (Cadillac Publishing, 1967) The best parts of this book, and the ones the publishers brag about in the intro—are the 176 illustrations, many in color. One connects "a dinner of exciting foods" with a man later having "erotic dreams in which unsatisfied desires are fulfilled"; I've added beef stroganoff to my menu lately with no especially stimulating results to report. There is also an unappetizing cross section of the penis, with various red and



blue veins. Ouch. The text itself is academic and dry, so you know Cadillac Publishing was like, this book needs pictures!

**The X-Rated Bible** by Ben Edward Akerley (American Atheist Press, 1989) A former college professor, Akerley starts out by noting the irony of fundamentalist Christians who want the rest of us to follow the Good Book literally. "They hold to a narrow moral code," he writes, "yet they stand on shaky ground indeed, since by their [own] standards, much of the Bible might be considered obscene." Akerley proceeds to pick out and describe the juicy parts for us, offering a rather dry chronicle of every act of incest, venereal disease, homosexuality, rape, adultery, group sex, indecent exposure, nudity, prostitution, abortion, husband swapping, sexism, bestiality and witchcraft he could find. Most of his conclusions could be described as a stretch, however, on closer examination: He calls Abraham and Isaac "pimps," argues that King David was revived with that sin of sins, "female body friction," and labels Paul "the compulsive celibate" (a guy can't win). Lo and behold, you quickly realize that Akerley is *also* taking the Bible literally, the same way fundamentalists justify their hatred of gays and push to shove creationism down our throats. Takes one to know one, Ben.

**Confessions of a Dangerous Man** by Chuck Barris (St. Martin's Press, 1984) Despite what you might think, this "unauthorized autobiography" of the game show king was a *great* read. Barris, who created "The Dating Game," "The Newlywed Game" and "The Gong Show," weaves his television reminiscences in with a nearly believable account of his work for the CIA as a trained assassin code named "Sunny Sixkiller." At one point, he explains that he had the perfect cover, being a game show host, because no one suspected that when he "scouted" vacation spots overseas for Dating Game prizes, he was actually executing hits for the Company. He also describes how the Dating Game almost never got off the ground because the early contestants were so raunchy. Later inventions such as the Newlywed Game thrived on sexual double entendre, but the Dating contestants weren't nearly as tactful. Exasperated as he filmed and scrapped pilot after pilot because of the adult humor, Barris finally had to hire an actor to portray an FCC official and warn contestants that foul lan-

guage could lead to a one-year prison sentence or \$10,000 fine. That was complete bull...uh, it was complete fiction, but it saved TV viewers from exchanges such as these, which never aired for apparent reasons:

**Pretty Girl Cheerleader:** "Bachelor Number One, one of my biggest difficulties is spelling. How do you spell relief?"

**Bachelor:** "F-A-R-T."

**Pretty Girl Cheerleader:** Bachelor Number Two, what nationality are you?

**Bachelor:** Well, my father is Welsh, and my mother is Hungarian, so I guess I'm Well-Hung!

Good one, Bubba! (Hic) That's what you get when you let frat boys in the studio.

### How Does Aspirin Find a Headache?

by David Feldman (HarperCollins, 1993) I generously offered Feldman my collection of metaphors for hail ("Hail the Size of God," #6) and what do I get? He spells my surname wrong (Howe) and then cuts me out of the paperback edition. Feldman does these question and answer books, as the title suggests, digging up answers to mundane trivia questions sent in by readers. I mean, does anyone really care why public schools don't teach CPR or why Barbie has realistic hair while Ken's is painted on? Now, chronicling metaphors for hail—that takes some *thought*.

### Confessions of a Raving Unconfined Nut: Misadventures in the Counter Culture

by Paul Krassner (Simon & Schuster, 1993) Paul edits the *Realist*, a newsletter of satire and political commentary. During the '60s he was one of the yippies (he claims to have coined the phrase), causing a lot of problems for Nixon and the gang. This is a highly entertaining account of those years and his relationship with his daughter Holly. A prodigy violinist, he turned sour and got into drugs and politics and generally pissing people off. I saw Paul do some stand-up in Greenwich Village soon after "Confessions" came out, and he read some passages from the book. One of my favorites is when he describes being tailed with Abbie Hoffman by two Chicago cops during the '68 Democratic convention. As soon as he and Abbie realized they were being followed, they returned to a restaurant where they had been refused service the previous day and made a point of shaking the

manager's hand (no hard feelings) so he'd have a spot on the cops' suspect list.

Later, they stopped their car and walked back to talk to the tails.

We introduced ourselves and shook hands. Their names were Herbie and Mac. We offered them official Yippie lapel buttons, but they said, "No thanks, we're on duty." I explained that if we happened to lose them in a crowd, we'd be able to spot them more easily if they were wearing Yippie buttons, so they accepted and pinned them on their jackets."

Soon after, the cops asked if Abbie and Paul were going to eat soon. The cops recommended the Pickle Barrel, and the two Yippies followed *them* to the restaurant.

This was indeed a rare and precious moment. We obediently got back into our car and followed the cops. I thought they were going to try and shake us, but we managed never to lose sight of them....

We sat at separate tables.

### Drunken Goldfish & Other Irrelevant Scientific Research

by William Hartston (Sterling Publishing, 1988) I picked up this book at a museum bargain bin. It wasn't a surprise to find it there, considering it mocks the lame scientific research that forms the basis for many an exhibit. The title comes from a research paper Hartston stumbled upon that described the effects of alcohol on goldfish memory (about what you'd expect). Hartston didn't want to burn any bridges with his fellow scientists, so he states up front that "on the one hand I have great admiration and love of research for its own sake; on the other I cannot help feeling there is far too much of it going on." Among the findings he cites from studies completed by bona fide researchers (sometimes with taxpayer money—isn't that always the case?): alcohol makes dogs drunk; animals held under water never die in exactly the same length of time; pigeons can be taught to distinguish between Bach flute music and Hindemith viola music; squeezing a cat's testicles causes it pain; the ideal height for a toilet seat is 0.4 meters; chickens prefer to eat off blue triangles rather than red circles; jokes you've heard already seem less funny; and young orangutans like colored foods better than older ones but older ones eat faster.

### The Dictionary of Sexual Slang

compiled by Alan Richter, PhD (John Wiley & Sons, 1992) You gotta love a prof who would write a book like this, but nowadays, can he talk about his research without being charged with sexual harassment? Richter, a two-time United Kingdom Scrabble champion (I wonder why), writes in the introduction: "Many languages could probably support a whole book about their sexual terms and phrases. But no other language can rival the variety, color, or sheer number of sexual terms to be found in English." Ah, yes, something we can all be proud of. By far the best part of the book are the charts and maps in the introduction; I've reproduced Richter's "Sexual Metaphor Matrix" elsewhere in this issue and tip my hat to the great maps included with the book showing locations whose names have sexual meanings (e.g. Grand Tetons, WY; Twin Peaks, CA.) This is a dictionary where looking up dirty words like "fuck" or "shit" is about as exciting as turning to "the" or "and" in Webster's. Who cares when you've got "kwela," the African Nguni tribe's term meaning "to mount," or "patha-patha," the South African equivalent? Why bother when you can choose between "sugar stick," a 19th century British term for penis, or Shakespeare's reference to the vagina as a "peculiar river"? And finally, who knew that gism (semen) is the preferred form of jism? All these years I've been spelling it wrong.

### The Illustrated Texas Dictionary of the English Language

by Jim Everhart (Creative Books of Houston, two volumes, 1968) I was going to send these to my Texan friend Dawn, but they're so entertaining I done kept 'em. Jim's buggy mug appears on each page as he clowns for the camera to illustrate Southern gems such as tarred ("Boy, am ah tarred"), lahr ("Who you calling a lahr?"), barley ("Ah can jes barley open my eyes"), heidi ("Heidi, neighbor") tom ("How come you ain't ever on tom?"), sep ("Everyone can go in sep yew!") and are ("Ah'll meet you there in about an are").

