

The Realist

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Editor: Paul Krassner

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The Sodomy Snitches

Murder At the Humor Convention

There are no numbers on the campus clock. Instead, letters spell out ARIZONA STATE in a circle. The time was exactly N after R. I had 35 minutes before the first plenary session began. To be honest, I don't know the difference between a plenary session and a breakout session, but there are always plenty of both at the annual WHIM (Western Humor and Irony Membership) Conference.

In 1981, a dream began to turn into reality for Don Nilsen of ASU's English Department. Art Buchwald was coming to consult with the planning committee. However, he tried to discourage them: "A humor conference can't possibly succeed because people would come expecting to laugh for three days — which of course is impossible — and disappointment would be the inevitable result."

Assistant Dean Alleen Nilsen recalls: "His advice wasn't as important as the fact that he lent credibility to the whole project. And with forty of the most important people at the university having witnessed our public commitment to proving Buchwald wrong — such a conference could be a success—we were off and running."

The first national humor conference took place in 1982. Now I was attending the fifth WHIM humor conference, but the first to be combined with TAASP (The Association for the Anthropological Study of Play). Presentations undulated along an invisible spectrum between the scholarly and the silly.

From "Humor in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*" to "The Humor of Popeye, the Plectariat's Sir Walter Raleigh." From "Environmental Factors That Affect Black and White Basketball Performance and Style" to "Psychological Services in the American Shopping Center—or, Can I Get a Refund Within 7 Days If I Haven't Used the Insight?" From "Incongruity-Based Humor As an Index of the Child's Understanding of Quantity and the Investigator's Misunderstanding of Compensation" to "Joke Analysis Analysis." From "The Humor of Sign Language Used by Deaf Children" to "How to Stamp Out Rape From U.S. Campuses and Balance the Budget." From "The Limits of the Transgressive Behavior of the Vidusaka in Sanskrit Drama" to "Mystic Secret From Pakistan Offers Cure for Cancer, Loneliness, Acne, Poverty and Religious Doubt." From "The Status of Muslim Women in Sport: Conflict Between Cultural Tradition and Modernization" to "Play, Fun, Comedy and Dead Seriousness in Minnesota Queen

Pageants." From "The American Indians' Attempt to Get the Last Laugh" to "Computer Recognition of Situational Ironies." From "The Trickster/Clown Dichotomy and the Problem of Individual Freedom vs. Social Propriety" to "American Humor and the Death Event."

You could learn new euphemisms: In a Pentagon document, peace is "permanent pre-hostility." Civilian casualties are "collateral damage." The invasion of Grenada by paratroopers was a "pre-dawn vertical insertion." At Expo 87, vomit is a "protein spill."



Or you could hear examples of Maine humor:

Gramp Wiley says, "I see in the paper that even the people who keep building these nuclear plants don't know what to do with the waste. And I certainly don't know what to do about the waste. But if my barn was fillin' up with cow manure faster than I could shovel it out, I'd learn to live without cows."

And: It was about two years ago that Gramp Wiley fulfilled one of his lifelong ambitions — streakin'. Took off all his clothes, and had nothin' on but Nike sneakers and ran right through the vestry of the Baptist church where the ladies was holdin' their flower show. There warn't one of them Baptist ladies that raised an eye. Think of that control. But one of them *did* say to the lady next to her, "Martha, what was that?" Martha never looked up either, and she said, "I don't know, but it sure needed pressin'."

I had the pleasure of emceeing a Saturday luncheon. The speaker was Gene Perrett, who has written for Bob Hope, Carol Burnett and,

more recently, "I worked with a gentleman who's the youngest at heart of anybody you'd ever want to meet. That's George Burns, who just celebrated his 90th birthday. Last year, he had more love affairs than Burt Reynolds. The only difference is Burt remembers his."

"It's amazing," I announced, "that George Burns makes out better than Burt Reynolds. I think it may be because women think he's aroused when it's merely rigor mortis on the installment plan."

Later, a Linguistics professor cornered me: "Your rigor mortis line was a most appropriate vehicle to point out that sex and death are actually two sides of the same coin. . . ."

