

VooDoo

ALL-
APOLOGY
ISSUE

IS MY
FACE
RED

®

SHIVER
ME TIMBERS!

BLOW ME
DOWN,
MATEY!

HOLY
COW

I'LL
BE
DIPPED

KNOCK ME
OVER WITH
A FEATHER



FORMER
CARTOON EDITOR
MART TIMSON®

TIM
UNIVERSITY

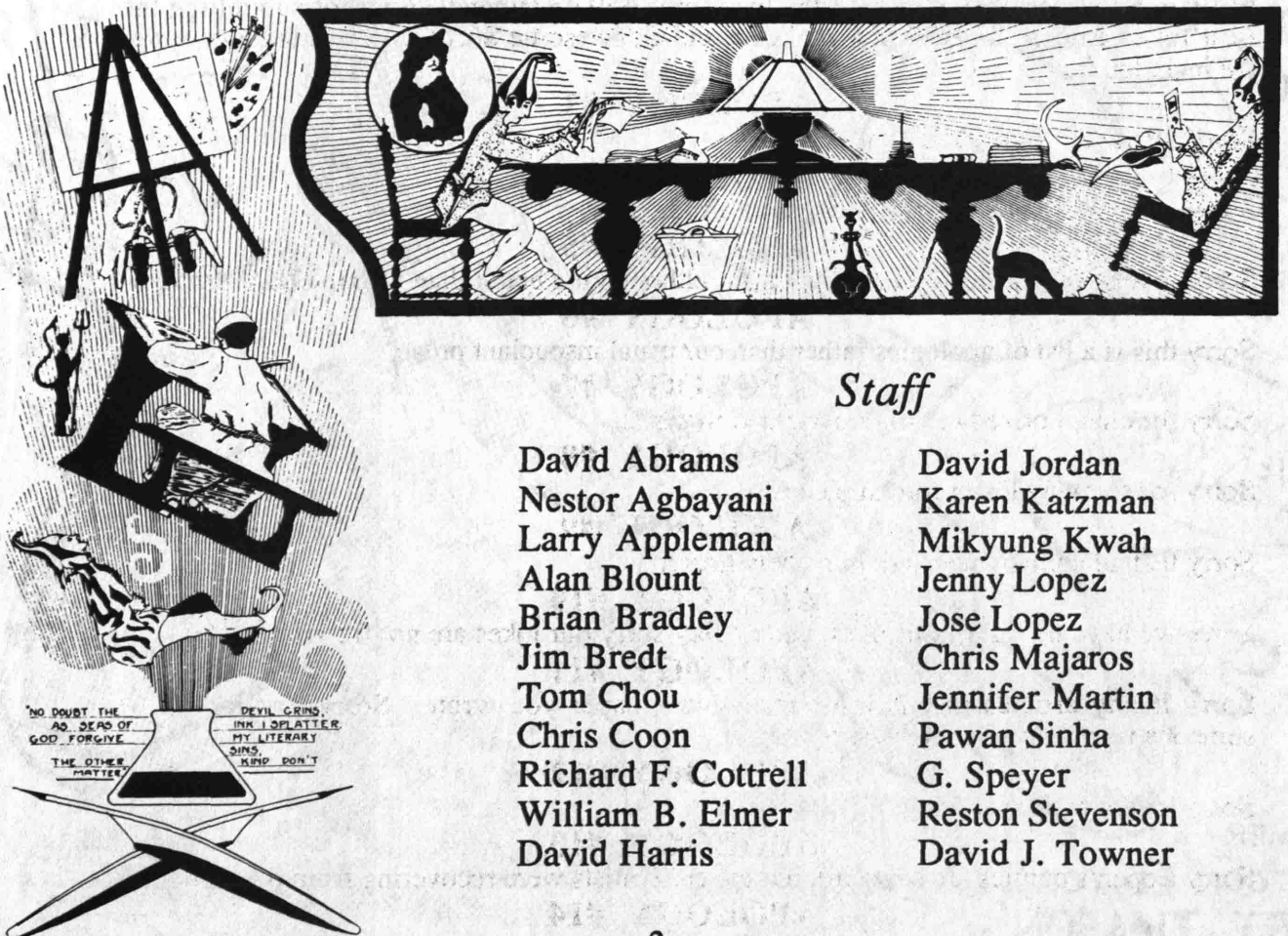
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APOLOGY #1

In the Winter 1990 issue of Voo Doo, the cartoon "Batmon: The Killing Toke" was presented as a winning entry in Voo Doo's 1989 humor contest. After the issue was published, Voo Doo was informed that a virtually identical cartoon had appeared in the Hofstra University humor magazine Nonsense in May and September 1989, written and illustrated by Rick Engdahl and Pat S. P. Fitzgerald. Voo Doo apologizes to Nonsense, to our readers, and to Engdahl and Fitzgerald for unwittingly publishing the apparently plagiarized cartoon.



APOLOGY #2

In the Winter 1990 issue of Voo Doo, the staff list inadvertently included Ms. Eva Berlandi, whose work was omitted for reasons of space.

PRIZE WINNERS

On a happier note, Voo Doo is somewhat pleased to announce the winners of our 1990-91 Humor-Writing Contest. The ubiquitous Christopher Coon wins the Best Comic Prose prize, which includes a hefty \$53.21 honorarium. Top honors in the Best Cartoon or Comic Drawing prize were split between two cartooning powerhouses, Pawan Sinha and William B. Elmer; they also split the handsome \$50.43 stipend. And, for submitting the Best Joke, Robert "Hawk" Shaw takes home an awesome \$6.14. All triumphant entries are included in this issue.

APOLOGY #3

Sorry "Parade" is upside down.

APOLOGY #4

Sorry Motherf___ing Sexist Pig has such a rude title.

APOLOGY #5

Sorry magazine is printed on cruddy paper, although it's better than a couple of years ago.

APOLOGY #6

Sorry this is a list of apologies rather than our usual insouciant prose.

APOLOGY #7

Sorry for unauthorized use of copyrighted material.

APOLOGY #8

Sorry for so many Dave Jordan pieces.

APOLOGY #9

Sorry that all animals were not humanely treated.

APOLOGY #10

Sorry we have no pithy war jokes, and doubly sorry our jokes are not freshness dated.

APOLOGY #11

Sorry if any articles in this issue resemble a paper you wrote. Sorry if it looks like someone typeset it on an Athena printer.

APOLOGY #12

Sorry letters page is so long.

APOLOGY #13

Sorry Lopez's comics are so weird, but the cartoonists were recovering from pregnancy.

APOLOGY #14

Sorry the Student Center elevator is too slow.



Letters to the Editors

Dear Staff:

In my day that salutation by itself would have had me in Killian's office. Shameless "pornographic narcissism" would have been the charge, and "one more time and you're out of here," the sentence.

How times have changed! You assholes routinely use fucking language that would have had me the fuck out of there in a fucking minute.

Probably in '69 the "railriders" felt abused, likewise the Senior Board in 1978, but let me tell you how free *Voo Doo* spirits were dealt with in days bygone, like 1940-1941.

First of all let's set the personality scene.

A fat little bugger named Lobdell was nominally Dean of Students but in fact appeared to regard himself as my personal parole officer.

An ambitions and somewhat gutless "golden boy" named Killian was Executive Assistant to Dr. Karl Compton, our leader at the time.

Your correspondent was the newly elected General Manager of *Voo Doo*, a position of some substance entitling me to 75% off due bills and a seat on the august Institute Committee.

And it was late September in 1940, about September I would guess, when a "story" appeared in the Boston press announcing the arrival of a new and somewhat distinguished debutante, one Harriet Aldrich, who would enter MIT as a bright and shiny "freshperson." (Please note the cool absence of sexism before we go on.)

Now Harriet was probably a very nice lady but she carried with her some very heavy baggage. She had in the Spring of '40 appeared on the New York debutante scene along with "deb-of-the-year," Brenda Frazier and others of like ilk, yet to learn, that what was floating in the bowl was not chocolate bars. In addition her father was a very heavy hitter, Chairman of the Board of what was then the Chase National Bank, later to become our Ambassador to Great Britain. When he said, "Shit!," drawers dropped from Wilmington to Chicago.

Harriet on arrival at the Ritz had held a press conference in which she explained to the rest of her class and "public" that she had come to MIT on the basis of a bet with her friend, Brenda. She and Brenda, it seems last Summer, had been sipping a little sauce at a long since departed saloon, the Stork Club, when Brenda popped the question "Harriet where'n hell are you going to go to school next

Fall." To which she told the press she replied, "Oh I don't know, but my Daddy can get me in anywhere." At that, Brenda is alleged to have said, "I'll bet he can't get you into MIT!" Harriet let the press know she promptly rose to the challenge and bet Brenda \$1,000 (One Thousand Dollars, like Ten Thousand Dollars in 1990) that her Daddy could get her into MIT.

Hard to believe, but in those bygone days five hundred bucks was tuition for the whole year, and when you graduated you were lucky to be offered \$135 per month. So you can see that to most of us Harriet's remarks were about as sensitive as a fart in a space suit (unknown at the time, the suit that is.)

At that time in history our President's wife Eleanor wrote a syndicated daily column "My Day" in which she regaled the great unwashed with tales of her numerous heres and theres.

Thus was set the scene for *Voo Doo* inspiration; and a comic strip called "Harriet's Day" was born. "Harriet" was dressed to the hilt, drove a Duzy (Dusenbergs) about thirty feet long, held a cigarette holder at least thirty-six inches from under her UFO-like hat, all the while filling the "balloons" with inane debutante-like air head bimbo platitudes. (You can see why I have never been invited to address the Senior Class at Ratlife.)

Well to get on with it, *Voo Doo* had hardly hit the street when the shit hit the fan!!

Daddy Warbucks was on the phone to Carl Compton demanding that the *Voo Doo* person (me that is) be expelled for insulting his daughter. Followed by threats of seeing to it that MIT would be cut off the goody list from several of our great Corporations (like GE, GM, DuPont, etc, etc) unless Dr. Karl hopped to it.

Well he hopped to it. Immediately, I was summoned to an audience with Prince James Killian (later to become famous) where I was told to pack up and leave and explicitly why. Hard to believe! Here I was, a Senior, neither distinguished nor undistinguished as a scholar but nevertheless one who had paid some dues, getting literally expelled for fathering nothing more illegitimate than a little "social commentary."

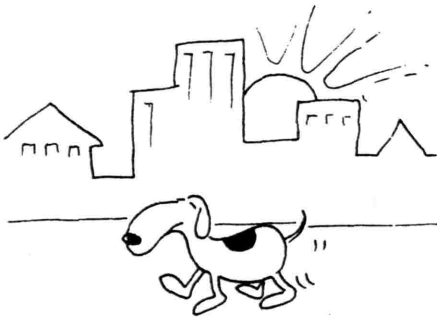
I suggested to Dr. Compton's dog-robber that, while I was helpless to prevent a "Presidential expulsion," he should understand that on departure I too would also have a conference with the Boston press and "wouldn't that be a pretty dish to set before the King." At first my response was greeted with stunned disbelief that any real MIT man would think of subjecting the Institute to such abuse, but when it

(continued on page 36)

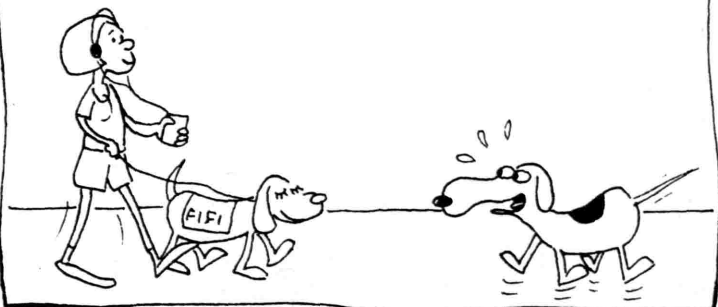
PAGES FROM A DOG'S DIARY

pawan sinha

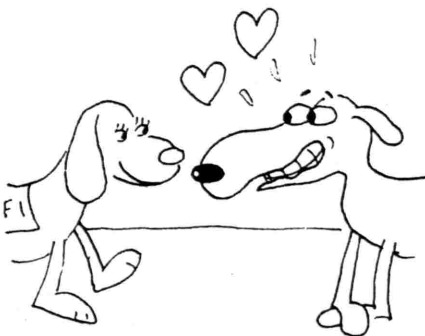
THE DAY BEGAN WITH THE
CUSTOMARY CONSTITUTIONAL
AROUND THE PUBLIC PARK.



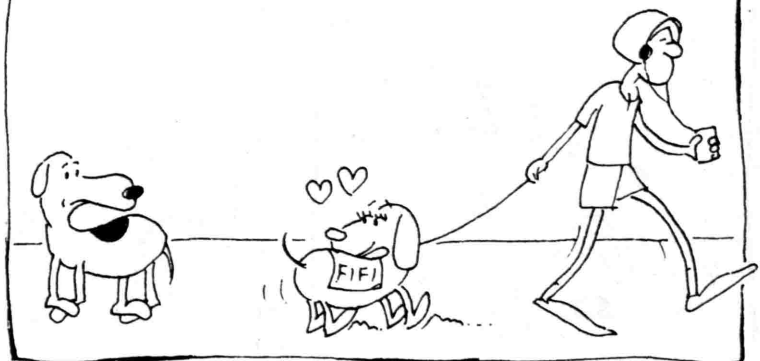
SUDDENLY, I SAW THIS BEAUTIFUL
BLONDE COMING MY WAY FOLLOWED
BY HER PET HUMAN.



OUR EYES MET, WE
SMILED AND SAID 'HELLO'.



BUT, BEFORE I COULD SAY ANYMORE,
THE STUPID HUMAN WHISKED HER
AWAY!