**Lonely Saturday Night Movie Three-Pack** John Kupetz sent me



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three of his favorite movies. His first selection, **Dark Star** (1974), is the "Dr. Strangelove" of outer space. Directed by horror master John Carpenter, it follows four astronauts assigned to a long-term mission to destroy unstable planets. It's very dark and very funny, especially the scenes with the beach ball alien they've captured and made into an unwilling pet. **Jackson County Jail** (1976) has a classic line in which Tommy Lee Jones tells his jailer, "I'll play what I'm dealt," when told that he was going to be extradited to another state on a murder charge.

Meanwhile, a woman who has had her purse stolen is locked in the cell next to Jones for the night until she can be identified, and from there the action begins. Check out the awesome final chase scene through a Bicentennial parade. Finally, there was **Humanoids of the Deep** (1980), directed by Barbara Peeters. I didn't see the last hour of this flick because I accidentally taped reruns of "Rosanne" and "The Simpsons" over it, but it starts with these guys on a fishing boat, and they catch something REALLY BIG and the pudgy cheeked kid gets pulled overboard and he's thrashing around, then GULP, he's gone and a few seconds later the water is full of blood. The movie's

pretty serene until then, so you're POW right at the edge of your seat cause you're expecting the Humanoids to jump right on the boat and have it all get gory right away. Instead, Peeters rides the suspense train until the end of the line.

## Kraft Velveeta and Shells 12 ounces

You can get a box of this, the world's most perfect food, for under \$2 if ya got the right coupon. I like to toss in some salsa after mixing in the smooth cheese paste with the shells, to give it that extra zing. The portion is just enough to fill me up if I toss in a few pieces of bread and some Crystal Light, which I love too but is one of those



things that you suspect is going to be named in a cancer study years from now and held aloft at a news conference by a scientist with one of those "I told you so" looks on his face. I trust Velveeta, though: How can you go wrong with cheese?

**The Larry Sanders Show** Garry Shandling's spoof of late night talk shows has got to be the best sitcom on television. It's one of the few places you can visit on the dial anymore without being accosted by a laugh track. That is, Shandling treats his viewers with some respect, figuring we'll laugh if it's funny, like people used to do. The show revolves around Larry Sanders, who hosts a late night talk show opposite Leno and Letterman, but much of the action is centered on the chaos behind the scenes. There are real guests who play along with the plots (e.g. John Ritter and Gene Siskel meet in the hallway before the show and Siskel mocks Ritter for making "Problem Child"). "Hey Now" Hank Kingsley, Larry's sidekick, is annoying in the way George on "Seinfeld" has worn out his welcome, but he's got the character down. For instance, if Hank wants to see Larry, he sends in his assistant Darlene to say, "Hank would like to speak to you," at which point Hank pokes his head around the corner and says, "You wanted to see me, Larry?" To show you just how good this show is, one Wednesday my VCR was messed up and everything was recorded with Spanish-language dubbing. I later watched the entire (taped) show in Spanish, thinking it was something they would do for kicks. And it was still funny.

## Sexual Metaphor Matrix

Theme	Metaphor	Metaphoric Term			
		For Sexual Intercourse	For Female Genitals	For Penis	For Other Sexual Concepts
Body	Sex is embodied	ear, foot, leg business	eye, hot lips, dimple	bone, best leg of three, nose	lungs, bent wrist, tongue
Animality	Sexuality is animality	dog's rig, goose and duck, rabbit	cat, cockles, oyster	cock, donkey, lizard	bitch, wolf, zoo
Nature	Sex is part of nature	nature's duty, exchange DNA, root	rose, star, garden	stem, stalk, tree of life	petal, stones, mountains
Death	Sex is ultimate; sex is an end	sweet death, bury the bone, lie in state	box, undertaker, everlasting wound	devil, stiff, life preserver	die, infanticide, little death
Food/Eating	Sex is consuming; sex is appetite	fork, bit of cauliflower, spoon	bread, cabbage, cake	banana, baloney, cucumber	fruit, melons, vegetable
Aggression and War	Sex is conquest; sex is attack/being attacked	impale, charge, screw	arsenal, fort, target	club, weapon, bayonet	bullets, barbettes, break and enter
Religion	Sex is sacred/profane	knowledge, religious observances, pray with the knees upward	pulpit, hell, limbo	idol, bishop, rector of the females	church, abbess, angel
Sport	Sex is play/sex is contest	hole in one, tilting, couch rugby	target, saddle, wicket	putter, stick, bat	the game, pocket pool, catcher's mitt
Music	Sex is making music	strum, play the trombone, jazz	lute, fiddle, organ grinder	bugle, flute, lullaby	orchestra, kettledrums, blow some tunes
Names	Sex is communication/personification	Colonel Puck, in Cupid's alley, take Nebuchadnezzar out to grass	Fanny, Lady Jane, Miss Horner	Jack, Abraham, Dick	Mae West, Mata Hari, Jodrell Bank

**A 25th Anniversary in Show Business Salute to Ray Charles—His All-Time Greatest Performances** (*ABC Records, ABCH-731*) Once in a while you come across a sign that your parents were actually hip once, probably until the day they had you and had to put all that aside to feed you, get you to sleep and clean up your pooh. Ray is that sign. I had raided my parents' record collection once before, as a kid, when I scored "The Jackson Five's Greatest Hits," "Steppenwolf Gold" and "Jesus Christ Superstar." But it was only this past summer that I found this Ray Charles classic. I brushed it off, stuck it on the turntable, and began to groove. A blend of blues, funk, jazz and rock, Ray's sound warmed my heart. Brother Ray! Brother Ray! I will now treat my parents with the respect they deserve.

**St. Michael's Emporium: Leather Attire for the Middle Ages through Armageddon** For three bucks, Michael Saint will send you his latest catalog of leather outfits and medieval garnishments. The catalog is worth the price solely for the astonishment of looking at people in leather armor. Saint, whose hobby is medieval sword fighting, says he started his business because he couldn't find leather armor anywhere (I know the feeling). He now spends his days assembling custom-fit masks, corsets, harnesses, cases, belts and armor. "My designs are dark, bold and gothic," he tells

potential customers. "Perhaps they are the result of spending too much time, in my formative years, in a cathedral that mirrored Notre Dame." Some of Saint's masks could scare you shitless late at night after a few beers. It's the only catalog you'll probably ever look through and then go turn some lights on (156 EAST SECOND ST., NEW YORK 10009).

**Thrift Score** Once in a while a zine comes along that hits the target so cleanly we must stand in awe. Such is Thrift Score, a magazine for people who like to find treasures at thrift stores. The publication is "not about tightwadding or economizing," writes editor Al, but simply for those "who shop in thrifts for the never-ending quest for cool stuff you don't really need—in other words, The Score." I've only been to a few thrift stores with my friend Laura, who has decorated her apartment very tastefully for less than the price of a grilled cheese sandwich, but I used to love to bargain with the old ladies at the Labor Day flea market when I was a kid. The cover of Thrift Score No. 1 says it all: "It's a Purse! It's a Phone!" It's a Purse and a Phone. Inside, Al quizzes his readers on topics such as the weirdest things they've ever bought (a bald doll with no butt or legs, apple-headed girl salt and pepper shakers, a pink plastic bank with a nude baby in graduation garb holding a Diaper U. pen-

nant) Hot zine (\$2 from POB 90282, Pittsburgh, PA 15224). Al probably doesn't read **Living Cheap News**, although he may well have bumped into editor Larry Roth at the local thrift. This is a man after my own heart:

"I want to explore the limits of cheap," he writes.