* * *

The keynote address that afternoon was given by Gershon Legman, a cantankerous gargoyle whose nemesis is respectability and whose delight is pricking the prudery of academic virtue. The 69-year-old folklorist first coined the phrase "Make love, not war" — and then, as if to aid in that very process, co-invented the vibrating dildo.

His talk — "Erotic Folk Elements in the Humor and Play of Adolescents" — was overflowing with raunchy references:

"When I was sitting waiting for the plane to take me to this conference, my wife told me she was very embarrassed because our 12-year-old daughter asked, 'Does semen taste sweet or sour?' Now who would have been embarrassed if the question had been, 'What is the taste of human blood?'"

He told of a bar in Tijuana where "stripteasers performed on tables. Students and sailors were all sitting around chugging beer, and they would move forward, their friends slapping them on the back, to perform cunnilingus on the girl dancing — while she danced. And if the girl could be made to have an orgasm, or pretend to, he would give her \$10 and be a hero to his friends. It reminded me of the time I'd gone to communion. I remembered seeing the same look on people's faces. Sort of a gone, happy look of being lost in a ceremonial reunion with something. And these kids were sitting there with exactly the same expressions, waiting for their turn. . . ."

Later on, in the hallway, Legman got into a shouting match with a Literature professor. They were arguing over whether a philosophical maxim — "I laugh so that I will not weep" — came from *The Marriage of Figaro* or Lord Byron.

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COURT JESTER

Signs Along the Cynic Route

There are signs of the times all over the place: a telephone answering-machine repair service charges \$5 extra if they find any dead cockroaches in your equipment, presumably to compensate for an employee's adrenalin rush; over 200 students at the University of California in Santa Barbara urinate into specimen bottles which are then sent to the White House (with such slogans as "Give Piss a Chance") to protest mandatory drug testing; the cultural spectacle of a giant Mickey Mouse actually escorting *U.S. News & World Report* correspondent Nicholas Daniloff onto the stage to meet the media at Disney World in Florida just after his release from prison by the KGB, thereby erasing any lingering doubts that he might've been involved in espionage.

However, conspiracy researcher Mark Lane writes in the right-wing tabloid, *Spotlight*, that on February 2, 1977, the day Congress was to vote on whether their investigation of the John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King assassinations would be continued, UPI dispatched a story by Daniloff about an all-night vigil outside Kennedy's birthplace in Brookline, Mass. the night before, led by Lane and Dick Gregory.

A false quote—"This vigil is to let Tip O'Neill know we're watching"—was attributed to Richard Feldman, described as a spokesman for the group. Lane asked Daniloff who Feldman was. Daniloff replied: "Feldman? You got me. Who is he? I never quoted Feldman, whoever he is, and I never put those words in there."

Lane checked with Elizabeth Wharton, overnight editor at UPI in Boston. She denied adding the Feldman quote, concluding: "This is very strange. All I can say is that it could not have happened, but it did." So now Lane wonders: "Was Daniloff part of the CIA effort to defeat the resolution to continue the investigations into the murders of Kennedy and King?"

In any event, Daniloff was at least *traded* for a Russian agent, a swap which escalated into a scenario reminiscent of the "Spy vs. Spy" feature in *Mad*, the magazine on whose carpet I literally lost my virginity, and whose editorial irreverence figuratively popped the psychic cherries of a whole generation of kids that had been spoon-fed on piety.

* * *

When Peter Jennings finishes delivering the ABC News, he simply says "Goodnight."

On NBC, Tom Brokaw prefers to end with a philosophical observation. After a piece about Japanese lady wrestlers, he commented, "It's reassuring to know that there are *some* things we don't have to learn from the Japanese." And after a piece about the high sales of the new Bruce Springsteen package, he commented, "Teach your children to sing rock and roll."

Dan Rather began signing off his CBS newscast with the word "Courage." He took a lot of flack for this, but didn't have the convictions of his courage and quickly dropped it. Then he got mugged, and his viewers increased by 42%. It would be understandable if he were now to end his newscast with "Take my cash." Or, to blur even further the distinction between entertainment and news, "Take my cash — please."

Aberrant muggings aside, though, it turns out that most viewers watch whichever news on whatever network happens to precede it with *Wheel of Fortune*. The obvious answer to this competitive question is to make a game show of the news itself.