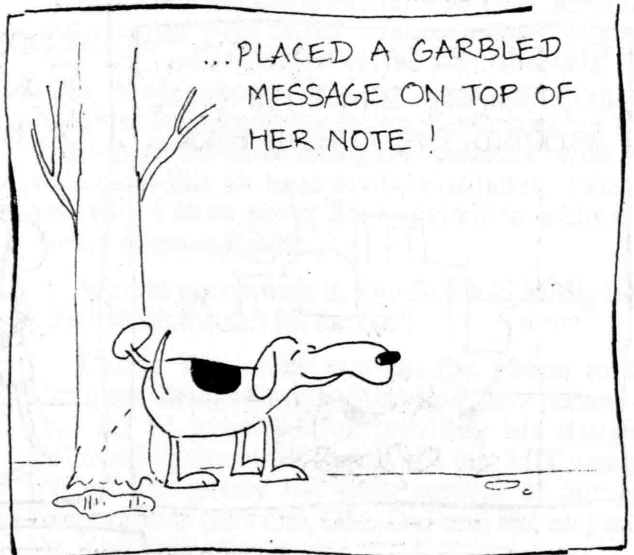
JUST AS I WAS BEGINNING TO DESPAIR ABOUT EVER SEEING HER AGAIN, I SAW HER PUTTING HER ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER NEAR THE OAK TREE. 'HOW CLEVER' I THOUGHT!



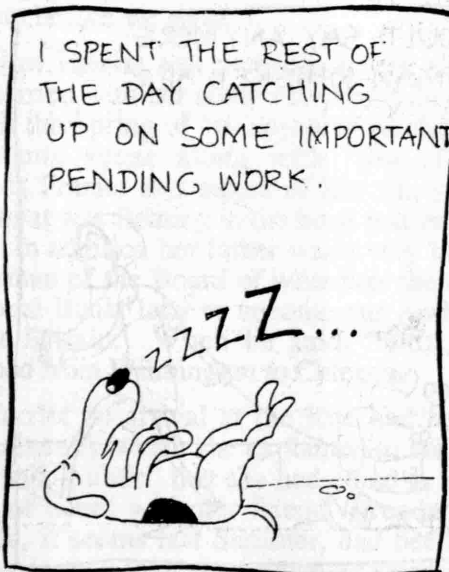
I QUICKLY WENT OVER, READ HER ADDRESS AND TO MAKE SURE THAT NO ONE ELSE MAY READ IT...



...PLACED A GARBLED MESSAGE ON TOP OF HER NOTE!



I SPENT THE REST OF THE DAY CATCHING UP ON SOME IMPORTANT PENDING WORK.



IT WAS TOUGH GOING BUT I MANAGED TO FINISH IT BY DUSK.



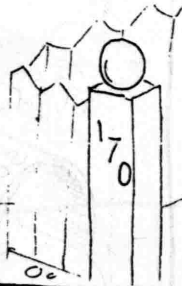
I HAD A QUICK BATH...



... AND DRESSED HURRIEDLY.



HER HOUSE WASN'T HARD TO FIND
'CAUSE SHE HAD LEFT LITTLE
MARKERS ALL ALONG THE WAY.
'HOW CONSIDERATE OF HER' I THOUGHT.



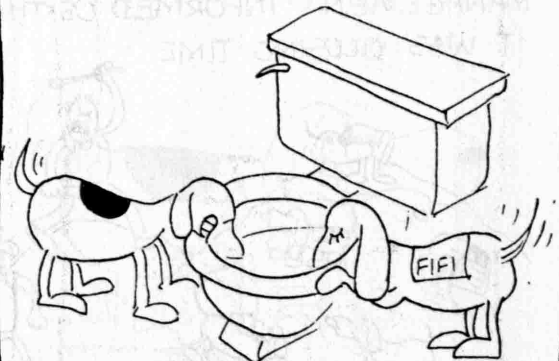
SHE LOOKED STUNNING!
I ALSO NOTICED THAT SHE
HAD GREAT LEGS AND
KNEW HOW TO USE 'EM!



LIKE TWO NERVOUS YOUNG LOVERS,
UNSURE OF WHAT TO SAY, WE JUST
SAT AROUND DISCUSSING LOCAL
AND INTERNATIONAL NEWS FOR A
WHILE.



SHE THEN INVITED ME TO HER
LIQUOR CLOSET. WE HAD A COUPLE
OF EXQUISITE DRINKS AND THEN
DECIDED TO GO OUT FOR DINNER.





THERE WERE ALREADY MANY COUPLES IN THE RESTAURANT AND THE BAND WAS PLAYING ERIC CLAPTON'S 'WONDERFUL TONIGHT'



A COUPLE OF HOURS LATER, THE MANAGEMENT INFORMED US THAT IT WAS CLOSING TIME.



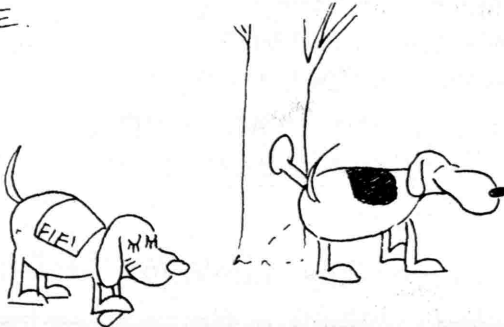
THE WORLD SEEMED TO BE FULL OF YOUNG LOVERS FOR WE WERE SOON JOINED BY SEVERAL IN THE SONG.



WE CAME UPON THE OAK TREE WHERE OUR LOVE AFFAIR HAD BEGUN.



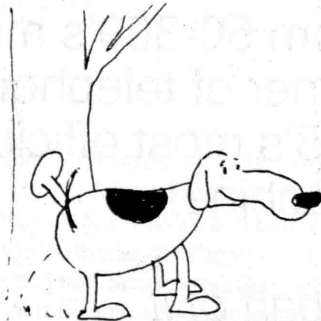
BEING IN A PLAYFUL MOOD (IT MUST HAVE BEEN ALL THOSE BEERS I DRANK), I PUT UP A NOTICE PROCLAIMING OUR LOVE.



BUT SHE FELT SHY AND RUBBED IT OUT.

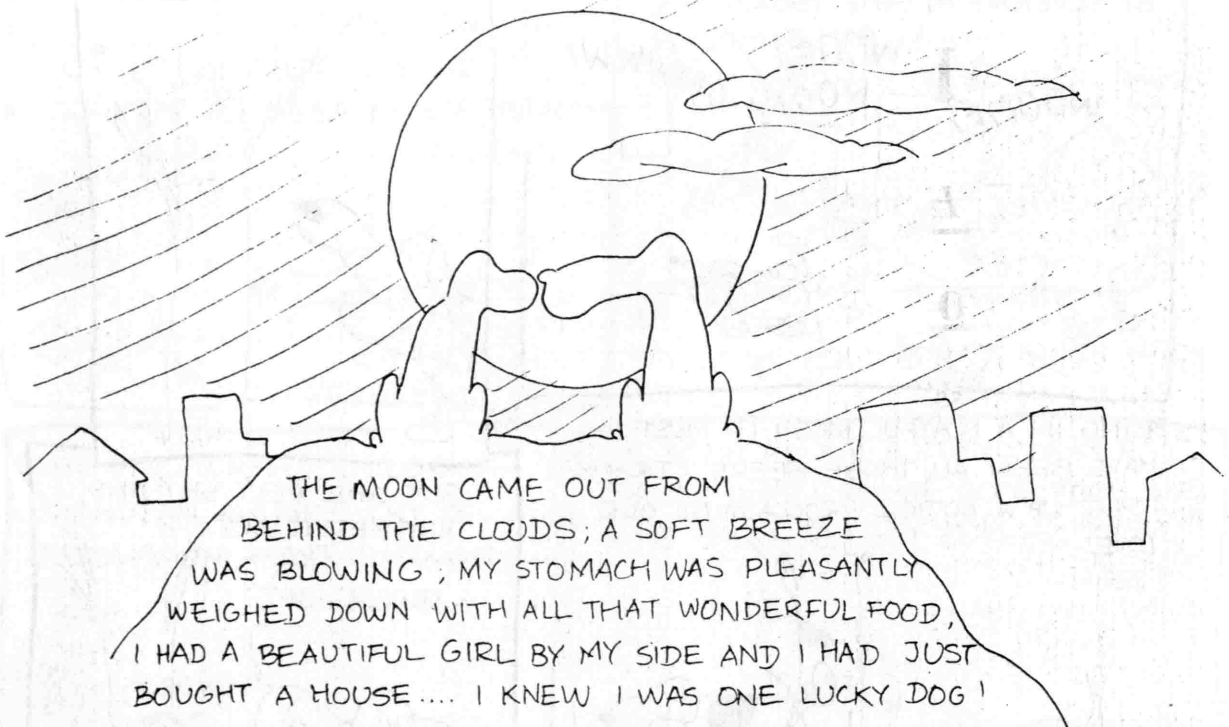


THEN AN IDEA STRUCK ME. I COULD BUY THE PLACE AND BUILD A HOUSE UPON IT. SO I PROMPTLY PUT UP A NOTICE OF OWNERSHIP AND A WARNING FOR CASUAL TRESPASSERS.



EVEN AS I PUT UP THE NOTICE, I DREAMT OF THE DAYS WHEN OUR HOUSE WOULD RESOUND WITH THE CHEERFUL SHOUTS OF OUR CHILDREN





pawan sinha

America's fourth oldest college humor magazine! New England's first forum for technological humor! M.I.T.'s third oldest student activity! Ames Street's second-largest publication! Room 50-309's most prestigious tenant! Owner of telephone number 1-617-253-4575's most efficient answering machine!

*You can be a part of it
or it can be a part of you:
Join Voo Doo.*

The Ennis Theory of Human Relations

David Harris

October 9, 1990

I. Introduction

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has a long and distinguished history of applying scientific methods to new and uncharted territories. One such unknown field is human relations: the binding of men and women together into a relationship. Continuing MIT's tradition of quantifying the immeasurable and explaining the inexplicable, a noted colleague¹ and I have probed the unknown, conducted research, collected data, suggested hypotheses, waved our hands, and formulated a new theory. I hereby present to the candid world the Ennis Theory of Human Relations.²

I shall begin this dissertation by examining the several forces underlying intersexual relations. I shall then discuss the effects of these various forces in forging bonds between individuals, looking not only at the homogeneous case, but also at several singular forms. From this understanding of forces and bonds, I shall derive the oscillation theory to predict and describe the time-dependent behavior of such relationships. Finally, I shall touch upon several other fine but interesting points related to the Ennis Theory.

¹Perhaps Justin Ennis, a Freshman at "Harvard on the Hill," (better known as Cerro Coso Community College) is not yet noted and famous, but this scholarly paper is certain to elevate him into the ranks of the great: Newton, Kant, Freud, Einstein, and Hitler.

²A footnote in history: the Ennis theory was first postulated during a lunch time bull session at the Sherman E. Burroughs High School and State Penitentiary. It almost entered the Science Fair, but, due to time constraints, was relegated to future publication. Since that point, it has evolved and improved to present form.

II. Fundamental Forces

Until this research began, four fundamental forces were known to Science: gravity, the electrostatic force, the weak force, and the strong force. Physicists working on the Grand Unified Theory were puzzled; certain interactions could not be fully explained by these four forces. However, the Ennis Theory of Human Relations solves this problem by introducing two entirely new forces into the arena: love and sexual attraction. Though some scientists view love and sexual attraction as two different facets of but a single essential force (and others have never directly observed either force in action), I have found fairly convincing evidence to the contrary.³

Sexual attraction, like gravity, is easy to describe but difficult to explain. Though two people may be of irregular shape, it can be proven with a very difficult surface integral that sexual attraction can be modeled as if all the mass is located in the genitals. The magnitude of the force varies not only with mass and distance, but also with dress, appearance, and mood.

Love is an even more difficult force to quantify. Unlike the other forces, the magnitude of the force sometimes increases, not decreases with distance. Instead of attempting to describe love in absolute terms, the Ennis Theory will examine love by observing the interactions it causes between other particles/persons. By placing two lovers in a bubble chamber, it is easy to intuitively grasp results that otherwise would require very obscure equations from Quantum and Meta physics.⁴

Love and sexual attraction are the only entirely new forces necessary to describe human relations, but several other pseudo-forces (really just special instances of interactions involving the fundamental forces) are useful, just as friction is useful in Newtonian Mechanics. Peer-Pressure (measured in Newton-Friends per square meter) and Society-Expectations (measured in Fads per Fortnight) both make individuals play certain roles within a relationship. Boredom, like friction, is characterized by an increase in entropy; it usually follows an asymptotic path over time, acting in a direction opposing sexual attraction. Though often a very small factor, Boredom does act as a damping force to prevent relationships from

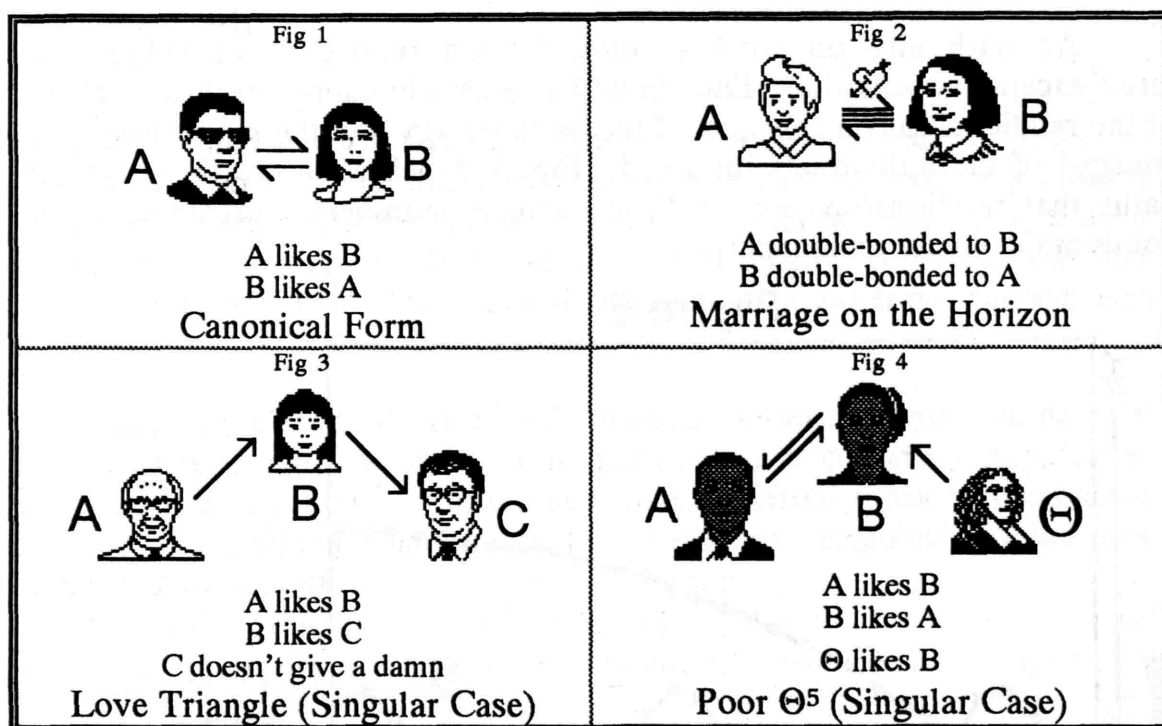
³Debbie Does Dallas, et. al.