Larry has his limits, however. He hates, for instance, people who are cheap at the expense of others, such as those who won't tip in restaurants. And Larry hints that the guy who times his bowel movements so he'll be at work to save on the water bill might be going too far. Besides how-to tips, **Living Cheap** also reviews books such as "Once-a-Month Cooking" (90 meals in a day to save energy) and reprints readers' letters about their latest money-saving

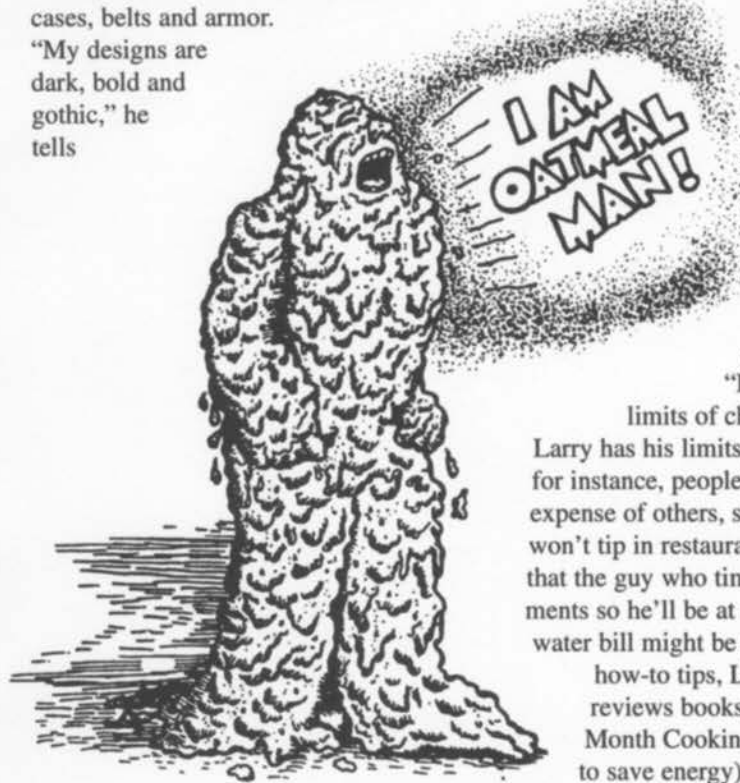
coups. (Helen from San Diego complains that grocery clerks won't ring up her items separately so she can send the receipts in for rebates.) Don't try any funny stuff by asking Larry for a free sample: You may be cheap, but a guy's gotta eat (\$2 from POB 700058, San Jose, CA 95170).

**Cometbus** Aaron travels a lot without much money, kind of the Jack Kerouac for the grunge generation, then fills 82 pages with his observations about the places he visits and the people he encounters. Usually I find reading about other people's wanderings about as interesting as looking at vacation photos, but Aaron's outlook is so different from mine (that is, punk—he's got a Mohawk and travels largely by Greyhound—I just have a Mohawk) that I found this vastly entertaining (\$2.50 from Wow Cool, 48 Shattuck Square, Box 149, Berkeley, CA 94704). Cometbus has become so well known that it's already been parodied by other zine editors, namely Queen Itchie of **Everything I Touch Turns to Shit and Garbage** (\$2 from POB 770, Sherburne, NY 13460) in her first issue. But then again, Queen Itchie is married to an editor from *Hustler*, so she's one to talk? Actually, I liked "Everything I Touch..." too, especially the four-crayon color separation. Itchie, Aaron: Can't we just all get along?

### Betty Henley's The Lighter Side

Where else are you going to find an Elvis collage T-shirt ("cut a bit smaller and shorter than traditional t-shirts"), Coca-Cola Insulated Beverage Wear, a spring jacket with pictures of cats or horses all over it, a "Play the Piano Overnight" instruction booklet, Playboy beach towels, Three Stooges boxer shorts, a green baseball cap that plays "When Irish Eyes are Smiling," an "entertaining collection of train videos," fast food earrings (a miniature soda and slice of pizza) or cow car floor mats (one-half the cow on each)? Why from Betty, of course! (4514 19th Street Court East, Box 25600, Bradenton, FL 34206).

**Encyclopedia of Graffiti** by Robert Reisner and Lorraine Wechsler (*MacMillan, 1974*) I suppose they needed a guy and a gal to co-write this so they could cover both bathrooms. "Graffiti are the voice of the common man," they write in their intro (which tries hard to sound scientific). If that's true, we need a huge bar of soap to wash out the common man's mouth! Shame! I love this book because



## More Reviews

it's organized by subject, including the mainstays "Defecation" and "Sex," as well as more dour topics such as "Women's Liberation," "International Relations" and "Philosophy." They also include graffiti exchanges, complete with cross outs. Some of it's obscene, some political, but sadly, not much of it is very interesting.

**Batteries Not Included** I'm not a subscriber to this one, mom, but the issues editor Richard Freeman sent me were fascinating nonetheless. BNI reviews and celebrates porn films, but looks at them as healthy erotica rather than "dirty." It's also very funny. My favorite article was "Schmeckel Moves to California," about this guy who had appeared in some adult films in the '70s and then moved on with his life. Well, one day his cousin Marvin, a lawyer in Washington, skipped work to treat himself to a showing of "The Candy Strippers." And there was his cousin Richard getting a blow job in a closet! I mean, holy shit! So Marvin drove home, got his wife, dragged her to the movie to confirm what he had seen. She did. Word got back to Richard, who immediately called his mother (better she hear it from him) and told her he had done a couple of X-rated videos a while back and that Cousin Marvin had seen one of them. Her response? "He goes to see *those* movies?" After Richard explained further, she added: "You know what I think?" "What?" he asked. "Plllllbbbbb!" she said. His mom gave him the raspberry! I can only pray my mother will have the same reaction.

(\$2 from 130 West Limestone St., Yellow Springs, OH 45387).

**Might** Another of the many tiresome array of Generation X magazines, but this one is actually not too bad. Their second issue, celebrating "Our First 50 Years!" complete with fake covers from the past, includes a story by a guy who tried to get and lose a fast food job in one day but couldn't (now *that's* a loser); a photo essay of actual naked people to demonstrate how far we all are from the "ideal"; and record reviews by the band themselves. Cute. At times a bit too "hep," but some gems in each of the first two issues and I like the layout (\$4 from 544 Second St., San Francisco, CA 94107).

**Super Dum Dum** You won't find Super Dum Dum in any store. He lives inside my heart. We used to have some great times together, decapitating bad guys with the red crayon, and when I came across my drawings and stories the other day in my closet, I was overwhelmed with a feeling of well-being knowing that he was there all these years, gathering dust, cursing me for leaving him behind. I did three issues of the "Super Dum and Dum and Other Stoires" [sic], one of those elementary school projects that always had a readership of one (three if you counted your parents looking at the cover and patting you on the head). In the first issue, to attract subscribers, I tossed in three bonus Super Dum Dum games ("Track Down the Crooks," where you "go after the crooks by following their tracks in the snow"; "Penny Drop," in which you dropped pennies onto dots and advanced six spaces if you hit one and three if you didn't; and "Ring Around the Dum Dum," in which everyone makes a circle holding hands around the first player, who then tries to bust out by force). Of course, the villains make or break any hero, and Dum Dum made quick work of flunkies like Muggie Mike and Rob Robber. His arch-enemy was Mr. Fly, who eventually got flushed down the toilet, but he also took on the Hot Hotwheel (stuck in a freezer), Mr. Mad (caught in a net with his evil robot), Dopey Dog, Mr. Ping Pong Ball, the Litterman and the Spanker. Super Dum Dum lives!

**Beer Frame: The Journal of Inconspicuous Consumption** Issue No. 1 takes a look at the Brannock Device, that cold metal contraption they use at the shoe store to measure your foot. You can't buy one unless you're a shoe salesman, did you know that? There's also examinations of Etch-a-Sketch, American Cemetery magazine, Bazooka Joe and some records (\$1 from 160 St. Johns Place, Brooklyn, NY 11217).