Indeed, CNN now does exactly that. Viewers are quizzed, for example: "How many terrorist attacks have occurred in Paris, France in the last ten days?" When a call finally comes in with the correct answer (five), you can hear the the sound-effect of a crowd cheering the winner, whose prize is a "Know-It-All" drinking mug.

* * *

I had never seen *Wheel of Fortune*, but it's a favorite of my 83-year-old mother, and I decided to watch it with her. What a thrill to discover Vanna White, a toothy blonde who has attained celebrityhood merely by turning over letters and pointing at prizes. She has written an autobiography which promises to be the most illuminating book to hit the market since publication of Morris the Cat's biography.

Later, I noticed that *Mad* magazine had a parody of *Wheel of Fortune*,

so I bought a copy and sent it to my mother. She was delighted. So were the friends and neighbors in her age group she passed it around to. Things have come full cycle. The generation to whom *Mad* once represented a subversive influence has caught up with it and now this teenage mag *appeals* to them. I guess this must be evolution or something, something.

Me and Lyndon LaRouche

I thought I would share with you excerpts from a dossier on me which appeared in *New Solidarity*, July, 1981, published by Lyndon LaRouche:

"In the early 1950s, Paul Krassner was recruited to the stable of pornographers and 'social satirists' created and directed by British Intelligence's chief brainwashing facility, the Tavistock Institute, to deride and destroy laws and institutions of morality and human decency.

"Among Krassner's circle of Tavistock iconoclasts, peddling smut in the name of humor and 'creative expression,' were Lenny Bruce, the drug addict comedian who died of a heroin overdose in the early 1960s; 'literary' pornographer William Burroughs; Norman Mailer, whose plea of insanity saved him from conviction on charges of attempted manslaughter against his wife; and homosexual versifier Allen Ginsberg.

"Krassner's recruitment to Tavistock's psychological shock troop was facilitated by his intense childhood and adolescent masturbatory fixation. The young Krassner, much like the Woody Allen character who 'bought the *New York Times* magazine to look at the brassiere ads,' has been described as 'living proof that masturbation does not cause blindness.'

"Krassner's susceptibility to manipulation was exploited by one Lyle Stuart . . . While working at *The Independent*, Krassner also became a writer for another of Stuart's publications, the 'sick, sick, sick' pre-teen *Mad* magazine. Even the infantile Krassner was to tire of *Mad*'s puerile obscenities, and in 1958 he founded his own magazine, *The Realist* . . . Through Krassner's pioneering obscenities was created an audience for and toleration of the wave of overt sado-masochistic magazines . . .

"Moreover, Krassner's flaunting of pornography and obscenity — and early promotion of drugs — provided the platform for the Berkeley 'Filthy Speech' movement of the early '60s, the germ of the anarcho-terrorist student movement. One rivulet of this sewer became, in 1968, the Youth International Party, or Yippies, of which Krassner was a founder and whose name he lays claim to have invented. The Yippies were and are a terrorist unit financed by dope traffic — consistent with their call for legalized marijuana and cocaine. . . .

"Krassner re-emerged in the light of investigative scrutiny after the March 20-22 Yippie-sponsored National Resistance Conference in New York City. At that event, attended by 75 inhabitants of the terrorist and drug underworld, Krassner delivered a 'comedy' monologue mooting the assassination of President Ronald Reagan — only 10 days before the Hinckley attempt on the President's life.

"Krassner has now threatened Democratic Party leader Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., another target of the Yippie terrorist conference. Among other contemplated acts, Krassner plans a libel suit against LaRouche in retaliation for LaRouche's exposure of his organization's threats against Reagan. Krassner has stated that he plans to use the suit as a vehicle of his malice against LaRouche . . ."

Ah Sordid Announcements

- *The Realist* is published quarterly en route to bi-monthly. Subscription rate: 12 issues for \$23. Back issues #99-102 are available at \$2 each. Address: Box 1230, Venice CA 90294.

- This is to announce the birth of the Realist Speakers Bureau — an alternative booking agency for campuses—to be run by Jeanne Johnson, *The Realist's* original managing editor.