⁴Though some of the mathematics of Meta physics is straightforward (e.g. I think therefore I am), most of it requires much more sophisticated knowledge involving group theory, truth and beauty quarks, and existence and uniqueness theorems for God.

increasing without bound. These pseduo-forces appear independent on the macroscopic scale, but in actuality can be represented as combinations of the six fundamental forces at the atomic or sub-atomic level.

III. Bonds

As the four classical forces act to create interatomic and intermolecular bonds, the forces of love and sexual attraction also work to create interpersonal bonds, the building blocks of human relations. Let us first examine several typical bond patterns:



Observe the “Standard” cases in figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 portrays the single bond configuration of the conventional “boy likes girl–girl likes boy” idiom. Figure 2 is similar but involves double-bonding, bringing the two persons closer together and raising the bond energy. Marriage or a paternity suite are the likely product of such a relationship. On occasion, triple bonds with amazing stability can be found, but, judging from experimental evidence gathered in the 1980’s at singles bars, such close, permanent relationships are difficult to form. Frequently, all of these types of emotional bonds are accompanied by a “joined at the wrist”

⁵One might say that Θ is screwed, but it’s not likely to happen.

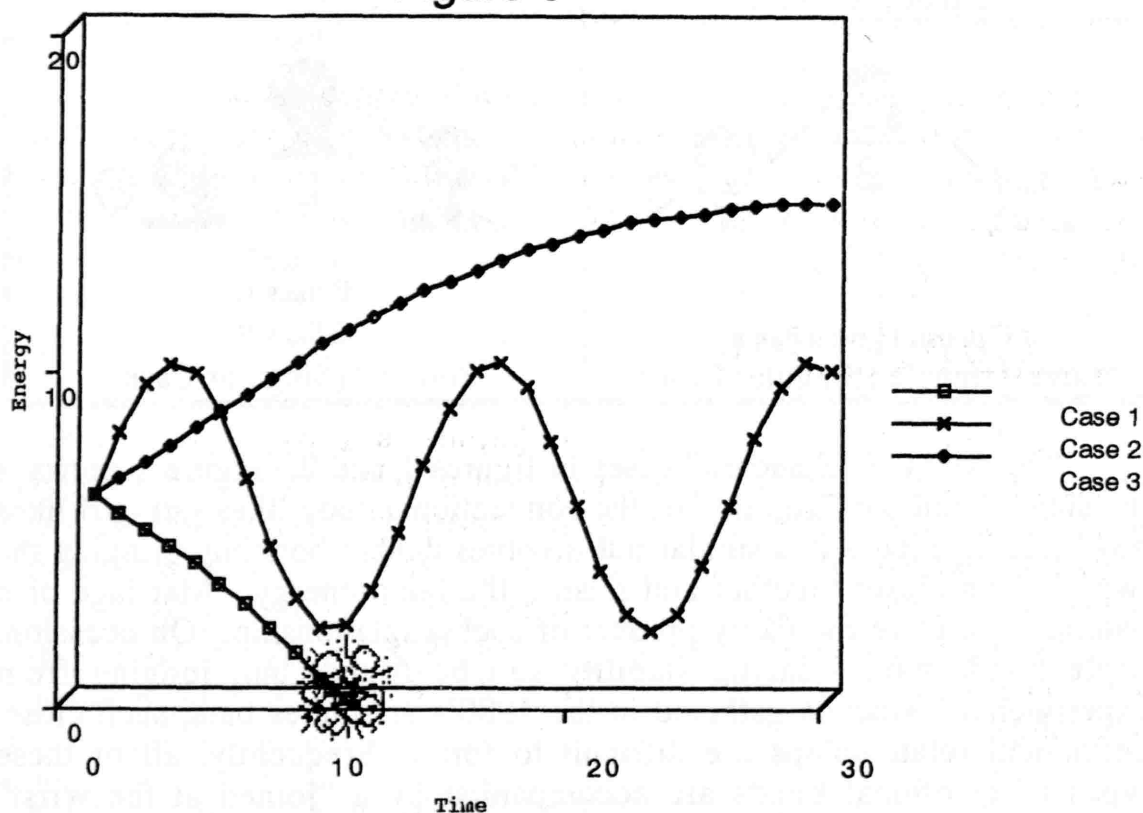
physical bond, a “joined at the lips” bond, or, in the degenerate case, a “joined at the hips” bond.

Figures 3 and 4 represent the singular cases where Newton’s Third Law does not hold. In such cases, there is no equal and opposite reaction for a given attractive force. The results of the singular cases are sad and unfortunate, but one must remember that the situations arise from a cold and uncaring universe.

IV. Energy and Oscillation Theory

As with any physical system, human relations are subject to turbulence and oscillation. Each bond has a certain energy in it; the course of the relationship is a function of the bond energy and the momentum and energy⁶ of the individuals involved. Figure 5 below shows three typical paths that relationships may follow. Higher numbers indicate stronger bonds and a closer relationship.

Figure 5



In Case 1 ($R(t) = -at^{3/2} + k$), we observe the all too common “crash

⁶Individual energies may be measured at the ground or sexually excited state.

and burn” scenario. This occurs when either the bond energy is too low to keep two highly energetic individuals together or in the singular cases above where the bond is unidirectional, i.e. the attraction is not mutual.

Case 2 ($R(t) = a \sin(\omega t + \phi) + k$) shows another common form of oscillation, rebounding from high to low. Like a drug trip, this case is characterized by extreme rapid mood changes, confusion, and mental distress. In some instances, the trajectory may dip too low, resulting in an extremely painful reoccurrence of Case 1. Under more fortunate circumstances, a positive force may raise the highs while smoothing out the lows, leading to a generally successful relationship.

Finally, Case 3 ($R(t) = a(1 - e^{-t}) + k$) portrays the most desirable situation: positive growth until the relationship reaches a terminal velocity. A damping force from familiarity and human limitations prevents infinite growth, but the relationship approaches a horizontal asymptote at a comfortable high location. Sometimes the relationship can remain at this level indefinitely; other times, boredom or an external force can destroy the stability and induce Case 1 behavior.

These three cases all assume a common boundary condition, namely that the relationship already existed and had a positive magnitude. Supplying the initial energy to the system is a difficult task to accurately model mathematically, just as the true cause of “impulse” forces is a complex part of physics.

V. Conclusion

The Ennis Theory of Human Relations is a powerful tool for analyzing the underlying causes and behavior of relationships. The Ennis Theory is also useful for predicting the course of a relationship given information about bond types and individual energies. As with Newtonian mechanics, everything flows from the fundamental forces. These forces, especially the two recently discovered ones, love and sexual attraction, build bonds between individuals. These bonds are the essence of all relationships.

The Ennis Theory is also a general theory, i.e. it can predict other phenomenon beyond the original goal. For example, just as you can examine electric potentials over space to calculate the electric field, you can examine the bond energies between two individuals to calculate the

emotional field. This explains the uncanny ability of two lovers to always locate each other: they simply measure the field and move toward the region of greatest potential. Furthermore, given the Ennis Theory, several leaps of logic, and a great deal of hand waving, it is intuitively obvious that the Meaning of Life, the Universe, and Everything is precisely 42. Proof is left to the reader.

I believe that the Ennis Theory of Human Relations will revolutionize man's understanding of relationships. As the developments of agriculture, industry, communications, and computers changed the course of History⁷, so too will this new theory shape the future of human thought and growth as we enter the twenty-first century.

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⁷21.354: History. Prerequisites: None. 3-0-9 HASS-D credit.

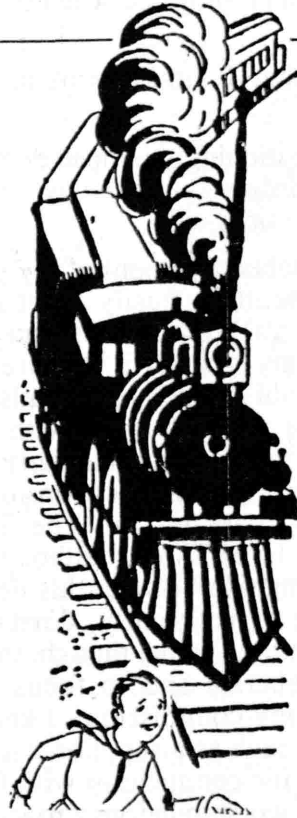
The Third Rail, Fortissimo

by David Jordan

Classical music sucks, and my head droops wearily at the thought of the fay, prancing snobs who delight in parading their musical sophistication in public. I address this humble missive instead to Those Who Rock, the hardy souls who crank the volume until rivulets of blood flow gently from their ears: the headphone slaves, the children of the decibel. If you count yourself a member of this ragged group, then I invite you to pour yourself a cool, refreshing beverage, put your feet up on someone you love, and consider this story — yes, ponder it in your heart. I would be honored, Gentle Reader, to tell you about the time I turned the volume up all the way, so to speak, and about the effects my adventure had upon me.

I had spent an enjoyable day with a group of close friends, chit-chatting about mindless little nothings and reveling in delicious tidbits of gossip about other close friends. Oh, we had our minor disagreements and we struggled with our petty tensions — what group of committed, close friends doesn't? — and I must admit that my feelings were somewhat hurt when Bunny and Muffy turned to me in a quiet moment and said in unison, "Dave, you are an abomination on the face of the land." But on the whole, a warm, syrupy miasma of good cheer and comradery had suffused this particular day. I felt bathed in a golden shower of friendship.

Well, it so happened that in the course of our playful wanderings, we came to the Kendall Square subway station. I felt unusually sprightly and whimsical at the time, so I embarked on an amusing little aside concerning the sign that hangs on the wall at the edge of the platform: "No trespassing." I naturally associate such a sign with a fenced-off spread of lush, heavily forested hunting



territory, and so the juxtaposition of the sign and the dank recesses of the subway tracks perpetually strikes me as jarring and comical. (Darned if that isn't how my mind works.) My remark to this effect drew an appreciative chuckle from my companions. In response, Bunny turned to me and, with a twinkle in her eyes and a mischievous lilt in her voice, suggested that I "go cuddle with the third rail."

You must understand something about me, Gentle Reader. I don't like to disappoint my friends. If some thoughtful act of kindness or support suggest itself, I jump right in and go for it. I never make promises I can't keep, and my word on a matter of import is as good as gold. Just press your ear to the grapevine and you'll hear a chorus of industry insiders heartily agreeing that Dave Jordan's word is inviolate. Further, and more germane to this

narrative, if I feel that a jolly demonstration of good cheer with brighten someone's day, I will push back the limits — of convenience, of legality, even of good taste — to bring such a demonstration to pass. I would rather lick my friends' boots clean, until holes wear through my tongue, than disappoint them. Verily, my closest friends recognize as axiomatic the fact that I would rather be sealed in a pit of my own filth than fail a close friend when the chips are down.

You can bet I didn't want to let down Bunny.

So I unquestioningly jumped down into the recess containing the subway tracks and approached the third rail.

Some detached fragment of my perception noted vermin scuttling busily about at the dark fringes of the track pit, and I formed a vague appendix to my standard "No trespassing" joke: Perhaps this wilderness of rails truly was a fertile game preserve, rich with bountiful hunting opportunities for the wily poacher. Another part of my mind felt a kinship with the Robert Shaw character in "The Taking of Pelham One, Two, Three," although I could certainly distinguish between his desperation and my sense of willy-nilly, devil-may-care good fun. The time came, though, to clear my mind of peripherals and to focus upon the fulfillment of my commission. I knelt before the third rail, much as a supplicant in a Shinto shrine, pining for communion with fragrance, might kneel in worship before a row of orchids heavy with blossom. I glanced back at my close friends, and I was pleased to note that my capricious exploit was indeed entertaining them: Eager anticipation painted their faces, and across Bunny's features in particular a look of depraved exultation cavorted nakedly. I luxuriated in a deep breath of the sepulchral air issuing from the subway's maw, trilled my tongue expectantly across my lips, and bent my head down to the third rail.

Then, with a passionate kiss to wed flesh and metal, I sealed my covenant with current.