**Reign of Toads** A zine that blends technology and pop culture in a mush. I particularly liked editor Kyle's observation that those of us in our late 20s are the last generation that can recall life before computers. "My existence precedes Nintendo," Kyle writes with a hint of pride. "My existence precedes Atari. My existence precedes Space Invaders.... I remember two five-ball pinball games for 25 cents." Geez, Kyle, you're starting to



sound like my grandpa. Makes you wonder if Beer Frame #289 will feature the Commodore 64 and Pong. Also in this issue (No. 3) is a hip person's guide to the Internet, loads of reviews and an interview with Mark Hosler of the band Negativland, which recently got sued by U2 for parodying "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" (\$4 from POB 66047, Albany, NY 12206).

**Eye** Some far-out stuff here, and most of it enjoyable. Issue No. 2 has an article about microchips and how some day we may be able to have them implanted somewhere (your palm, maybe) with all our personal info. Upside: If you're grocery shopping, you just pass your hand over the scanner and the total due is automatically deducted from your account. Downside: The government could record all your darkest secrets with the same method. My question: Would muggers be able to steal from you by shaking your hand? Would we become less friendly as a result? Eye No. 2 also includes an article on triangles, as well as one about those STP stickers that you saw everywhere when you were a kid. Issue No. 3 has an article on Germans using corpses as crash test dummies (who cares?), more on injectable microchips (it starts getting a bit paranoid here) and an examination of the sexual undertones of the Addams Family (\$4 from Box 303, New York, NY 10009).

**A2Z: An Alphabetical Disorder** A great little book with the alphabet illustrated by 26 cartoonists. The entries aren't exactly



apple and horse, however. You've got A for Asshole, G for Gas Chamber, N for No Shit, P for Psychotic Ducks, U for Uranus, and Z for Zilch (\$2 from Wow Cool. See Cometbus for address).

**The Impossibilist Manifesto #11:**

**Multiphasic Personality Inventory A** parody of the famed test to measure your psychological state. You mark true or false to some 200 statements such as "I always close the bathroom door, even when I'm home alone," "My saliva doesn't make the postage stamps stick," "Quiet people are up to something," and "I have counted my ribs." Kinda funny (\$2 from 5136 Lynoale Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55419).

**From the Wall: A Newspaper of Crime Prevention**

Otherwise known as the National Crime and Graffiti Prevention News, this publication spends much of its editorial space railing against "taggers" and other urban artists who don't exactly beautify our cities. It's a great read because the people putting it together seem both well-informed about gangs and overly sensitive about graffiti, which, after all, is expensive to clean up but never killed anyone. In this issue, they rant about zines. "While topics vary, what most zines have in common are graphic language and a nothing-is-sacred mentality aimed at seducing anti-authoritarian youngsters," the editors warn. "With graffiti vandalism and gang activity on the rise, zine-scene influence is hardly what the doctor ordered."

Yikes! If anyone is writing "The Closet Cleaner Rules" on billboards, please put that spray can down. The value of this newspaper, in the end, is the great suitable-for-framing guides they include to gang hand signs and writing. Makes you wanna be part of it all (\$1 from POB 739, LaVerkin, UT 84745).



**Joey's Inside Outlook** Joey Klempe is a 75-year-old retiree who will remind you of exactly what he is: an old guy sitting in an overstuffed chair telling you jokes so corny you can't help but laugh. Joey has an ounce of creativity, though, which makes his twice-monthly output a stitch. In one

issue last year, he had a contest to draw "Aunt Sarah," a companion for Uncle Sam. Joey uses a lot of exclamation points and always includes a page of "Joey's Jottings." To wit: "Being a humorist pays very little money, but on the bright side, we are seldom sued for malpractice," or

"Living in a dump does not make one a dumpling." Joey also offers his thoughts on phone sex and suggests that we need a "national holler-day" to handle our stress (\$1 from POB 74, Nokomis, IL 62075).

**Farm Pulp** My suspicion is the editor works at a copy shop, because you get the whole shebang for two bucks: foldouts, colored paper, nifty clip art. Why, it's zine origami! (217 NW 70th St., Seattle, WA 98117-4845).

**The Last News** A religious tract that purports to be a newspaper from the day "Christ Returns," as the banner headline declares. First, the "playful, sensual world" would be shocked by the sudden disappearance of the many Good Christians who were taken up to Heaven, leaving behind all the Buddhists and Hindus



"I WAS BORN ON PLANET ASPHALT, A WORLD WITH NO REST STOPS! WHEN I ESCAPED TO PLANET EARTH IN MY SUPER-COLOSSAL, SOUPED-UP BIG RIG, I VOWED NO TRAVELER WOULD EVER GO HUNGRY OR THIRSTY AGAIN!"

and couples living together who aren't married, I guess. I love the creative use of stock photos: One shows an empty airport ticket counter with the caption explaining that it's deserted but for the attendants because "all travel came to a halt last night." Well, then, why are the attendants there? And wouldn't everyone be rushing to Jerusalem? I mean, it is the rapture. Inside there's this photo of a woman screaming and the caption, "Denver mother screams for her child." Why Denver? The back page has a black-and-white photo of the moon with the explanation, "A spokesman for a nearby observatory said that the recent red color of the moon may be explained by Act 2:20." Question: If all the Christians went up to heaven, who put this newspaper together? (Gospel Tract Society, POB 1118, Independent, MO 64051).

**Mail-Order Ministry** That's Reverend Chip to you, sinner, and I've got the papers to prove it. Write the Universal Life Church and they'll gladly send back a framable certificate and a wallet ID card certifying that you are a legally ordained minister in the church. It seems that in many states (including Alabama, California, Arizona and North Carolina) you only need a document from a recognized church that says you are an ordained min-

## More Reviews

ister to actually *be* one (and why not? I mean, what are the qualifications to be a minister, anyway? Good karma?). The Universal Life Church, led by founder Kirby J. Hensley, D.D., has fought numerous court battles to establish itself as a legal church with both the federal and many state governments, and since John 15:16 says Jesus has already ordained all of us, the ULC sees their certification process as simply a legal formality. "The 'state' claims you need a written document that states you are an ordained Minister," explains Rev. Kirby, 81, who founded the church 35 years ago. "We have given you

this document." When you send in your request, the church puts your name into their computer database, which ordains you, and you're then free to perform baptisms, weddings, funerals, and church services. It's all explained in the guidebook that comes along with your certification. The booklet also explains the church's philosophy—which is that if you accept the church's philosophy, you're free to accept or reject the church's philosophy. "We believe," Rev. Kirby says, "only in that which is right, and everyone has the right to determine what is right for themselves." Hell, I can live with that! (The church trinity is Freedom, Food and Sexuality.) The Rev. Kirby, who says he has ordained such celebrities as the

Beatles, George Burns, Wolfman Jack, Betty Ford, Merle Haggard and Lawrence Welk, explains that a minister should be "compassionate, loving and trustworthy." He adds however, that "ministers are entitled to many discounts" and for three bucks the church will send you a window shield for your car so you can get better parking spots at nursing homes and prisons. Or better yet: For another three bucks, you can get an "Affirmation of Love" certificate for couples living together. Makes a great housewarming gift! (Send your name and address to Minister Credentials, Universal Life Church, 601 Third St., Modesto, CA 95351 and state that you would like to become an ordained minister of the church. Credentials are free, but you might throw in a buck or two for postage.)