- I'll be performing at the "Laughter & Liberation" humor conference (February 12-15) at the Sheraton-Universal Hotel in Los Angeles, and at "On the Boards" theater (March 19-22) in Seattle. I'll be giving a keynote address at "Humor — the World's Common Language," the 6th international humor conference (April 1-5) at Arizona State University. The conspiracy continues. Tavistock . . . Tavistock . . .

Hmmm . . . It must've been programmed out of me.

The Mad Guru

I had my first recognizable spiritual experience when I was 12 years old. After school, in the small Nebraska town where I grew up, I used to hang around the comic book rack at the local magazine store. Before TV, comic books were a primary source of adolescent heroes and villains, and in the pages of *Superman* and *Scrooge McDuck* and *Archie* I found the images that filled my dreams. The cartoon body of Veronica was my first object of desire.

One day I was leafing through the comics when suddenly I saw a face looking out at me from the cover of a new magazine. I was immediately transfixed. It looked like a cartoon face, but there was something different about it. The face was not just funny — it went deeper than that. It was only later I realized that for the first time in my life, that face had given me a glimpse of the absurd. It was a major revelation. The absurdity was in the face of my first spiritual teacher, Alfred E. Neuman, who was smiling out at me from the cover of *Mad* magazine.



At first you might see the silly grin and freckles and think that this is just a stupid kid. But after careful study you begin to grasp that Alfred E. Neuman has both deep wisdom and realization. No matter what is going on around him, he remains equanimous. In the midst of incredible chaos with speeding cartoon characters in a blitz of foulups, mishaps, natural disasters, wars, aliens from space, food fights — still, his expression never changes. His face remains open and accepting, a detached observer of this insane world.

His teaching is simple and direct. Three little words of wisdom: "What — Me Worry?" Alfred E. Neuman is the Meyer Baba of the West! Meyer Baba said, "Don't worry. Be happy." Alfred E. Neuman simplified it to, "What — Me Worry?"

In some ways I think my entire spiritual path has been an attempt to become more like Alfred E. Neuman. To be able to look at the absurdity of the world and remain calm, and grin. However, when I ask myself what is meant to be a rhetorical question or mantra, "What — Me Worry?", I still answer back, "Yes — Me Worry." But I think I'm getting the grin down, and maybe once I've mastered that, the mental state will follow.

—Scoop Nisker

Condom Nation

Sex has always been a difficult subject to teach in American schools because, unlike most courses, which are how-to — Math, Reading, Writing, etc. — sex has always been a why-not-to course.

In many schools it is little more than an arcane description of human "plumbing," primarily because teaching why not to necessarily entails teaching *how* to do what it is you're not supposed to — which, in the minds of some parents and educators, is the quickest way to insure that students *will*.

For example, in Massachusetts, often thought of as one of the least reactionary states, attempts to offer birth control information are met with strong local resistance. Students are frequently told in school that contraceptives exist, but not where to obtain them or how to use them.

This dilemma appeared most graphically in a recent court battle in Tennessee which had nothing at all to do with sex. A group of fundamentalist Christian parents successfully sued their board of education and the state of Tennessee, claiming they were victims of religious discrimination because the textbooks their children were required to read in public school reading classes promoted such radical ideas as vegetarianism, the equality of women and world peace.

Among the objectionable books cited in the case were *The Wizard of Oz*, because there's no such thing as a good witch, and *The Diary of Anne Frank*, because it promotes the toleration of all the world's religions — ideas these "victims" did not want taught to their children. According to the ruling by a Federal District Judge, the students will be allowed to withdraw from classes in which objectionable material is used.

Separate sex education classes are being planned for the children, and textbooks will be provided free of charge by the makers of Cabbage Patch Dolls. The parents have invited the stork who originally brought them their bundles of joy to serve as a guest lecturer, and Attorney General Meese, whose recently-released report on pornography is being sold in brown paper wrappers at Christian bookstores, will give a special workshop on The Joys of Censorship.

Unfortunately for the parents in Massachusetts and Tennessee, someone may soon be giving their children a far more explicit idea of what it is they're not supposed to be doing. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop — who has decided that where sex is concerned it is not true that what you don't know can't hurt you — has called for detailed sex education to begin for children as young as six so they can be taught how to protect themselves from exposure to the AIDS virus.