And I *rocked*.

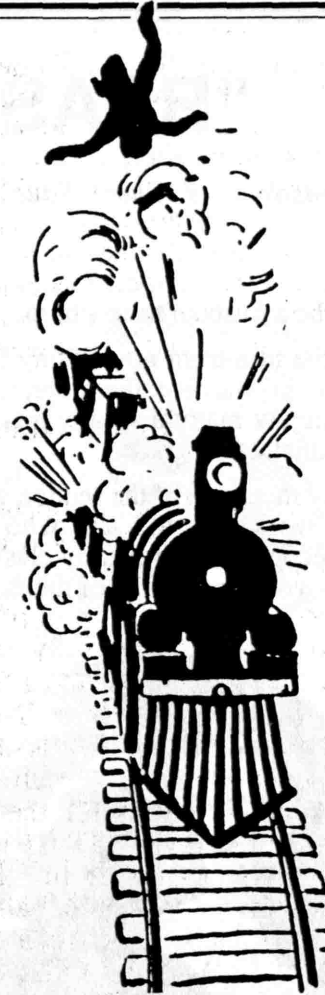
You will find recorded in a number of scholarly journals — should you be inspired to pursue the matter — the medical community's surprise, bewilderment, and even outrage at my survival and eventual recovery. (See, for

example, Dr. Allen "Ted" Blofeld's exhaustive review article, "Neural Blitzkrieg: The Bizarre Electrocution Case of D. Jordan," in the Spring, 1987 issue of the *AMA Quarterly*.) If you are among the electrical engineers and technicians employed by the MBTA, you have no doubt heard my exploit referred to (with appropriate awe) as the "French inhibit," a phrase of obscure etymology that nevertheless seems to capture the spirit of my manouever. And perhaps you caught the poignant human-interest piece that the hip kids at "West 57th" did on me (most of my family members have VCRs, so they time-shifted this piece for more convenient viewing at a later time). Although the medical and popular accounts adequately describe the revolting, unspeakable changes wrought in my physiognomy, they are a little bald on psychological insights. So grab a hammer, Gentle Reader, and let's bust open my head for a nice, close look at my mind and character in the aftermath of the Third Rail.

For starters, I now perform arithmetic in base ten. Granted, I counted in base ten before my little tête-à-tête with destiny, but now base ten really feels comfortable to me — like a friendly pair of well-worn boots. Multiplication (using the traditional grammar school algorithms) is a snap for me now, although long division is a fretful and worrisome chore, as always. More startling than this crystallization of my computational skills is a fundamental rift in my cognitive and perceptual abilities. My understanding of, and reactions to, the material world have changed radically: I am, for example, bewildered by burlap, and I often find myself growing unaccountably edgy at the thought of the tarpaulin used to cover baseball diamonds and tennis courts during rainstorms. And here's a wryly amusing study in contrasts for you: Although I dream about the four-color problem in Technicolor, I can no longer seem to keep straight how one works simple household objects like teaspoons, erasers, and sweaters. Further, my cognitive peculiarities have mated with my standards of morality to produce unexpected offspring: I tend to perceive liquids as innately "good," whereas grout, gels, and most industrial epoxies fill me with ineffable loathing and dread. Furniture polishing agents and wood stains remain morally neutral, as before.

The most noticeable change in my character

is an unnerving instability in my demeanor. I tend to oscillate between two moods: one of unreasonable, giddy cheerfulness (in which I perpetually giggle and sputter inanities like "Been there!" and "Let's go with it!"), and one of craven, groveling self-deprecation (in which I offer, with sidelong glances and bowed head, ingratiating phrases like "My flesh and my immortal soul bask in the warmth of your presence"). Also, the jolt of Ampère's seed I absorbed from the Third Rail seems to have spawned an imp of the perverse within me. My once carefree sense of good fun has decayed into something fetid and darkly compulsive. I cannot resist pretending, for example, that my experience gave me supernatural, precognitive powers. When I'm with a close friend, I'll begin my act. My eyes will go all smoky and unfocused, I'll tremble slightly, and I'll mumble something oracular like, "Oh, your parents...I can see it all so clearly...the suffering...I'm so terribly sorry...." Although of course I can see no further beyond the veil than anyone, my remarkable survival lends this little performance a disquieting authority. The recipient of my ersatz prophecy fights and claws to avoid believing, but...I play it for all it's worth and thus the seeds of gnawing worry are sewn. This tickles me no end, thank you. Needless to say, this proclivity has made me somewhat unpopular at parties and has lost me most of my close friends. Poor, gullible Bunny swallowed my act hook, line, and sinker; someone should just blow away her folks right now and save her the agony, the delicious misery, of anticipation. Heh-heh.

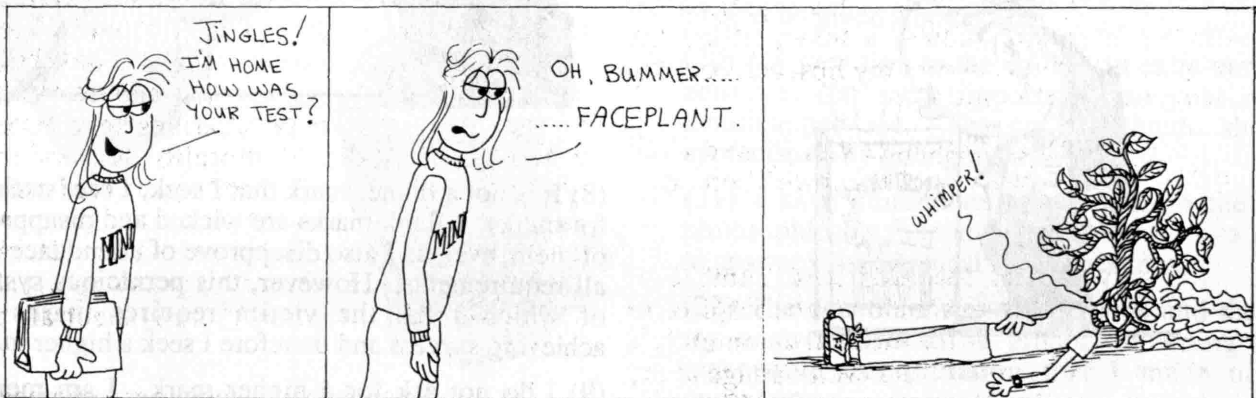


This, then, is my fable, culled from the dregs of my experience and offered timidly for your enlightenment. I wish I could leave you, Gentle Reader, with some generic, drippy moral summarizing the disjointed entrails of my story in a predigested package. But I cannot, and so I welcome you to form your own generic, drippy conclusions.



Jingles and J

by J + J Lopez



“REASONS” WHY MY MARK

Reston Stevenson *J. Chem. Educ.*, Vol. 8, No. 5, May 1931

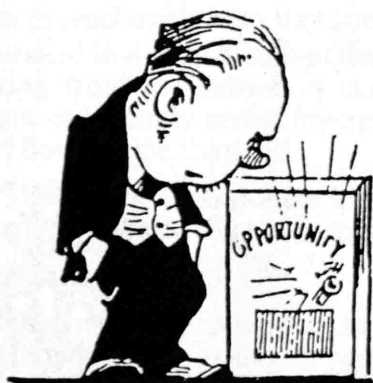
(1) There must be a mistake somewhere.

(2) Neither at the mid-term now at any time have I received any official warning; therefore, relying upon the college, I merely maintained my grade. Surely, this must be a satisfactory grade.

(3) I know many members of the section who did not do such good work as I did and who got better marks. I was recognized among my classmates as a good student — you can ask any of them.



(4) I was not well at the time of the time of the examination or else I was unwell on the evening before the examination.



(5) This mark ruined my prospects of graduating (or of entering medical school or, etc.)



(6) This mark grieves my father (or other relatives) whose pride I am.

(7) This is the only course ... where I have received a poor grade. Surely all the other instructors were not mistaken in their appraisal of my work.



(8) It is not a higher mark that I seek; I care nothing for marks. I think marks are wicked and disapprove of them, even as I also disapprove of attendance and all requirements. However, this pernicious system of which I am the victim requires marks for achieving success and therefore I seek a higher mark.

(9) I do not ask for a higher mark. I am merely discussing the matter abstractly. Therefore, I shall show you why I should be given a higher mark.

SHOULD BE RAISED

(10) I am not asking for a higher mark, but I ask that it be proved to my satisfaction that I did not deserve a higher mark. I offer to cooperate with the instructor in a reconsideration of my paper.

(11) Several [students] around me in the examination copied from my paper, yet I know that they received a higher mark than I did. Surely this is not fair?

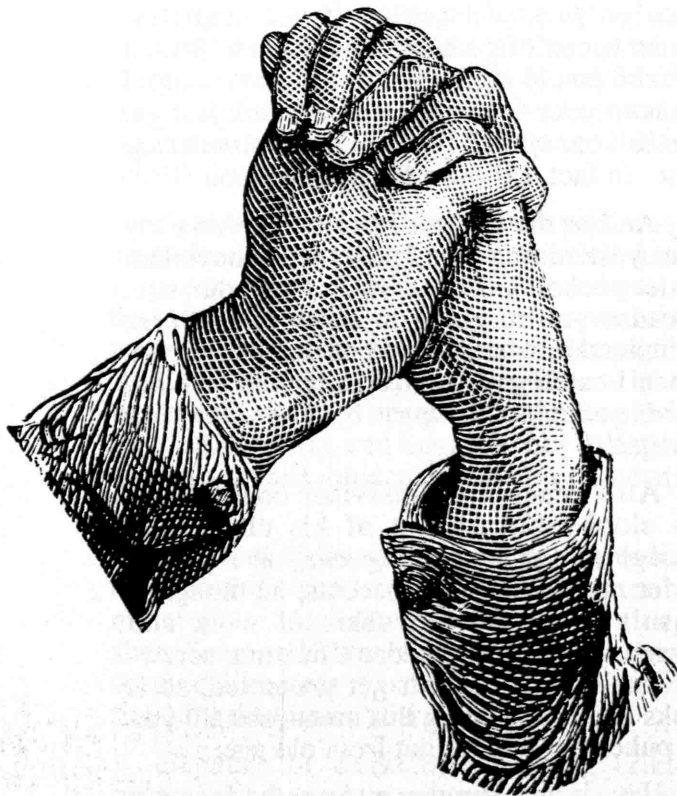
(12) The reason I did not do better is because I am very honest whereas I do not wish to say anything against many of the other members of the class.

(13) The examination was unfair and unfairly distributed over the subject.

(14) The instructor was unfair.

(15) The system of grading is unfair.

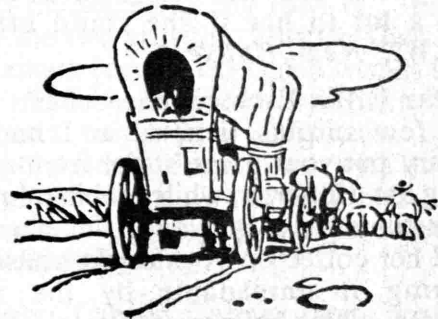
(16) Some questions in the examination were graded too high (or too low) and should have been omitted or replaced or made optional.



(17) Can't you do something for me? If you were in my situation, would you not desire a higher mark?



(18) I am a poor [student] who has to work for a living and therefore I was late or absent or had not the opportunity to study. Therefore, I should not be marked like the others but should be given a special bonus.



(19) I live far away from the college and therefore should be given a bonus.

(20) My devotion to the college in extra-curricular activities (far more important than your course) handicapped me. The college should show its appreciation by giving me a bonus.

(21) I have studied this subject from the broad philosophical standpoint and therefore I was unable to answer your technical catch-questions.

(22) The questions were ambiguous and therefore my answers should be graded according to the reasonable interpretation that I made of your questions.

(23) I am a conscientious objector to examinations.

The MIT Ombudsman

by Chris Coon



The MIT Ombudsman is a service provided by the MIT administration to answer questions related to MIT, and to help students cut through red tape and otherwise deal with a sometimes-frustrating MIT bureaucracy.

Dear Ombudsman: I will be graduating this June, and would like to know where I might find an extra commencement ticket for my grandmother, who is terminally ill and would like more than anything to see me graduate before she passes on. Is there a clearinghouse of some sort where I can find students who have extra tickets? It would really mean a lot to her if she could attend! — E.W., *New House*

Dear E.W.: Each commencement there are a few surplus tickets, so I had my secretary put your name at the front of the waiting list. However, while looking through your Institute file to get your ID number, she spilled her coffee on your credit transcript, rendering it unreadable by the main computer, which registered a total of zero credits for you. You have thus been expelled permanently for failing to make adequate academic progress.

Dear Ombudsman: I'm trying to get summer funding for my UROP, and I filled out the form and had it signed and everything, but the UROP office says they have no record of it. Can you help me find out what happened? I may have taken it to the wrong office. — K.S., *Burton*

Dear K.S.: Well the good news is you took it to the right office, and made the deadline, but the bad news is you turned in the pink copy, and not the yellow copy, so it

got no further than the receptionist, who told me she remembers tearing it up after you left. Also, as is routine in these matters, the MIT Properties Office did a quick inventory of your UROP lab, and couldn't find an x-ray diffractor tube that was installed in 1971, and even though the professor swears it was replaced over a decade ago, we can only assume you broke or stole it, so we are charging its cost (\$47,853) to your account, payable immediately.

To My Readers: Apparently some of you still seem to think I *give a shit* about your petty-ass problems — "the library charged me for books I returned" *then go fuck yourself*, "I can't get a parking sticker" *then go fuck yourself*, "two of my finals conflict" *then go fuck yourself!!!* If you smart-ass students can't figure out what form to fill out or who has to sign what to add some stupid class to your schedule, *well you can just get the hell out of MIT then, no one's gonna stop you*. In fact, I'll open the door for you.