## Idiot Nation

I recently bought a new stereo system, and naturally I read the instruction booklets from cover to cover. My faith in humanity was severely damaged by the fact that Sony felt the need to include the following problem-remedy combinations in their troubleshooting guide (particularly the remedies). Either they think we're idiots, or they've gotten enough phone calls from consumers to know we're idiots:

Symptom	Cause	Remedy
The disc tray does not close.	The disc is not placed correctly.	Place the disc correctly on the disc tray.
Play does not start.	The disc is dirty.	Clean the disc.
	The disc is inserted upside down.	Insert the disc with the printed side up.
The remote commander does not operate the player.	The batteries are run down.	Replace both batteries.
	The remote commander is not pointed at the remote sensor.	Point the remote commander at the sensor.
	There is an obstacle between the remote commander and the player.	Remove the obstacle.
	The remote commander is too far from the player.	Move it closer.
The ● button does not activate.	There is no cassette in the holder.	Insert a cassette.
Automatic shut-off mechanism activates before the tape comes to its end.	The tape is slack.	Take up the tape slack.
	The cassette shell is deformed.	Use another cassette.
"no disc" appears.	There is no disc in the player.	Insert a disc.
"6 discs" appears.	Six discs are inserted.	Remove a disc from the disc tray.

## Poems for You

Excerpted from "Poems For Everyone"  
by Chipper Rowe (self-published, 1977):

### Go Away

Please get out of my way,  
I'll talk to you some other day,  
When the sky is sparkling blue,  
And when the rain is gone for you.

### Susan the Smarty

Susan is as smart as can be,  
Miss Buzz always picks her as spelling bee.  
This makes the kids angry,  
And when Miss Buzz picks somebody else for  
counting cow,  
Susan always says, "Get up tomorrow!"

### God

God forgives everyone,  
God lives beyond the sun.  
God is the king  
God made everything.  
God loves you and me,  
God made the blind man see.  
God sent his only son to all men,  
Jesus said, "Let the children come to me,  
like Bob, Jane, Joe and Ken."

### A Prayer

Lord, so kind and true,  
Thank you for the morning dew.  
Thank you for the trees so tall,  
Thank you for the large and small.  
Thank you for your loving care,  
Thank you for Sonny and Cher.



## Top Tips

From *Viz*, along with a few of my own.  
Mine are the ones you like.

■ Clean the inside of your compact disc player by dipping your CDs into hot sudsy water and playing them immediately. As they spin, they will spray the water throughout the inside of your console! Repeat with cold water to rinse.

■ While driving, if you see someone pulled over to the side of road by a traffic officer, accelerate past at a high rate of speed blowing your horn and making an obscene gesture so that the officer will be

preoccupied as he jumps in his vehicle to give chase. This may well save your fellow driver an expensive ticket!

■ Save on postage by resealing your reply in the envelope used by your correspondent and marking it "Return to Sender."

■ Stop nosey neighbors from knowing which room you are in by stealthily crawling about your house on all fours.

■ Pretend you have a fantastic sex life by jumping up and down on your bed and moaning loudly several times a day. Look at your neighbors' jealous faces each time you leave the house.

■ Avoid having your wheels clamped for overdue tickets by jacking your car up, removing the wheels and locking them safely in the trunk until you return.

■ Repainting your car? Cover it with Saran-Wrap first. If you don't like the new color, simply peel it off and start again with another.

■ Child-proof cactus plants by removing all the spines with a pair of tweezers.

■ Do you wear glasses? Enjoy foreign language films without the bothersome subtitles by sticking a brown piece of tape across the lower half of your lenses.

■ Save electricity on freezing winter nights by unplugging your fridge and placing its contents on your doorstep.

■ Make your own tea bags by pouring tea into an After Eight mint envelope and stapling it closed. Then puncture the sides 2000 times with a pin.

■ Parking problems? Tie a balloon to the bumper of your car, and tape a pin to the rear wall of your garage. When you hear the balloon burst, apply the brakes.

■ Don't waste money on expensive toilet fresheners. Simply hang herbal tea bags over the rim of the loo, and every time you flush—presto!—your toilet fills with lovely tea.

■ Foil fiddling taxi drivers by taking photographs of street signs as you pass them. At the end of your journey, you can confront him with evidence if he has taken an unnecessarily long route.

■ While waiting in line at the post office, keep some loose change in your right pocket. As each minute passes by, transfer one coin into your left pocket. When you eventually get served, the number of coins in your left pocket will tell you exactly how many minutes you have been waiting.

■ Stereo too loud? Simply place the speakers inside a cupboard. The volume can then effectively be controlled by opening and closing the cupboard doors.

■ Calculate the age of antique tables by sawing off one of the legs and counting the number of rings in the woodgrain.



## Readings

### Can You Beat This?

Excerpted from a list of 101 euphemisms for masturbation that appeared in *Attitude Problem* (for a sample copy, send \$3 to POB 2354, Prescott, Arizona 86302):

01. Slapping Johnny on the back.
02. Dancing with the one-eyed sailor.
03. Pounding the fence post.
04. Saluting the general.
05. Fastening the chin strap on the helmet of love.
06. Wiggling your walrus.
07. Sampling the secret sauce.
08. Gardening with the golden trowel.
09. Putting your thumb in the porridge.
10. Smiting the pink knight.
11. Working up a foamy lather.
12. Varnishing the banister.
13. Making the bald man cry.
14. Rubbing Buddha's tummy.
15. Squeezing the happy lumberjack.
16. Looking for clues with Fred and Daphne.
17. Shaking hands with Dr. Winky.
18. Playing the single-string air guitar.
19. Greasing up the three-legged cow.
20. Making a deposit.
21. Plugging in the toaster.
22. Stretching the truth.
23. Painting the flag pole.
24. Teaching the Cyclops to dance.
25. Frying up the corn dog.
26. Helping put Mr. Kleenex's kids through college.
27. Unleashing the alabaster yak.
28. Calling in the Secret Service.
29. Feeding bologna to the Smurfs.
30. Making chowder for sailor Ned.
31. Painting the picket fence.
32. Working at your own speed.
33. Holding your own.
34. Making magic with leftovers.
35. Tipping off the inspector.
36. Building upper-body strength.
37. Aiding and abetting a known felon.
38. Invoking the Oscar Mayer love spell.
39. Frosting your maple bar.
40. Sailing the mayonnaise seas.
41. Opening the flood gates.
42. Relishing your hot dog.
43. Giving the half-blind dog a run for his money.
44. Making the bread rise.
45. Spanking the rooster.
46. Riding the wild pony.
47. Flogging the eggman.
48. Lubricating the love monkey.
49. Making the world safe for democracy.
50. Exercising your right to privacy.

### A Speech by Abraham Lincoln (Really)

I will say then that I am not nor ever have been in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races; that I am not nor ever have been in favor of making voters or jurors of negroes nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor of intermarrying with white people.

And I will say, in addition to this, that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of political and social equality. And inasmuch as they cannot so live, while they do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race.

I say upon this occasion I do not perceive that because the white man is to have the superior position the negro should be denied everything. I do not understand that because I do not want a negro woman for a slave, I must necessarily want her for a wife.



### Infra-Verbal Poetry

From an article by Bob Grumman in *Poetic Briefs* (for a sample copy, send \$2 to 19 Southern Blvd., Albany, Alabama 12209):

Recently in the pages of *Small Press Review* a letter writer named J. Alvin Speers attacked an essay I had done for a previous issue. Its subject was a kind of poetry I term "infra-verbal" because of its focus on textual elements smaller than words, such as letters, numerals and even spaces. Speers used terms like "scribbling" and "ridiculous" to describe the poems I discussed. Heartened by such attention, I could not resist the chance to expand my thoughts here.

So far I've distinguished five kinds of infra-verbal poetry: fissional, coupligual, fusional, microherent and alphaconceptual.