At almost the same time, the National Academy of Sciences released a report predicting that beginning in 1990 almost 60,000 Americans will die annually from AIDS and calling for an expenditure of \$2-billion on education about the disease, including precise information about how it is transmitted.

Neither the Surgeon General nor the

Academy is likely to encounter serious opposition. According to a 1985 poll by Louis Harris, 85% of respondents want sex education taught in schools.

There are, of course, only two ways to slow the spread of AIDS, the use of condoms and abstinence, and the consensus about sex education will doubtless break down over which of the two methods is promoted in the classroom. The Surgeon General, to the surprise of many, appears to be "pro-condom," although others in the Reagan Administration are urging that the following label be placed on packages of rubbers: "Surgeon General's Warning: Quitting Sex Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health."

For those who will not quit, the Surgeon General recommends the use of rubbers for vaginal, anal and oral sex. No recommendation has been made concerning whether the ribs should be worn on the inside or out for the latter.

In New York, sex and students' understanding of it is suddenly of great interest because of the revelation that the City's School Chancellor quietly instituted a program in 1984 to dispense contraceptives to students in high school health clinics. The New York program was begun in part on the basis of a study of a highly successful 3-year program to reduce pregnancy in Baltimore. There are other similar programs in St. Paul and Chicago, and nationwide a total of 17 health clinics in high schools dispense contraceptives and 32 others write prescriptions.

A representative of the archdiocese of New York promptly denounced the program as "genocide," though he now claims he was misquoted and actually meant it was "spermicide." Secretary of Education William Bennett said the program encouraged sexual promiscuity, and one member of the New York City Board of Education announced her opposition because, she said, dispensing contraceptives would make it possible for "students to have sex in the schools."

Apparently they believe sex is less difficult when rubbers are employed.

The majority of contraceptives prescribed and dispensed in health clinics in schools and privately are birth control pills, but much of the condemnation has been directed against condoms because, as Norman Podhoretz angrily pointed out, dispensing condoms is a case of "two for the price of one." They both curb the spread of AIDS and prevent teenage pregnancy. This "two for one" scenario is infuriating to many reactionaries who are in favor of abstinence and would like to see sex education classes become exclusively morals classes.

One reason may be they already have a "two for one" agenda of their own. Since, in the public mind, most victims of AIDS are gays, prostitutes and drug-users, not only can children be shown in morals class that "aberrants" receive swift earthly punishment, but also an Orwellian re-ordering of legal history creates a convincing rationale for the kids about why homosexuality, prostitution and the use of specified drugs are against the law.

These moral historians have found an ally in

their fight in the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church, which denounced homosexuality as an "objective disorder" in a recent statement concerning the church's stand on the subject.

The document said that "in 1986 AIDS cannot be ignored in any consideration of the moral and ethical issues raised by homosexuality," and denounced the "deceitful propaganda" used by pro-homosexual groups.

"When civil legislation is introduced to protect behavior to which no one has the right," the statement said, "people should not be surprised when irrational and violent reactions increase."

According to a Vatican spokesman, the church will tackle the issue of the use of contraceptives by gay women in a report next year.

Dispensing contraceptives and counseling students about birth control in high school clinics is not the only birth control program presently being employed in the nation's schools. There are a number of programs which encourage something called "outer-course," which bears a remarkable resemblance to what used to be called heavy petting, and one program which encourages junior high school students to "just say no."

Nancy Reagan, who has had such astonishing success with her drug message based on the same premise, has agreed to join this fight also. As she indicated recently, "This is something I believe in very strongly. I've been saying no for more than thirty years."

These various programs have been instituted because the number of teenagers who are sexually active increased by two-thirds in the 1970s, and nearly two-thirds of unwed sexually active teenage women either never or inconsistently practice birth control. Two of the most popular methods of birth control are withdrawal and rhythm, and one of the most common reasons young women visit birth control clinics is for a pregnancy test.

The increase in sexual activity is not, however, a result of the availability of contraceptives. In 1982, one in ten teenage women became pregnant (1.1 million), 16% more than in 1973, but nothing approaching the percentage increase in sexually active teenage women. Interestingly, the birth rate has been declining among unmarried black teenagers while it has been rising among unmarried white teenagers.

It is safe to assume that, as in the case of drugs, the mass media will soon discover this new "epidemic" now that it has "spread" to the white community.