And to the student I caught slashing my tires yesterday: you might as well shove that little pocket knife of yours up your ass, because you're going to think that *tickles* compared to what I'll have the CPs do to you when I catch you — *I've got power around here, goddamn it, don't try that shit with me!!!!!!!*

Also, since my supervisor couldn't lift his slobby fat ass out of his chair long enough to see me slaving away at my desk under my buzzing fluorescents, he thought I wasn't doing my fair share of work and passed word up the ladder I'm some screw-off loafer, and I didn't get promoted, so it looks like I'll be doing this ombudshit till you all puke your bowels out from old age.

Have a nice summer and get the fuck out of my office.



Motherfucker Sexist Pig

by Nestor Agbayani

Bukowski! The spring term and junior year were nearly over. Party season was in full swing. Two old friends of mine from freshman year — Janet Duncan and her sidekick Tamara Smith — had invited me to their end-of-term bash. And I certainly needed a party to lift my spirits, because two weeks earlier I had been brutally dumped by my freshman girlfriend. It was just as well, for that event and that negative mind-set were fodder for my true calling. I had discovered this "calling" at the end of freshman year. I was walking to class — yes, minding my own business — when a young woman, a total stranger to me, approached me, and for no apparent reason, she accosted me: "Motherfucker Sexist Pig!" She seemed overwrought; indeed, she was part of the impassioned feminist rally around which I was walking. I had done nothing, absolutely nothing, but asked her "How many gears are there in your menstrual cycle, Honey?" She was riled for nothing; she must've been on the rag, or something. Besides, how could I be sexist? I wasn't in a frat.

Actually, "motherfucker sexist pig" was an upgrade. Prior to that I was only a Self-hating Jingoistic Bigot. While others pumped gas, cut hair, studied math, or became werewolves, I was a teenage "motherfucker sexist pig." I wouldn't be sexist, I thought, if I knew how it felt to be a victim of sexism: if only I could find a girl at the party and convince her to degrade and to sexually objectify me in a demeaning fashion.

The cool night air felt good as I meandered through the streets of south Berkeley on my motorcycle. As I drove to the party I thought about Janet and Tamara and how freshman year seemed like only yesterday. Now we were finishing our junior year.

Because of Berkeley's housing crunch, many freshmen were assigned to off-campus

dorms. We were put into dorms at Holy Trinity College, a small Catholic college in the Oakland Hills.

Both Janet and Tamara were big-boned and overweight. My God, they were huge. For that reason they were very close, birds of a feather, you know. For that same reason their fellow Berkeley students ostracized them. The girls were outcasts. But I didn't shun them. In

*How could I be sexist?
I wasn't in a frat!*

fact, I was a hermit, locked up in my dorm room (a single room, no roommate) trying to master the secrets of my IBM-PC. Everyone called the two girls the "Buffalo Gals." Janet and Tamara became very good friends with the Holy Trinity students, especially the foreigners, particularly the Asians. Berkeley students seldom fraternized with the Holy Trinity students. It was an elitist bullshit thing. I was so elitist I talked to no-one, not even my fellow Berkeleyans.

Holy Trinity College was a stagnant institution run by aging nuns with PhDs, The Order of the Holy Trinity, a sort of Catholic educational battalion. Much of that college's income seemed to be from a very active international exchange program in which wealthy, greasy, evil foreigners from Europe, Asia, and the Middle East would come to America to learn to speak English and rape some American girls.

Poor Janet and Tamara, I used to think, to have to find haven and acceptance in the society and impolite company of non-English speakers. I was a freak too. I hated people, everyone. My only companions being my computer and, of course, Janet and Tamara. I

considered them my fellow freaks. But I would never poke a fat girl. I had to preserve what little self-respect I had, and no matter how desperate I was, Christ, I had to live with myself. But don't get me wrong, Janet and Tamara were great gals, contemporary Western aesthetic value judgments aside.

Susan definitely had more chins than a Chinese phone book.

I knew their party would be loaded with freaks from Holy Trinity, especially gooks. Janet and Tamara had a thing for gook guys, like me. But, I thought, there has to be a few token Berkeley gals (hopefully impressionable, insecure, young, hot, stupid, rutting freshmen) that I could scam on with my Lovable Asian Rogue persona. Of course, as a freak and a loser, union rules strictly prohibited me from interacting with normal people. Perhaps I could find a nice dwarf or someone deformed, I thought, trying to be optimistic.

I got to the apartment building, parked, and went through the mental pre-party, skirt-patrol checklist: breath mints, check; hair in place, check; Woody Allen jokes, check; cock, check; balls, check; self-hate, check. Yes, the Lovable Asian Rogue was ready for action. As I walked towards the maze of apartments, my thoughts were clouded with notions of Truth, Beauty, Justice, and how beating off is a real drag.

I walked down the wrong corridor between buildings and had to crawl through Janet's kitchen window. As I climbed through I heard Janet's voice, "Look! It's Alex! Phallic Alex!"

"Hi, Janet!"

"Everybody... this is Alex Acasio."

I looked around, shook hands with a few people, gooks like me mostly, put my helmet down near the sink, grabbed an imported beer, opened it, took a hit, and saw Tamara come up.

"Hi, Tamara, how are you?"

"Fine. Just help yourself to the beer. We've got more in the bathtub, and we've got white wine in the fridge."

"Thanks."

Standing behind Tamara was another girl even more massive than Janet. Then Tamara spoke up.

"Alex, this is Susan. Susan, Alex."

"Nice to meet you, Susan. Are you Berkeley or Trinity?"

"Berkeley."

"Really? What major?" I asked as has always been asked at every God-damned college party, ever.

"English."

"Great," I said, "I'm in structural engineering myself, but I read a book once."

Susan laughed. She liked that. Big girls are so pleasant and easy to talk to. Christ, she was enormous. Every Fat Girl joke in National Lampoon came back to me. Susan definitely had more chins than a Chinese phonebook. She may have had "Greyhound" written on her.

Susan sported that sickly white pallor that I so much like in women. Red hair. Freckles. And thick, thick glasses with equally thick, thick tortoiseshell frames, like a true pseudo-intellectual English major from Hell. I wondered how she wiped herself, how she looked while shitting, how she looked getting bopped, if ever. Must she be rolled in flour? And if so, would there be a wet spot, as the common folklore suggests? Not even my own acute imagination could muster the strength to generate, much less envision, that kind of imagery.

Susan towered at 6'-0" tall to my 5'-7". In high school I had known a Filipino girl named Susan. But this Susan and that Susan were nothing alike. Life was so full of mystery and wonder. There must be a God, I thought.

Just then I caught a glimpse of a normal-weight female, Caucasian, the way I like 'em, in her late teens, approximately 5'-2", wearing a white blouse and a white skirt. The skirt was not tight enough to reveal her true American worth. There were no visible panty lines. That

was a strike against her, but maybe she could cook and do laundry, I thought, in the time-honored tradition of Alice on "The Brady Bunch." She was in the hallway near the room where people were dancing. I was about to excuse myself, but Tamara spoke up.

"Susan can really tell good jokes."

"Really, Susan? Let me guess: Leper jokes, sodomy, or what?"

"Of course not!" she said and she proceeded to tell us a joke about Ronald Reagan.

They both chuckled. We three chuckled, and somewhere cousins kissed and peaches remained canned.

I took a hit of beer. Another hit. And another hit and a final gulp. And opened another beer.

"Want a beer, Susan?" I asked my massive friend.

"Sure."

"I've got a joke," I said. "A guy goes to his psychiatrist and says, 'Doc, you gotta help me. I'm in love with a horse!' The psychiatrist is taken totally off guard, doesn't

really know what to say, but for want of anything else to say, he asks, 'Well, is it a male horse or a female horse?' With that, the patient angrily grabs the psychiatrist by the neck and screams, 'OF COURSE IT'S A FEMALE HORSE! WHAT DO YOU THINK I AM, SOME KIND OF QUEER?'"

I wanted to find the other girl, the thin one, my elusive Pixie in White. I drew upon the forces of evil and three years of problem solving skills. Given that I wanted to go to the other room, but I didn't want to be rude, what was I do to? I knew what to do.

"You aren't a lesbian are you, Susan?"

"Well, no, of course not."

"Well, shit," I said, "let's dance."

"All right," she answered with savage glee. I figured that like Janet and Tamara, Susan had a thing for gooks too. Gooks like me.

On the dance floor, she towered over me with her six feet of daily-nutrient-allowance-exceeding, white flesh. The tunes were off cassettes. "Blue Monday" by New Order was on. Susan bounced like a sack full of cats heading for the river. The Pixie in White was



dancing too. I wanted her more than a Palestinian homeland.

I wished I had whiskey. Some Crown Royal straight up. But I didn't. The beer would have to suffice. I should have had some Crown Royal, but I didn't. For this reason I was briefly overcome by a sense of keen disappointment followed by self-loathing and an intense realization that everyone in that room would shit sometime in their lives. The song ended, I left Susan, and went back to the other room for more beer and some potato chips. The Pixie in White soon after entered the room.

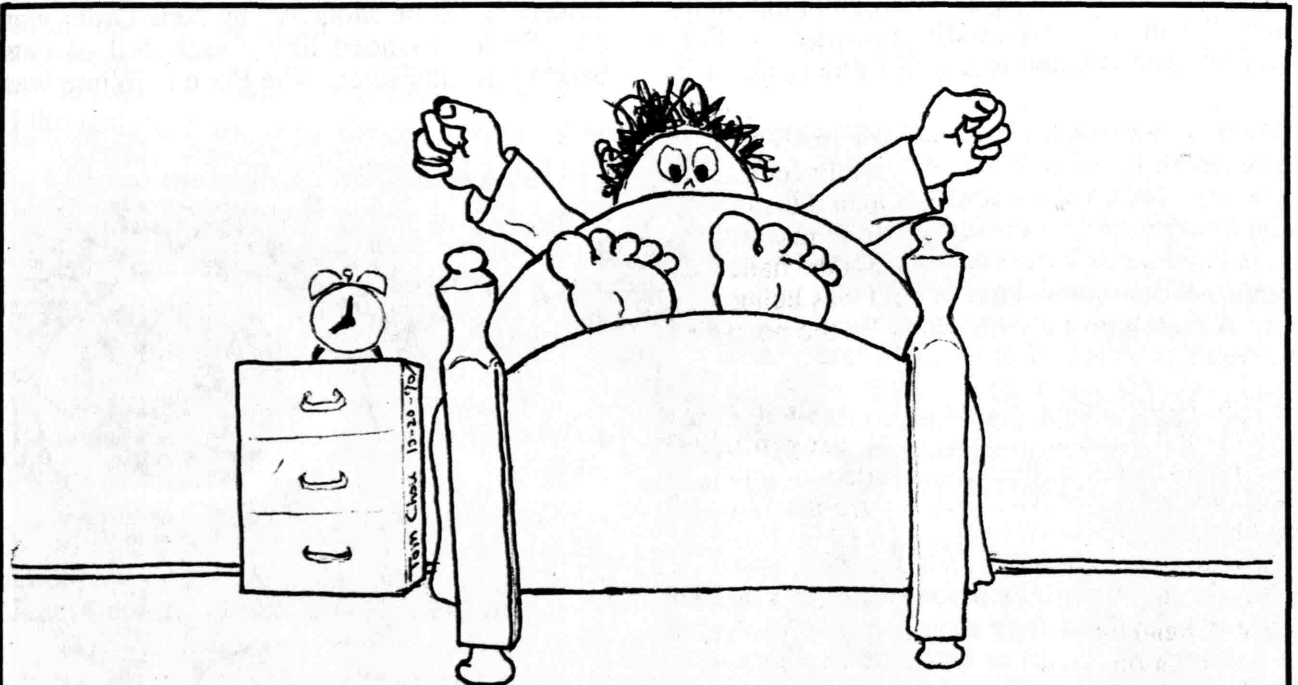
She was the only girl at the party who wasn't over 185 pounds. She was thin. Nice ass. Funny glasses. Her blouse was white and her skirt was white, just as they had been minutes earlier. I wanted to soil her clothing for her.

She should have had flowers in her hair, jasmine and buttercups, a wicker picnic basket with, you know, one of those red and white checkered picnic blankets, good sandwiches,

grapes, Brie, and cheap red wine. She should have had all of that, but she didn't.

And we should have been in a meadow or pasture (sans cow shit) in the dead of spring amid fertile green grasses and pretty, delicate wildflowers under blue skies with some cumulus clouds (so we might look up at those clouds and see patterns and shapes and say things like, "Look, that one looks like a horse's head" or "That one looks like a dick"). Anyway, we should have been there, but we weren't. Instead, we were at Janet Duncan's party surrounded by my greasy, evil Asian brethren, internationally imported riffraff from a local Catholic college. I stared at her across a sea of wicked, greasy faces and slanty eyes and evil mouths — mouths from which occasionally their very non-English speaking tongues would emerge, followed by sounds.

I took a good hit off my bottle of imported witch piss and imagined my Pixie in White playfully giving me a hand job on that red and white checkered picnic blanket. And how only



... and then one day he discovered that he really did have two left feet.

that come which landed on the red squares might be visible. I stared, took another hit of beer, wanted to fart, but didn't.

If I were a real mean I'd sidle up to her, ask her what her sign is, and tell her that I'd give her a quarter to repeatedly beat me about the face and neck. She'd move in with me, spend my money, call me a monkey, and charge me money to cop feels of her ass. But that's only if I was lucky.

If I wanted to talk to her, I would have to stay right where I was, strategically standing

*I wanted her more
than a Palestinian
homeland.*

by the potato chip bowl — where she would eventually have to come for potato chips. And if she doesn't eat potato chips, well, who would fuck a woman like that? I felt like a predator by a water hole waiting for small prey to come drink. Yes, I was definitely feeling like a large mammal — large compared to, say, a dog or a lemur, like on PBS. While research was being done at universities across the nation to improve our national defenses, I was being a man. A man burning with desire by the potato chip bowl.