In fissional poetry spaces are used to "disconceal" interior words, as in LeRoy Gorman's "t rain s top spar row." A coupligual poem consists of two or more words that are joined where they share one or more letters, as in the Richard Kostel-

## Cable Hell

A sampling of cable networks that have been introduced during the past year or are scheduled to debut soon:

Adam & Eve Channel (adult)  
American Political Channel  
Americana Television Network (music)  
America's Talking  
Applause (general entertainment)  
Arts & Antiques Network  
ATV: Advertising Television (infomercials)



Automotive Television Network  
BET on Jazz: The Cable Jazz Network  
Black Shopping Network  
Booknet (news and films based on books)  
Cable Health Club  
Canal de Noticias (Spanish-language news)  
Catalog 1 (shopping)  
Classic Arts Showcase  
Classic Music Channel  
Classic Sports Channel (shopping and old footage)  
CNN International  
Collectors Channel  
Cowboy Channel (westerns)  
Cupid Network (sex shopping channel)



Ecology Channel  
Encore Thematic Multiplex (six premium channels featuring love stories, westerns, tweens, mystery, action and true stories)  
ESPN2 (sports)  
FAD TV (fashion videos)  
Filipino Channel  
Fitness Interactive (exercise shows)  
FX (general programming from Fox Network)  
Game Channel (game shows)  
Game Show Network  
Game and Entertaining Channel (gambling)  
Global Village Network (international life)  
Golden American Network (50 and over)  
Golf Channel  
Gospel Network  
HBO en Espanol (Spanish language)  
Health Channel  
Health & Fitness Channel  
History Channel (documentaries/movies)  
History Network  
Hobby Craft Network  
Home & Garden Television Network  
Horizons Cable Network (museums, libraries)

Independent Film Channel  
 International Channel Multiplex Arabic  
 International Channel Multiplex Greek  
 International Channel Multiplex Hindi  
 International Channel Multiplex Russian  
 Jones Computer Network (educational)  
 La Cadena Deportiva Nacional (sports)  
 Lincoln Mint Network (shopping)  
 Microsoft Channel (computers)  
 Military Channel (documentaries)  
 MOR Music TV Multiplex (six channels: Spanish, Gospel, Aerobic, Classic Rock, Classic Country and Concert Music)  
 MTV Latino  
 Music Video Network  
 National Empowerment Television (conservative)  
 National Health Network  
 Network 1 (shopping)  
 New Culture Network (independent films)  
 NewSport Television  
 Outdoor Life Channel  
 Ovation: The Fine Arts Network  
 Parent Television  
 Parenting Satellite Television Network  
 The Parents Channel  
 PBS Horizons Cable Network  
 Popcorn Channel (movie previews)  
 Product Information Network (ads)  
 Planet Central Television (environment)  
 Q2 (fashion)  
 RecoveryNet—The Wellness Channel  
 Romance Classics (movies, series)  
 S—The Shopping Network  
 Sega Channel (video games)  
 Showtime En Espanol  
 Showtime Family Television  
 Showtime Action Television  
 Showtime Comedy Television  
 The Singles Network  
 Single-Vision (shows about singles)  
 Spice2 (adult)  
 Starz! (premium movies)  
 TACH: The Auto Channel  
 The Talk Channel  
 Talk TV Network  
 Telehit (Hispanic music videos)  
 TeleNoticias (Hispanic news)  
 Television Food Network  
 Television Shopping Mall  
 Trax (motor and boat racing)  
 Turner Classic Movies  
 TV Car Showroom  
 TV Macy's (shopping)  
 Viva II (Spanish-language)  
 Web SportsNet (text and graphics)  
 World African Network



anetz "string" that begins "ideafencere-brumble..." In fusional poems words are also combined, but usually less explicitly, and always less methodically, as in G. Huth's pwoermd, "myrrhmyrrh" and Jonathan Brannen's "space." The fourth classification, microherent poetry, depends on Very Bad Spelling or orthographic incompleteness or some other technique that makes its words—its key ones, at any rate—close to 100 percent incoherent. An example is a five line poem by Michael Basinski: "Ook/OKG/ Oon/eOa/dOK." It has no title that I know of....

As for alphaconceptual poems, they use all the tricks so far mentioned but go beyond other infra-verbal poems into letter-related conceptual concerns, as in the poem by Karl Kempton that speaks of a "caged/age" that is surrounded by "cd/propositionz" to bring the concept of (stifling) alphabetical order, among other things, into his composition. They thus seem to me the most sophisticated of the kinds of infraverbal poetry. But all of them can be uniquely effective.



## The Retard Society Meets the Braille Institute

*Each year the nonprofit Braille Institute, based in Los Angeles, prepares a list of the most unusual questions it receives by mail or phone. From its latest list:*

1. If a person is blind, why are dark glasses necessary?
2. Do blind people dream?
3. Is there such a thing as braille furniture?
4. What do blind people eat?
5. How does a blind person speak braille?



## Naked Proof

*"Showers at SPAC provide fresh view of professors," a column by freshman Matt Villano that originally appeared in the Daily Northwestern. SPAC is the university physical education facility:*

**I**t started out like any other shower at the gym. Then I saw him.

It was one of my professors—naked. He hummed Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, scrubbing himself with soapy hands.

Torrents of warm water beat down his wiry chest hairs and ran in tiny jet streams to the blue linoleum floor. He looked at me, and, with a wink, smiled.

The whole event freaked me out. The man with the hairy belly button across from me spent almost three hours each week teaching my class about the media and public opinion. I never imagined him outside of his office hours.

When he lectured, his designer shirts hid his love handles and saggy pecs, but now his flaws were completely exposed. In class, he constantly played with his glasses, but now his sunken and wrinkled eyes were bare.

In shock, I walked over to the electric dryers. Oblivious, he joined me. He nodded his head and smirked again. I was seeing parts of him that few of his students had ever seen, and that nakedness made me uncomfortable.

After the initial awkwardness, our conversation took off naturally. We talked about the best places to jog and our picks for the NBA playoffs. We laughed at the mole on another man's face.

For almost ten minutes, we stood in the nude, talking, laughing and gossiping like two schoolboys after gym class. The longer we spoke, the more human he became. To me, the personal lives of my professors were as inconceivable as my grandparents having sex.

Sometimes, going to the gym can be a learning experience. Being naked with my favorite professor was enlightening in more ways than one. Not only is his as big

## Faux Bands

*From a list composed by two disc jockeys in Washington, D.C.:*

White Tongue  
 Chocolate Fetus  
 Skid Marky Mark  
 Missing Sausage Link  
 Winnie the Pooh Juice  
 Gonoreasus Monkey  
 Trinidaddio  
 Inferior Peanut  
 Chicken Pot Pants  
 Anal Repentive  
 Fish Fungus  
 Scooby Doo Doo  
 Dizzy Colitis  
 The Dangerous Assumptions

## Readings

as mine, but he has one, and like my grandparents, he uses it to have sex. So remember, in the showers and in the classrooms, professors are people too.



## Haunted-Hic!-House

*From Alcoholism Briefs, a monthly newsletter of "concise news on alcoholism and related subjects":*

**T**here's a haunted house in Elk Grove Village, Illinois, that goes far beyond the typical cobwebs, zombies and witches. There's a heart-gripping scene from real life—a fatal drunken driving accident.

It's the "Tunnels of Terror Haunted House," at Berthold Nursery and Garden Center, an idea of owner Gary Berthold. Visitors to the haunted house first run into severed arms and legs and rubber-masked goons. Then, all of a sudden, they are hit by the glaring headlights and twisted body of a Ford Pinto. Next, the blood-covered body of a man, lying face down atop the hood of a car. Then a bloody torso of a woman lying in a pile of beer cans.

"The first time I walked in, it scared me," said Steven Glover, 16. "I never get scared at these, but this one scared me."

Matt Dallungan, 22, another visitor, said, "It was weird, really weird. It just came up really fast and it kind of freaks you out and makes you feel like you were crossing the street, and a drunk driver was coming at you."

Mr. Berthold said, "I hope the visceral reality of the drunken driving exhibit leaves a lasting impression."