While millions of dollars are being spent to prevent teenagers in the U.S. from becoming pregnant, millions more are being spent by people only a few years older attempting to have children. In New Jersey, a woman is contesting custody of a baby she brought to term for another couple who paid her \$10,000 for the child. The child, called Melissa Elizabeth by her father and Sara Elizabeth by her mother, is one of thousands of children conceived annually in the U.S. through artificial insemination, in this case because the woman in the couple was unable to conceive.

One of the other methods available to infertile couples is in vitro (laboratory) fertilization, which may involve husband's sperm/wife's egg, wife's egg/substitute sperm, husband's

sperm/substitute egg — 16 possibilities in all. The cost for in vitro fertilization is \$3,000-\$5,000 per try, and with a success rate of 20% the cost can run as high as \$100,000, not to mention the embarrassment.

In most clinics, as soon as the woman ovulates, the man is escorted from a waiting room, where he is seated with others like himself, to another room where he is supposed to produce sperm in 30 minutes. For the unimaginative male, some clinics provide *Playboy* magazines and an old brass bed.

So \$10,000 for a surrogate might, therefore, seem like a bargain, but there is always the possibility, as in the New Jersey case, that the woman who carries the child to term may decide to keep it.

There is also the possibility that the child may be born handicapped. In 1983 a man from New York hired a married woman from Michigan to have his child. She was artificially in-



seminated and gave birth to a microcephalic child who was retarded. The man claimed the child was not his and that the woman had been having sex with her husband and demanded a blood test.

Phil Donahue had the man, the woman and her husband on his show and announced the results of the child's blood test on the air. It turned out that the father was Danny Thomas.

In October in San Diego, a woman who, according to her doctor, ignored his instructions and gave birth to a dead child, was arrested and charged with "fetus abuse." A prosecutor claims that tests done on the fetus showed the presence of amphetamines in its system. In addition to signs presently posted in California bars warning pregnant mothers about the dangers of drinking, authorities in San Diego have deputized several hundred bartenders and authorized them to make citizens' arrests.

If teenagers are confused about sex and its increasing dangers, they are not alone. That is why the TV networks have finally agreed to carry public service announcements about sex, in spite of their refusal to air similar messages about birth control several years ago.

The first message, which will air this spring on CNN, was produced by the Department of Education and features actress Brooke Shields. In the announcement she says: "Sex. Somebody told you a little bit won't hurt you... they lied. Sex in any amount can kill you. It can destroy your life. One time, that's all it takes. And you'll be ruined for life. Sex... the Big Lie. Dial 1-800-ABSTAIN."

—Robert Myers

Snitching on Drugs

After attending a deputy sheriff's church lecture on drugs, Deanna Young, 13, turned in her parents to the local Tustin (Orange County) police for alleged drug use. The Youngs were charged with possession of cocaine; their daughter was placed in protective custody.

In the weeks that followed, several other children across the country—the youngest was age 5—turned in their parents for drug use.

On November 27, 1986, Thanksgiving afternoon, because of her particular success with the Tustin police, Deanna was selected by Deputy Sheriff Robert "Big Bob" Schaffer to kick off the third in their series of children-only programs under the auspices of Project DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education).

The following is a partial transcript from that opening session held at the Tustin Holy Pentecostal Church.

Deanna: ... I've brought my clippings. Here's one that says I "ignited a Hollywood frenzy" — you know, the bidding war I set off by turning in my Mom and Dad. Nine movie production companies called me the day the story broke. Judy Silk, the lady from Dick Clark Productions, is my very fave. She told everyone I'm "a one-of-a-kind situation and you have to move quickly. It would be great if we could have a happy ending."

Child's Voice from Audience: How do you, like handle all the attention and everything?

Deanna: I have my own staff. Sheriff Big Bob is my agent. His cousin is my image consultant. Lieutenant Orloff is just super as my very first accountant. In fact, except for that jerk from Lorimar Telepictures who had the nerve to say I'm asking for too much money, everybody's been totally awesome.