The little party raged and, unseen, I transformed myself into a male urogenital system: a cock and balls. Independently intelligent active organs with a purpose. Just like Shopenhauer would have wanted it. From mere genitals, I sprouted legs and feet, and a body. From the upper body sprouted some arms and head and from the head a face, just as my previous one had been. At the end of the transformation I looked the same as ever. Little did anyone suspect....

And then She, my dearest prey, came for chips, and I prayed that Certs encounters really do happen. My mind reeled at the possibilities now that she was within my sphere of influence. Perhaps she would drop something — perhaps a handkerchief, or a potato chip, or

her Kotex — and like in the old movies, just as she would kneel down to pick it up, so would I. She would stop in mid-reach and I would say something suave and debonair like, "Allow me." Our eyes would meet. Something would click. Click? Her Jarvik 7 Heart? No, you idiot, LOVE. And if not that, at least some indication that she would engage in heavy petting, maybe a blow job.

As luck would have it, she dropped nothing. I had to act! With three years of engineering education, I should have been able to think of something, anything, to say. I did.

"So, is that some kind of traditional foreign dress you're wearing or are you just trendy?"

"Oh, I...like A-mer-i-ka."

A God-damned foreigner I thought. All that effort wasted. She must have sensed my disappointment because then she said, "Just kidding. I suppose I'm just trendy."

"You had me fooled for a second," I confessed.

"Yeah?"

"Yeah. That was funny," I replied overcome with relief that my target was an English speaker.

Then she said, "Well, you look trendy."

"Are you a friend of Janet's or a friend of a friend or what? Do you go to Berkeley or Holy Trinity?" I asked.

"Trinity."

"And you?"

"Stanford."

"Great!"

Christ, I was being the scam-king. The Lovable Asian Rogue was surfacing, obscuring my true nature as a Despicable Asian Toad.

Her face was white. It was peeking out from beneath her artificially black bangs. Her neck was as white as milk. Up close I could tell she had some knockers under her blouse.

And I wondered.... Would there come a time when I would love her more than anything else in this world? Was I destined to wax poetic at every thought of her, every glimpse of her? Would I one day look up from my

engineer's desk and feel compelled to write poetry about her? Worse: would I write prose? And if so, which would rhyme — the poetry or the prose? Perhaps I would be a mild-mannered structural engineer by day. At night I would become the Establishment's version of Charles Bukowski. A real renaissance man.

I imagined that when it was our anniversary I could make her breakfast in bed: toast, a hard-boiled egg, two strips of bacon, juice, and half a grapefruit. And beneath her napkin would be a cleverly concealed Hallmark card. Then while I would be at work, she'd bang the gardener.

Would I write poetry about her? Worse — would I write prose?

And what if I do fall in love with her, and she dumps me, I dared to think. She would hurt me just as Cynthia had. No! no one could be worse than Cynthia (who, if you recall I mentioned earlier, was my freshman girlfriend who had dumped me three weeks prior to the party).

Cynthia Vallens was beautiful. I'd do anything for a fine girl, and I suffered for it. I had been a slave to her physical attributes: reddish brown hair, big eyes, a pretty face, great ass, nice legs, and white unblemished skin conspicuously all over her body. She was 5'7" just like me. She was from L.A. Orange County. She played guitar better than me, and

in high school she had been in a band called "Cavity Search." She played a Fender Telecaster; I played a Gibson Les Paul. She had been valedictorian of her graduating class; so had I. I was in civil engineering; she was in mechanical. Vodka got her off. Me — whiskey. She was a freshman, and I liked 'em young. She said tomato, and I said it the same way. We were meant for each other, so I thought.

I knew she was too beautiful for me, non-Western looking me. I was just a gook, but my friends and roommate envied me because of her. But every guy gets lucky now and then. I think she began liking me because once before we dating, she was hungry, so I bought her a taco. And then later that week we went to the Omni to see Chris Isaak play.

Our first couple of weeks together was bliss: a total lack of Hell on earth. On Valentine's Day, I picked her up at her dorm (Dern Hall, the women's dorm) and before going to dinner, I gave her candy and flowers, really, and I wrote her a limerick:

*There once was a lady from Dern
For whom my heart did yearn,
So with candy and flowers
And a few well spent hours,
Her favor I labored to earn.*

I'd have eaten my own shit for her. Then it all started going sour, and I couldn't stop it despite my years of rigorous training in the College of Engineering. It was like sand through my fingers. She went ape-shit.

One day she was trying to tech me a complicated chord progression to a song by X. When I couldn't quite get it, she swung her Telecaster at me, hit my head, and made me

Untitled

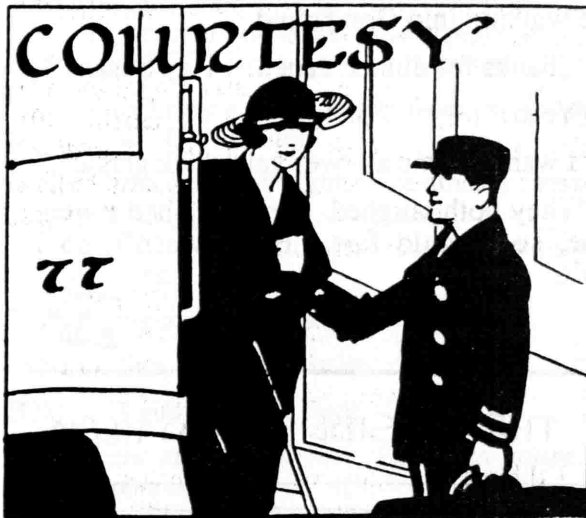
by Jim Bredt



bleed. "Anybody who plays a Gibson is a God-damned faggot!" she yelled.

Another time I left my Beatles' Songbook in her dorm room. When I got it back, she had written over some of the lyrics, stuff like "Alex is a bastard/fucken fucken asshole/ cocksucker/Alex shit shit shit..." I was so attached to her that I just laughed off all these incidents.

In bed she started to hit me a lot. Slap me. Elbow me in the stomach. She'd call me "Jane" and make me give her rim jobs, and if I refused, she'd just say, "Well, go home and jack off then!" and then she wouldn't let me



fuck her. Christ, I didn't want to lose her. I rationalized it all. LOVE is give and take and personal sacrifice, I would tell myself, when in reality, LOVE actually entailed holding my breath, licking, and hoping and praying to a benevolent God that she had wiped thoroughly and conscientiously after her last bowel movement. Put that on a God-damned Hallmark card.

Looney-Spheres



One night I brought over a 750 ml bottle of Stolichnaya. Stoli, the good stuff. Vodka junkie that she was, Cynthia said, "For a poor fuck, you sure have expensive taste, Alex." We drank it all, vomited and dry heaved together all night long. She hit me over the head with the bottle while I slept. The bottle didn't shatter (those are thick bottles) but it cut me and I bled all over her pillow. The wound required stitches. I told the doctor that a cola bottle fell off of a shelf above my bed. Cynthia just laughed and called me a "bloody little come slug."

Then a week before she finally dumped me she sent me a box with a big, brown stinky turd in it. It was too big to be cat shit. I might have been dog shit, but Cynthia hated dogs. I think it was her own shit.

I still wonder, today, if I'll ever love another woman as much as I loved Cynthia Vallens.

Incidentally, Cynthia had an older brother, Ted, who worked as a clerk at the Berkeley K-Mart. He was a nice enough guy, and very docile, but he had had learning disabilities as a child. And a mean stutter, truly a speech impediment from Hell. I had met him briefly; he shook my hand for two minutes while he said, "NN-N-N-NN-NNice to mm-mmm-m-mmm-mm-meet you." After seven years at the K-Mark he accidentally put the wrong price tags on some shampoo bottles. His manager was infuriated. With all the other employees looking on, poor Ted was forced to eat a bowl of his own feces, and then he was executed. Poor bastard.

Despite the memory of Ted's tragic demise, I was happy, dumb and happy, because I was talking to my Pixie in White.

by Jim Bredt

"My name is Alex, by the way. Alex Acasio. What's your name?"

"Sheila. Sheila Van Elsen."

"What's your major, Sheila?"

"English. How about you?"

"Engineering. But I once read a book."

She giggled. We hit it off. We talked for a long time. She kept getting more drunk on a cheap Chablis and I was shit-faced on beer. She laughed at all my Woody Allen shit. We talked about everything, school related topics mainly: financial aid, classes, etc. She was totally impressed by the scholarships I had gotten — the real ones and the ones I had just then invented. I even lied about my SAT scores. Christ, I told her I got a 1580. If I had gotten a score like that, I probably would have been at a party at Stanford. Somewhere, a boiling crawdad was becoming very bright red.

* * *

Three weeks later I went to dinner with Janet and Susan.

"When Susan found out I was going to eat with you, she wanted to come along," said Janet to me candidly.

We had Korean food in Oakland. The gals paid. They drove. I had broken a date (what would have been my third date) with Sheila for this. I told Sheila I was going whiskey drinking with my engineering pals.

On the way home I was sitting in the back seat, enjoying the drive through downtown Oakland. I saw Cynthia holding hands with a big black dude carrying her suitcase. They were walking into Greyhound.

"Thanks for dinner, Janet.... Hey Susan?"

"Yeah?"

"I wanna come all over your thick glasses."

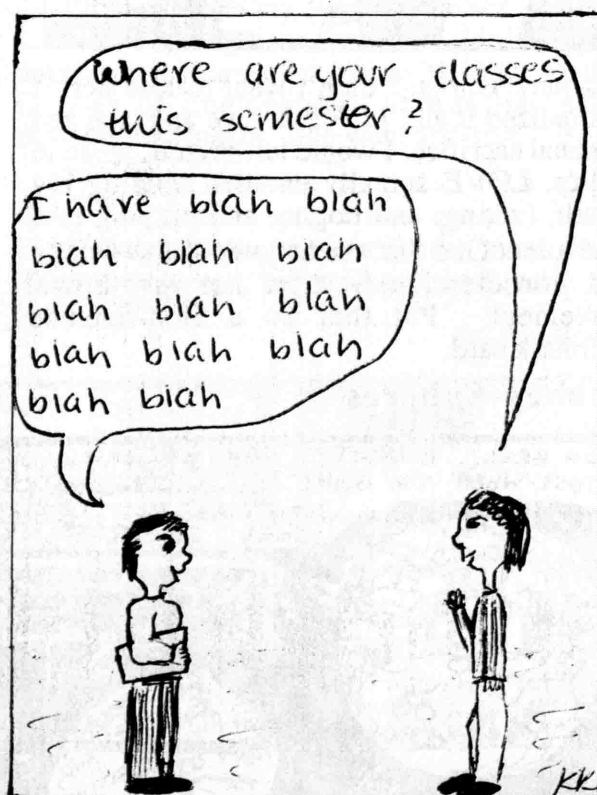
"They both laughed. And I wished I were alone, so I could fart. But I wasn't, so I didn't."



WHAT MIT PEOPLE SAY

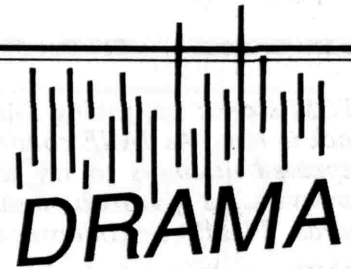


WHAT THE OUTSIDE WORLD HEARS



STUDENT CENTER

by Christopher Coon



(The entire play takes place during the time it takes the Student center elevator to go from the fifth floor to the first floor.)

(Curtain opens. First floor of the Student Center. The Student Center elevator is center stage, next to which are the up/down buttons, and above which is the floor indicator sign. The "5" is brightly lit.)

(JANE approaches the elevator from R. She is carrying several textbooks and a notebook. She presses the "UP" button, which illuminates.)

(After a long pause, TOM enters from L. He reaches to press the "UP" button.)

JANE: No, that's all right. I've already pressed it.

TOM: Oh, you have?

JANE: Yes.

(TOM's finger remains extended, unsure)

JANE: See, the button is lit.

TOM: I guess you're right.

(They stare at the elevator. Extended pause. The light remains on "5.")

TOM: Boy, this elevator sure is slow, isn't it?

JANE: *(laughing)* It sure is!

(TOM laughs too. Another extended pause.)

TOM: *(extending hand)* My name's Tom.

(JANE does not respond. Another pause.)

TOM: So... What floor are you going to?

JANE: Fifth.

TOM: Fifth? Really? Me too!

JANE: Huh.

TOM: What are you going to do on the fifth?

JANE: *(glaring coldly)* Stuff.

(Pause.)

TOM: Oh, I get it. I ask a simple question, trying to show a little kindness, and this is what I get. If that's what you want, fine.

(The elevator moves down a floor, illuminating the "4." TOM takes a pen out of his pocket, and begins drawing a line on the ground between himself and JANE.)

JANE: What are you doing?

TOM: Since you obviously want nothing to do with me, I'm drawing a line between us. I will not cross the line onto your half, and you will not cross the line onto my half. Got it?

JANE: Fine.

(The two turn away from each other. TOM sits against the wall. JANE stands, looking through her textbooks. The elevator is still on the fourth floor. TOM begins to fall asleep.)

(Finally the elevator moves down to the third floor, illuminating the "3." JANE begins looking through her pockets for a pen. She has none. Then she sees the pen TOM used to draw the line. It is laying on the floor, on TOM's half. JANE tries to reach it from her half, but cannot.)

JANE: Tom? *(TOM wakes up.)* Um... do you think I could borrow that pen?

TOM: *(mockingly)* This pen? You want to borrow this pen?