## Cool Envelope!

The envelope enclosed with this issue of the Closet Cleaner is provided compliments of New England Cartographics, which makes fine stationery and mailing products from old government topographical maps. They're great! If you got this issue by mail, it came in NEC's 9x12 mailer. Drop your name in the pre-addressed envelope and Chris Ryan will happily send you a sample kit. If the envelope is gone, write Chris at POB 9369-CC, North Amherst, MA 01059.

# Fashion Extra!



**A**nnie had been so industrious and clever with her needles that Mrs. Burnett engaged her long ahead of time for the spring sewing. One day as they sat in the sewing room, Mrs. Burnett glanced out the window. "Look, Annie, there is Nina Wilson," she said. "Isn't she the loveliest thing? Nina makes me think of a dainty rosebud, unfolding before my very eyes."

"A pure and lovely girl is worth more than her weight in any earthly treasure," said Annie quietly.

"That is what Mrs. Wilson thinks, and there are no auto rides at night and no gatherings without a grown person."

"How old is she?" asked Annie.

"She is 16, a girl's loveliest age. And yet, it is perhaps the most critical period of her life, when more than any other time she needs the watchful care of a wise mother."

There was a little pause, then Annie looked at Mrs. Burnett and said, "Why wait until they are budding into lovely young girlhood to bestow all that watchful care, Mrs. Burnett? Why not give it to them now?"

"Why, they are nothing but children," exclaimed Mrs. Burnett in surprise.

"We have a habit of looking at childhood as a time of carefree innocence," said Annie sadly, "and forget that the devil is just as busy putting temptations into the path of children as of grown people."

"Mrs. Burnett, you know that I have a fatherless little child at the Home. My mother was a good woman, but she did not see that, from the time a girl begins to play with other children, every year of her life is a critical one."

"Since I was allowed to play for long hours at a time with little neighbor boys and girls, in the orchard, the woodlot and the large barn on my father's place, we children had ample opportunity to say and do a great many things. And yet," said the girl, with a bitter smile. "I have heard the mothers in our neighborhood congratulate themselves that we children had such a safe place to play as Father's big old barn, with its many stalls and loft full of sweet, clean hay."

"By the time I was 12 years old, I began to realize it wasn't so easy to be a sweet, pure young girl as I had thought. I grew reckless, and you know the rest of the story."

The girl was weeping by this time, and she cried out, "Oh, that mothers would realize how priceless is the modesty and purity of little girlhood! I want to say another thing, Mrs. Burnett, which may cost me your friendship, and that is that the dresses you have made for Dorothy and May are not modest. Oh, I know that they are in style, but I believe in all my heart that the devil gets up the styles for little girls these days. I can't understand how it is that you Christian mothers will fall right into line and send your little daughters out half naked because it is the style."

"There is May, 12 years old and developing rapidly. Yet between her socks and the short dresses there is a big stretch of bare legs reaching halfway to her waist. Dorothy's are even worse. Neither of them have sleeves in their little frocks and the necks are cut very low. Of course, Dorothy is only six years old, but Mrs. Burnett, how can you expect her to grow into a modest young girl when all her life she has been used to exposing the larger part of her body to the gaze of the public?"

"People have lots to say these days about the immodest dress of women and young girls, but I think the most indecently clad creature is the average little American girl," cried Annie, her eyes bright with intense feeling. "I have heard but one minister speak on this subject; this man said that when a mother thoughtlessly followed the styles of today in dressing her little daughter, she was making her exposed little body a target for the white slaver by the time she was six years old."

A silence fell between the two women. At last Mrs. Burnett said, "I am going out for a few minutes to see what the children are doing. And while I am gone you may begin to rip the hems out of those dresses. We will let them down so that they will cover the little girls' knees."

from "The Purity of Little Girls," a tract distributed by Rod & Staff Publishers

# *Catalog From Hell*





**STAR TREK®  
Next Generation Shirt**

Officially authorized senior officer's costume as seen on The Next Generation TV series. Pullover styling complete with collar dressings you apply to signify rank. U.S. made. 100% polyester. **State adult size: S, M, L.**

**99849 Next Generation Shirt (size?) \$29.95**



**E. Frog Mug**

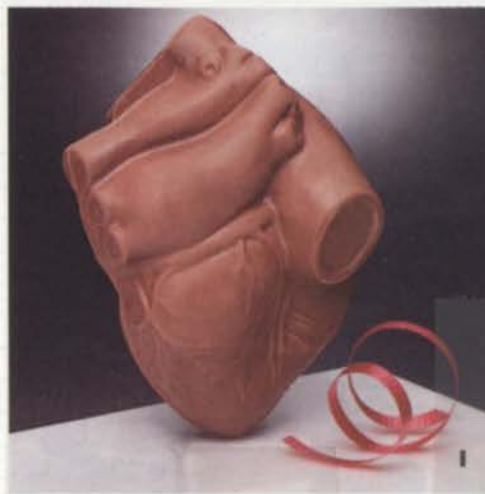
In Japan, it's believed that frogs presage good luck. The frog on the bottom of our mug just sits there quietly, waiting to be noticed. Small, green, and shy, he'll bring a smile to your face whenever you see him. Cream-colored stoneware mug is individually hand-thrown by Vermont craftsmen and holds 11 oz. Because each is made by hand, some variation will occur. Dishwasher and microwave safe.

**#21014...\$12.00**

**I. Anatomical Chocolate Heart**

You promised you'd give her (or him) your heart. What are you waiting for? Prove your love and your offbeat sense of humor with this anatomically correct, solid milk chocolate heart. Made from a mold taken from a medical school model, it's highly detailed, absolutely accurate, life size (about the size of your fist), and weighs about 1 pound. The thinking person's Valentine is a heartfelt way to express your affection.

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**COUPON SPECIAL**

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**Milton Bradley**

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**-4.00** COUPON

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## Eat at Ralph's

To win, stuff Ralph with all your snacks. But if he eats too much, it all comes back. Ages 5-up. Batteries sold separately.

Milton Bradley

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16.99 FINAL PRICE

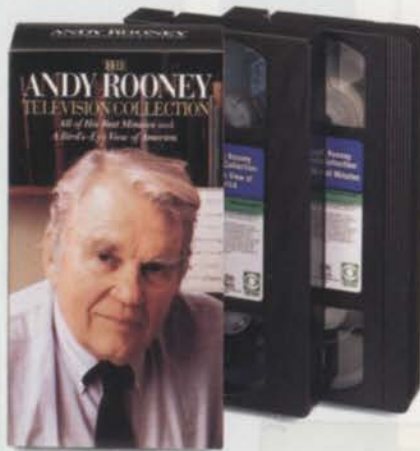
yummm



## C The Andy Rooney Television Collection Videos

America's favorite commentator and humorist holds forth on shopping, packaging, travel, automobiles, antique shows, and more in *All of His Best Minutes*, a collection of his signature pieces from "60 Minutes."

*Andy Rooney's Bird's-Eye View of America* takes you on a coast-to-coast tour of America by helicopter with the irrepressible Rooney as your guide. Over 3 hours on two video cassettes; color; VHS. #30477, \$39.95



C



## C. Barney™ Slippers

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Life  
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speaks from the heart.**

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**SI New Talking Picture Frame**  
\$34<sup>99</sup> (5.00) #C1110

**"I love you, Dad!"**



**"...but I wanna live with Mom."**


**Nerf  
Bow 'N Arrow**

Ready, aim and fire arrows up to 35 feet through the air. Ages 6-up.