JANE: Uh... yeah.

TOM: *(grabbing the pen)* You can't have it!

(JANE looks down, dejected.)

TOM: Besides, what would you use it for?

JANE: I wanted to start writing my thesis, that's all.

(TOM scrambles to his feet, suddenly happy.)

TOM: Really? I was just kidding when I said you couldn't have it. Here, take it. You can use it all you want!

JANE: *(grabs the pen and turns away angrily)* Thanks.

(JANE begins writing her thesis. TOM stares at her, then turns away and sits on the floor, dejected.)

(Finally, the elevator moves to the second floor, illuminating the "2.")

JANE: *(talking to herself as she writes)* ...which is supported by the empirical data...

(TOM stands up, facing JANE, who still has her back to him. As JANE continues writing, he makes repeated attempts to try to speak. Each time, however, he gives up, unable to find the right words. Finally, he collapses on the floor, sobbing.)

JANE: ...in conclusion... there! I've finished it! Here's your pen back. (She throws the pen back to TOM, who is in a fetal position, still sobbing. She doesn't seem to notice him.) I'm going to find my advisor to get it graded.

(JANE runs off R, leaving TOM alone. Slowly, TOM emerges from his fetal position. He stands, and begins to walk towards JANE's half. But when he reaches the line, he stops. He reaches out for JANE, who is unseen.)

TOM: No, no, no, no, nooooo! (He begins pounding his hands and head on the elevator doors.) It is all your damned fault! Noooooooooooooooooo...

(TOM spins around, stumbling and sobbing hysterically. Then he picks up the pen, holding it like a knife. For a moment he looks back at JANE's half as if contemplating something. But then he makes up his mind.)

(TOM stabs himself in the heart with his pen, and crumples to the floor. He is dead.)

(JANE runs in, waving her thesis in the air.)

JANE: Yippee! It's been graded! I got an A-plus! I can't believe it, Tom! And I want you to know, I...

(She abruptly stops speaking as she spots TOM laying on the floor, a pool of blood by his side. She is motionless.)

(The elevator reaches the first floor, illuminating the "1." The elevator doors open.)

(After a long pause, JANE steps toward the line, then crosses it. She kisses TOM on the forehead.)

JANE: ...I did it for you.

(JANE places her thesis on TOM's chest. Then she steps inside the elevator. She turns to face TOM again.)

JANE: Goodbye, Tom.

(The elevator doors close.)

CURTAIN



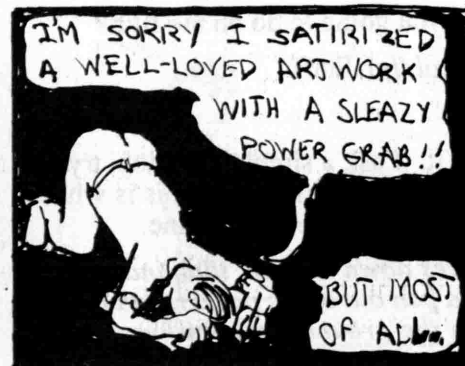
Warfield

by Jim Bredt



Apology for Warfield

by Jim Bredt



The Man with the Glass Colon

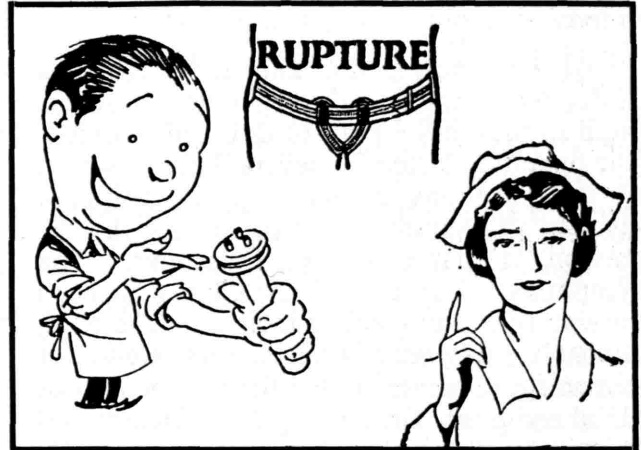
by David Jordan

Each year at harvest time, the elders of my village would gather the children together and tell them a story. The purpose of the story was serious, since it was meant to prepare the children psychologically for the ceremony of "First Coupling" which each of them would endure — in pairs, of course — at the arrival of their hormonal maturity. The fable served as an allegory for romantic love, and its appeal never seemed to dwindle with its annual repetition. I can still see the little ones, their eyes alight with the reflected brilliance of the altar fire, as the elders wove the simple, yet poignant, fabric of their narrative.

Thus:

There once was a circus clown named Beefy. His full professional name was Beefy, the Balloon Clown. most clowns who make balloon-craft an integral part of their act inflate long, thin balloons which they twist into amusing and clever sculptures. Beefy's act represented a more elementary triumph of the human spirit over adversity: He inflated one standard, spheroidal "party" balloon at a time. The really entertaining part of this spectacle was the gasping, hacking, and purple-faced wheezing the Beefy suffered as he drew in each spasmodic breath. Beefy had a major-league, kicker case of emphysema, complicated by an infestation of something his doctors referred to obliquely as "dripping lung cysts 'n' stuff." To the delight of the precious tykes watching him (and even the adults couldn't help smiling), he would punctuate each agonizing exhalation with remarks like, "I'm taking bets on whether I'll be ushered into eternity on this one." Sometimes Beefy had to clear his tortured lungs of great, clotting wads of mucous; he would turn his head from the balloon and spit his "golden crowd-pleaser" (as he whimsically referred to it) into a mug labeled "Blue Sky Lawn Care, Inc."

Beefy made a lot of little kids happy during his career. He didn't hurt anyone, and his only vice involved a devotion to Continuous Soft



Hits on the radio. By all rights, the Fates should have smiled on him, allowing him to live his life in peaceful obscurity.

But the Fates took one look at Beefy and decided to rev up the Cuisinart.

One night, as Beefy slumbered contentedly after a rich, full day of entertaining innocent children, a team of highly-trained mercenary operatives broke into his room and captured him. Under cover of darkness, they dragged the bound and gaged Beefy to a van parked outside the circus. The smoothly-executed abduction found its thematic bracketing in two places of repose for Beefy: at the beginning, in his own comfortable hammock, and at the end, on a cold, sterile operating room table in a complex some 400 feet underground. A battery of surgeons approached the helpless clown, and one of them addressed Beefy as follows: "Beefy, let me tell you. We've got some good news and some bad news."

Beefy tried to keep his voice calm as he replied, but the rivulet of perspiration trickling down from his wad of bright orange hair betrayed his nervousness. "What's the bad news, doc?"

"Oh, gosh, Beefy...The bad news is so very frightfully bad that I don't think you really want to hear it."

Beefy's bulbous, red rubber nose twitched

as he queried, "Okay then, what's the good news?"

The surgeon smiled warmly.

"Ah yes, the good news! Well, it seems...ummm..." He trailed off with a vague hand gesture that was, apparently, *à propos* of nothing.

At this point, the anesthetist's mask descended on Beefy, submerging his conscious mind in the murky pool of drugged oblivion. The operation lasted for several hours, as each of the surgeons busily clipped, snipped, inserted and sutured. Oh, the drama and the tension of that milestone operation! The symphony of execution resounding in each intricately-choreographed incision! The bold, almost haughty brush-strokes on the canvas of human flesh, painted in the flaring tinctures of blood and bile! The soaring aria of the mortal frame, as entrapped pockets of gas in Beefy's body felt the clean, crisp light of the outside world for the first time and rushed to voice their freedom!

The operation was a success.

Beefy's colon and lower intestine had been replaced by a meticulously designed prosthetic, constructed of high-impact polystyrene and coated with a thin layer of neoprene. The entire assembly had been hand-crafted by a blind Swiss munitions expert.

At length, Beefy's mind resurface and drew its first sputtering breaths of the harsh atmosphere of consciousness. He lay in a darkened room, illuminated by a single floodlight pointed directly into his cheerfully painted face. A figure stood in the darkness, obscured from Beefy's vision by the glare of the lamp. In the fullness of time, the figure spoke; his voice combined the deep, resonant timbre of Orson Welles with the matter-of-fact, down-home country wisdom of Wilford Brimley. And could one detect a note of empathy in that voice, the merest hint of pity? We have the luxury of distance and perspective that allows us to speculate on this point. Beefy, in his futile desperation, did not.

"Son, you have a problem," the shadowy presence began. "You've been a good old boy, and it seems that you've taken a shine over the years to entertaining folks and making 'em

happy." The figure paused, then added almost parenthetically, "Although you may want to rethink the Continuous Soft Hits station on that radio of yours." Then, more brusquely: "Nevertheless, you do have one whopper of a problem starin' you in the face like a big, nasty old grizzly in the woods. Do you know what your colon is, boy?"

Beefy nodded, his perpetually optimistic greasepaint smile wilting somewhat.

"Well, it just seems natural," the voice pointed out, "that a body's colon — heck, the rest of his intestines and plumbing, to boot — ought to be nice and flexible. Yeah...soft and flexible. It just stands to reason, doesn't it?"

Beefy once again nodded his agreement.

"Your problem, son, involves a certain loss of flexibility. In fact, you might call it a maximal loss of flexibility. Your colon and lower intestine have been removed and replaced. The artificial structures now in place at the lower end of your digestive tract are made of fragile glass. Are you beginning to get the picture, boy?"

Beefy honked a resigned note of assent on his playful bicycle horn.

"I wish I could tell you why this had to happen, son, because I don't bear you any malice. Let's just say that there are people out there...forces out there...with a lot to lose. These people are grown-ups, and they play grown-up games. Sometimes people get hurt. The game for you, Beefy, is to last as long as you can. Don't make any sudden moves. Forget your strict, daily regimen of calisthenics. Kickboxing is out, for good. Never lose sight of the fact that your innards are as fragile as a china teacup. And let me tell you this much, boy, man-to-man. I figure I owe you this much: When life gives you lemons, try to whip up a delightful low-calorie, caffeine-free citrus beverage."

The figure began to retreat into outer darkness. Beefy heard weeping and gnashing of teeth, and it took him several moments before he realized these sounds were coming from himself. In parting, the voice delivered Beefy's epithet.

"God have mercy on your soul, boy. And

break a leg."

Eventually, the same highly-trained team of agents returned the anesthetized Beefy to the welcoming curvature of his hammock. Beefy awoke to a new identity, a new self-image: He was no longer jovial, anything-for-a-laugh Beefy the Balloon Clown. Instead, Beefy looked into the mirror — nay, into his own heart — and he saw Beefy, the Fragile. Beefy, the Man with the Glass Colon. Beefy, the "This end up, do not fold, spindle or mutilate" Guy.

We need not dwell on Beefy's descent into the maelstrom of obsession. We need not detail his morbid experiments with a china teacup and a slab of raw steak; we need not intrude on the delicate privacy of his compulsion as he wraps the steak around the china teacup and crushes it into a million jagged pieces, each sliver tearing and slashing at the tissue of the steak....

We need not, because we hold this truth to be self-evident: A suppurating sore cries out for scraping. A scab practically screams to be picked off. And, inevitably, the imagined fragility of Beefy colon begged him...seduced him...into trying to shatter it himself.

Punches to his own abdomen failed, as did a vigorous session of sit-ups. Flinging himself to the ground — much as Pete Rose once dove into third base — also proved futile. The paralyzing waves of anguish which he expected, perhaps even wooed, continued to elude him coyly. For the doctors had given Beefy a network of plumbing that, Beefy's misinformation notwithstanding, was probably as strong as a motorcyclist's helmet. As he clutched and scraped to achieve the fulfillment of his destiny, Beefy was at last led to — how shall we say this gently? — *approach* himself...with an increasingly caustic and violent assortment of tools. Tools easily adapted for a more direct approach. A more intimate approach. A more internal approach.

The assortment included chisels, crowbars, scissors, and even the sword-swallower's foils, as Beefy defined his own degraded, inverted act of swallowing.

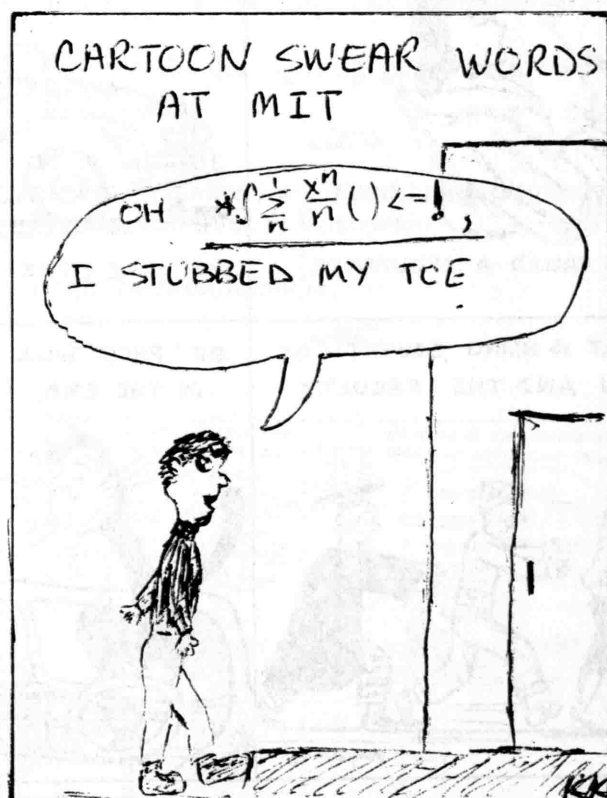
Beefy's polystyrene colon survived these attacks quite nicely.