**Kenner**  
**19<sup>99</sup>**



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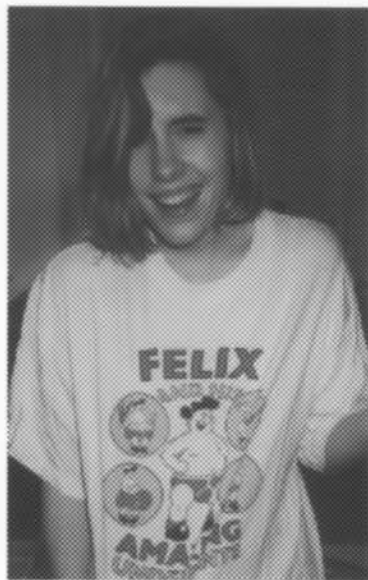
**E Woodstock Earchimes**  
From the makers of Woodstock Chimes®, the best windchimes in the world, these fun and fanciful earrings are music for your ears. Specially tuned to the scale favored by elves and fairies, they answer your movements with soft jingles. Sterling silver plated brass earrings measure 2 3/4". For pierced ears. #31017, \$29.50



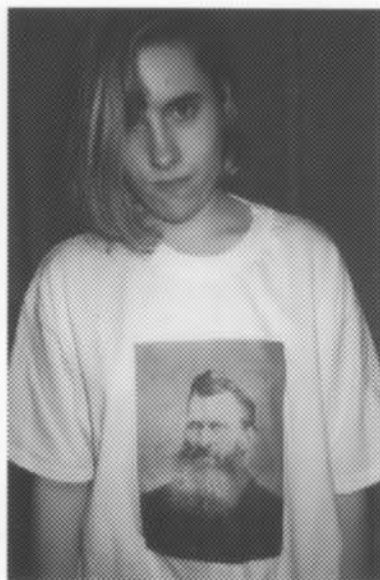
# My Girlfriend Wears My Favorite T-Shirts

**W**hy is it so hard to get rid of old clothes, particularly T-shirts? Because they remind us, like favorite songs, of good times from the past. I asked Charlotte to model some of my favorite tees so I could record them for posterity. She was reluctant at first, but soon was begging me to be the Cleaner cover girl. Maybe next time, muffin.

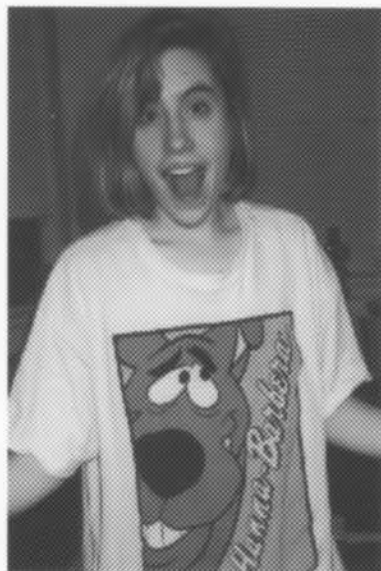
From left, clockwise: 1. Charlotte in my Felix and His Amazing Underpants shirt, purchased at Tower Records in London (see *Viz* review on page 6); 2. Charlotte with my great, great grandfather, John Rowe, a sheep farmer from Michigan; 3. Charlotte with Scooby Doo, a shirt I got from Hanna Barbera after they took issue with a story I wrote for *Spy* about how there was no Velma shape in Scooby Doo vitamins; 4. Charlotte with Roger Mellie, the man on the telly (see *Viz* review); 5. Charlotte as Larry Bird. I haven't worn this since I realized I wasn't going to break any of his records; 6. Charlotte burns it up in the "I Like It Hot & Spicy" tee I bought at one of the two Taco Bells in all of London (both have since closed); 7. Charlotte smiles thinking of Bonanza, the world's largest gift shop, on the Las Vegas strip. Must be seen to be believed—although the only thing I got was this lousy t-shirt; 8. Charlotte beams as she models the official Closet Cleaner tee, which must never be washed.



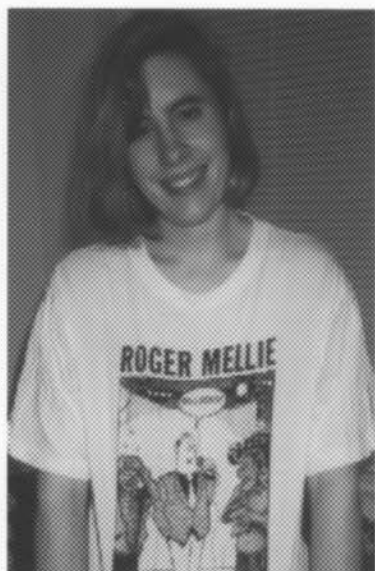
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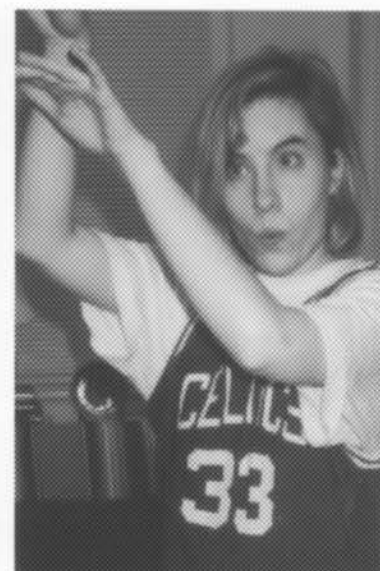
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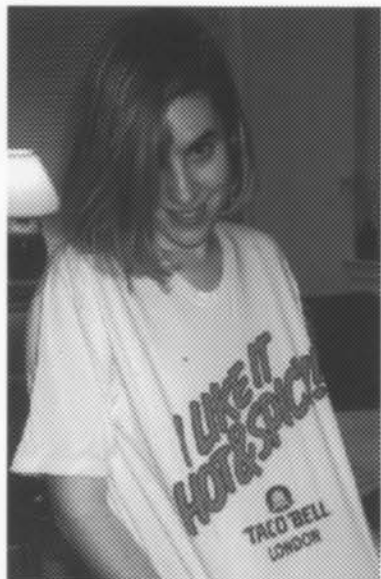
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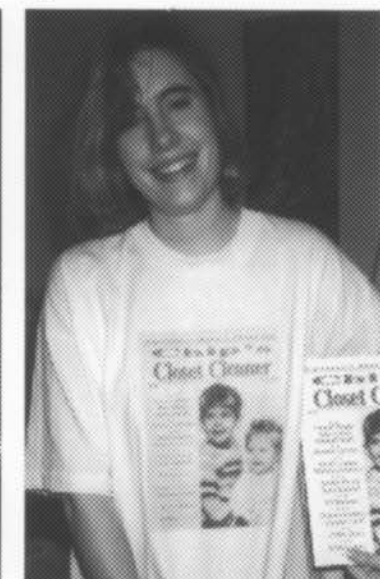
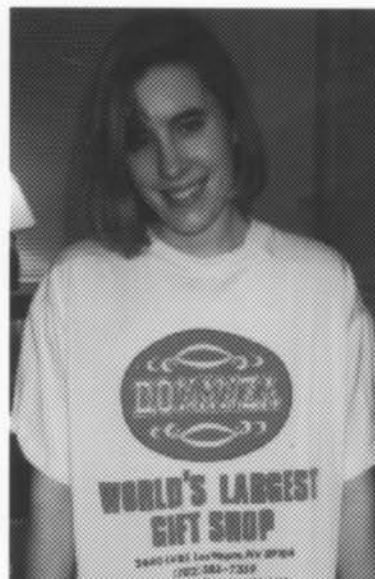
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6,7,8



**STONE SOUP**  
A MAGAZINE BY CHILDREN



11 April 1977

Dear Chip Rowe:

Thank you very much for sending us your story "Lost Mermaids." We really enjoyed reading it, and we kept it for a long time because we were seriously considering publishing it in STONE SOUP. We think your story is excellent.

However, we finally decided not to publish it because of the ending. It didn't seem right to us that the farmer should live happily ever after, even though he had killed a man out of greed. If you agree with this criticism, perhaps you might want to write a new ending and send us your story again.

In any case, we would like to hear from you again. If you have any more stories you could send us, please do.

Sincerely,

*Gerry Mandel*

Gerry Mandel (Ms.)  
Editor