By the time the other members of the circus discovered Beefy, the self-directed acts of carnage had ripped the final vestiges of sanity from the tender entrails of his mind. They found him with his pants down around his ankles, his eyes gouged out, and every surface of his lower trunk — from his ruined manhood and fundament to his floppy, oversized shoes — bathed in his blood. He howled his frustration, agony, and despair into the desolate void of his perpetual darkness. As an act of mercy, the circus people put Beefy's head under the food of Pretzels, the elephant. The great beast crushed the unfortunate clown's head as one might smash a peanut shell to gain access to the succulent, nutty meat inside. But Beefy's colon held.

This, then, is the essence of romantic love: Love is a pathetic old circus clown, his pants around his ankles and his every conscious thought darkly fixated on the fragility of his lower intestine; his soul absorbed in the act of waiting...

Waiting, waiting.

For his colon of glass to shatter.



(continued from page 4)

became clear that I was not kidding there was a "hold" put on my sentence while higher authority was advised what kind of asshole they had on their hands.

Next, the great ones, believe it or not, came down with the edict that I could stay if I would address a convocation of the entire student body and publicly apologize to Miss Aldrich.

My response was that I thought it was something that could be handled but "were they sure the press wouldn't attend such a convocation and perhaps properly interpret the sincerity of my remorseful appeal for forgiveness."

Well would you believe that these great men of judgement had not thought of that, so they would get back to me. No! Don't leave yet.

Finally, after 48 hours of frantic phone calls back and forth among Daddy, the Institute management, and I guess our heroine, they made me a final offer, "Promise not to publish the strip again and you won't be expelled."

Sorry to say, at that time I was so sufficiently self-serving and cowardly that I "copped the plea" and graduated on schedule in June of '41. But, sadly "Harriet's Day" was never seen again, albeit despite some popular demand.

Of course, Harriet was neither qualified nor motivated to make it at the Institute and was gone by about Christmas of 1940. Whatever happens to debutantes after that is, I guess, what happened. In any event, neither she nor her imperious poop of a father ever apologized to me.

Your latest *Voo Doo* is quite literary compared to the crap we used to put out but we made up for that with slick paper and color and National ads and local ads at clubs and restaurants and due bills and fun. Like money is the mother's milk of politics, ads are the life blood of *Voo Doos*. Where are they?

L'Affaire Harriet was not the only event of my brief stay with the cat. But one agonizing tale is enough for now. the event had great influence on my outlook on life and those around me.

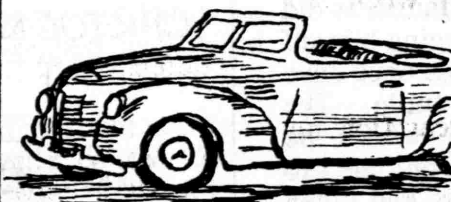
It's clear the MIT bureaucracy is still functioning well — not even 50 years can change it. Not to

THIS YEAR'S FRÖSH HAVE AN UNUSUAL MEMBER IN THEIR CLASS.
—NEWS ITEM



SHE IS CALLED A "DEBUTANTE"

SHE IS VERY PRETTY, AND SHE HAS HER OWN CAR.



WE LIKE THE CAR.

MURGATROYD IS JEALOUS. SHE HAS NO CAR.



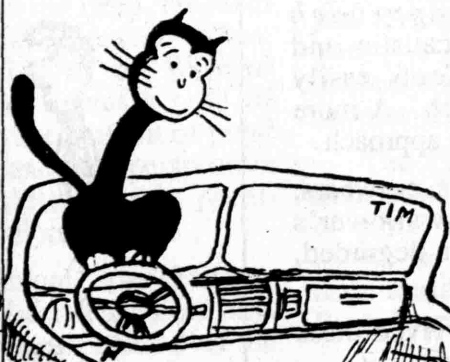
BUT — DID YOU EVER SEE MURGATROYD'S FEET?

HARRIET IS BEING SOUGHT BY MEN AND THE FACULTY



Peingold '41

BUT PHOS WILL GET HER IN THE END.



WE KNOW YOU AREN'T INTERESTED BUT — HERE IS HER SCHEDULE :

| | MONDAY THRU FRIDAY | SAT |
|-----------|--------------------|------|
| 9:00 P.M. | G-88 | MSDI |
| TO | | MSDI |
| 5:00 A.M. | | PTDI |
| | 3-310 | PTDI |

PHONE NUMBER: LON 7170
ADDRESS:
142 CLYDE ST., BROOKLINE

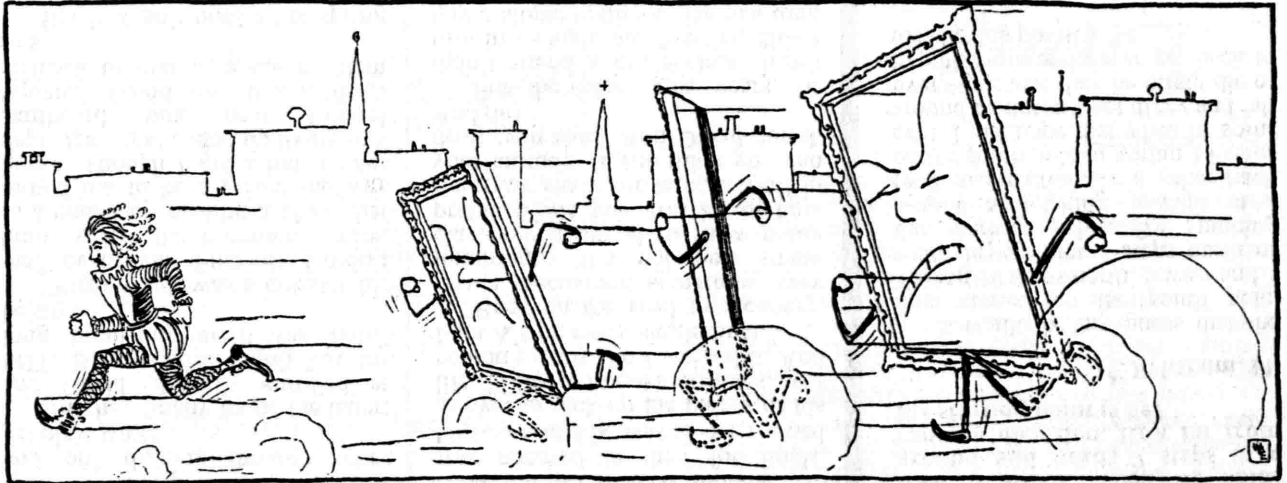
worry, 'twas ever thus. What you will realize in time, unfortunately, is that the MIT bureaucracy is nothing compared to what you are going to suffer for the rest of your lives. You are going out into a world of oafs ready willing and hoping to slow you down every step of the way.

But be of good cheer! And continue having fun.

— Richard F. Cottrell, '41

"How do you like that new obstetrician?"

"Wonderful, except for his nasty habit of shouting, 'Presto!'"



Three Pictures after Rembrandt.

New Hampshire Proverb: When you heat with wood, you get warm twice — once when you cut it, and then again when you stack it.



"Q: Why do Iraqis where wear flowing desert robes?

A: So the sheep can't hear the zippers."



— C.W.

Ned: What's the difference between a fighting game cock and a securities lawyer?

Ted: Well, the fighting game cock clucks defiance, and ...



Stude: Who has long blond hair, voluptuous breasts, and lives in Wisconsin?

Prof: Salmon Rushdie.



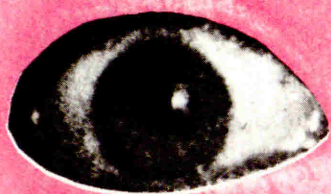
JERRY THE D.I.P.

by J. + J. López



Voo Doo's

PARADE



He lived in a box,
and life was hell.
Then:

**HE VOMITED
IN MY LAP**

By Fopsy Bopson

INSIDE: Ask Marilyn Vos Idiot

IN STEP WITH:™

BY AMES BRADY

Shagg Skump

Ask actor Shagg Skump what his favorite role has been over the past decade of his career, and he's apt to punch you in the face. "Get the fuck away from me!" he exclaimed to me one rainy, New England day.

But when talk turned to his infamous role as "Man #3 On the Dock" in the universally loathed '84 TV movie *Deadly Desires*, Shagg suddenly stiffened and fell silent. Finally, after at least several minutes of searching for the right words, he spoke. "That was a very difficult, demanding role. I started preparing a month before we shot the scene, standing on various docks with groups of three or more people, because I was Man #3."

"Do you remember that old McDonald's commercial where McCheese and the Hamburgler are running around, crashing into each other? Total chaos. Yet by the end it evolves into order, and we even get a big smile from Ronald. All through take one of my dock scene I pictured myself as the Hamburgler. But later I saw myself as McCheese."


Shagg's latest role was "Shithead Punk" in an obscure B-movie, a role that he prepared for by dunking his head in excrement. "It was not until later that the director said 'shithead' was not to be taken literally. But I disagreed, feeling it was a matter of character interpretation. We ended up getting into a bitter fight, with punching, biting, and eventually knifing. When the movie was finally released, I was not surprised to find myself edited out, replaced by a hand-puppet who hardly even looked like me."

On his way to California soon to begin shooting a new movie ("I play a spectator in a crowd scene who points at the sky"), Shagg says he's happy with his career. "All-in-all, I'd have to say it's a rewarding job. Though the gigs are scarce, and my co-actors despise me and snicker behind my back, there is nothing more rewarding than doing a role like 'Man #3' or 'Person Behind Counter' and doing it well. Also, besides my co-actors snickering behind my back, they do things like smash my car windows, and



As "Shithead Punk," he prepared for the role by dunking his head in excrement.

break into my apartment. And several times they have shoved me in front of oncoming city busses.

"I'm a goddamn master of my craft," he continues. "Leave me the hell alone, and don't you dare print a thing about me..." He pauses, then adds, "you asshole." 

Laugh Parade™

"I guess he doesn't like the new mailman, either!"

HOWARD HUGE®



David plays the pan flute in celebration of his success at MIT.



*"I can do it--
you can too!"*

THE BOX HE CALLS HOME

Overcoming the odds, David Mank was not only accepted to MIT, but enrolled. After spending four difficult years at this place he calls "hell," he may just graduate. Here's his story.

WHEN DAVID MANK FIRST received his MIT acceptance letter, he thought it was "just another piece of junk mail," and threw it away. But junk mail it was not--and when David finally realized what it was, it had been hauled away with the garbage of hundreds of his neighbors, and the Mank family spent "a better part of a month, off and on" digging through other people's waste.

But they finally found the letter, and David gleefully enrolled at MIT. But the glee didn't last for long. From day one it was "hell," he says.

"Rush Week was a disaster for me," he began. "First off, I didn't know where the fraternities were, so I ended up rushing a place that turned out to be a prison halfway house. Though I got a bid, I later deplored, and ended up living in a cardboard box near Central Square." David says this made it difficult to complete his problem sets.

But it wasn't until a hot spring day on a #1 bus that his situation hit him. "I had just sat down in the back of the hot, crowded bus, and as the exhaust fumes filled the interior, the person next to me leaned over and vomited in my lap. It suddenly dawned on me that I was not in the best of situations."

David took control of his life. "I started going to class. I started taking the tests, and even studying for them. And though I still didn't do the problem sets, I picked up the solutions."

His grades started improving, moving from F's to D's and even C's. "I started to feel good. My cardboard box was as tiny as ever, but it felt like it had no walls. The sky was the limit."

But then he hit bottom. Again. His cardboard box burned to the ground, along with his textbooks and notes. "I wandered around the city, obsessed with the color gray. Then my shoe broke a shoelace, and all I could do was sit and weep."

David was admitted to the Bridgewater State Hospital, where he was listed in "unstable" condition for several months. He was released in time for finals, however, and he was as determined as ever to pick up the pieces of his life. "I had no books or notes, so I couldn't study. So I winged it. And I got A's on every single final."

Back on the road to recovery, David discovered something very important. "It's not how many classes you attend, or how many problem sets you turn in, or how long you study for tests, it's all in your attitude. If you think you can do it, you can." And David could. And did.

For the next three years, he didn't attend a single class, didn't turn in a single problem set, didn't buy a single textbook. He just took the tests. "And because of my attitude, I aced them all," he says, smiling.

Now in his senior year, David is looking forward to graduation. "I'm not at the top of the class, by any standards," he explains. "But I passed. You'll see me at the ceremonies next spring...that is, if I can find Killian Court. I haven't been to the campus in three years." David laughs, then takes a deep breath, and crawls back into his cardboard box. His new cardboard box. The one he calls home. ©

Ask Marilynn™

BY MARILYNN VOS IDIOT

Which came first: the chicken or the egg?

--S.H. Scrotum, Pa.

The egg--but only if you're making breakfast!

Why do we drive on parkways, and park on driveways?

--B.S. Portland, Ore.

Because if we drove on driveways and parked on parkways, we'd have a heck of a traffic jam!

A total dickhead meets a complete asshole. Neither are moveable. What happens?

--F.Y. Boulder, Col.

I would think that the asshole and dickhead merge to form a fuckhead. I'm just glad I'm not their barber!

A man is in a snowstorm. He takes 10 steps north, then 6 west, then 3 south. Then he spins around and heads 7 steps in a random direction. How far from the starting point is he?

--C.F. Miami, Fl.

It would be my guess that the man started on the south pole. Taking 10 steps north, 6 west and 3 south leaves him 7 steps north of the starting point. By spinning around and taking 7 steps in a random direction, he's either back on the south pole or within 14 steps of it. I just hope that when he spins around he doesn't get dizzy and fall over--because then he might die of hypothermia and never get back to the starting point!

Which do you feel is more important: intelligence, or a sense of humor?

--D.N. Atlanta, GA

I would have to say both intelligence and humor--because an intelligent person without a sense of humor is just a smartass!

Marilyn Vos Idiot is listed in the "Guinness Book" as "funniest woman alive."