Here, listen to what the First Lady Nancy Reagan says: "I hope her parents realize just how much she loves them." And I would've loved them even more if they didn't hassle me. I bet they're sorry they didn't buy me that pair of Fila shoes now. It's such a drag having ex-hippies for parents, with their big lectures on human rights, whatever those things are. They probably adopted me from some wonderful insider traders. Anyway, I taught Mom and Dad a lesson they'll never forget. Any other questions?

Child's Voice: There's a friend of mine who's thinking of turning his parents in for drugs. Do you have any special advice for him?

Deanna: Yes. You should never forget that it's okay to have your own personal reasons for snitching, as long as you don't mention it to the press. You should only explain that you're doing it for their own good and that your parents are weak and need help.

Child's Voice: But didn't you feel guilty? I mean, I would feel guilty. Didn't you feel guilty?

Deanna: Well, at first I did, a little, but then I read this story about me in the *Los Angeles Times*, and it made me feel better. They quote this fancy psychotherapist named Thom Waner, who talks about how kids know that "feeling blind loyalty just because they're your parents" is no longer acceptable. ...

—Janet Bode

Snitching on Sodomy

Little Sally Walker clung to her teddy bear and looked up at police officer Sterling McClean with eyes in which hope and pride were mingled with fear. Officer McClean got down on one knee and beckoned her into his arms, saying soothingly, "It's all right, Sally. Mommy and Daddy are in jail. You're safe now." Tears spilling onto her trembling lips, Sally let the officer bundle her up and carry her outside, where the dusk was rent by bursting flashbulbs. The next day, newspapers across the country carried the sight of her beaming little face beneath the headline, *Little Girl Hero Saved from House of Sodomy*.

Praise for little Sally's courage and conscience came swiftly from the highest seats in the land. Said President Reagan, "When I see this new generation of Americans turning against the excesses of these so-called Baby Boomers, well, it just gives me hope for the future of this clean, decent country." To which Chief Justice Rehnquist added, "If more children could straighten out their priorities like that little lass, this court's job of safeguarding the personal morality of American citizens would be one heck of a lot easier."

Ironically, the only person who did not have immediate praise for little Sally's courageous act was Frances Spiegelman, the county Child Welfare worker who played such a key role in the events. Soon afterward, the 35-year-old M.S.W. noted, "Yes, I did encourage her to tell the authorities if she thought her parents were doing anything wrong. But, really, this isn't what I had in mind."

But District Attorney Cliff Rideout, who won Sally's parents' conviction on sex crime charges, scoffs at her reservations: "You know these knee-jerk liberals. Even when they're doing their country a service, they're not happy unless they feel guilty."

Reverend Jimmy Jack Babbitt had a different opinion. "I guess you can't blame these . . . well, these people who've been raised under non-Christian religions . . . for not having a fully developed moral sense. But pretty soon this country won't have to worry about that." It was Reverend Babbitt who first discovered Sally's dilemma, when the little girl called his local telethon during a sermon on the evils of Vaseline, begging him, "Please pray for my Daddy, because he does a bad thing at night." The reverend, too busy campaigning for State Senate to take her case on personally, referred the little girl's name to the county.

Promptly thereafter, Ms. Spiegelman contacted Sally at school. "She was reluctant to explain, but I gathered that both her parents were guilty of some sexual malfeasance," the social worker remembered, chewing her Joyce Davenport-style glasses nervously. "Fearing the worst, I emphasized how parents often do bad things, and that a child owes it to herself and to children everywhere to report them to government agencies. The hardest part about protecting children is overcoming their naive tendency to give more love and respect to their parents



Say Grope to Dope

Here's a snap of me in the Big Apple on East 42nd, giving Uncle Ronny a congratulatory shake for passing the Urine Test.

—Ken Kesey

than to the trained, certified experts who are there to protect their welfare. After a rather stressful session, I was able to get through to her."

Little Sally first began to realize something was wrong at the dinner table one night when her father praised her mother's fettuccini with clam sauce. "Daddy winks at her, right?" she tearfully told the court. "And then he goes, 'This is the second best clam I've ever eaten.' And Mommy goes, 'Jesus Christ, David,' and she looks at me and blushes. I knew they were doing something nasty."

Sally had been raptly following the anti-drug campaign of her favorite pop-stars, politicians and professional wrestlers, and assumed that "clam" was slang for some sort of narcotic. Inspired by newspaper stories of pre-teen heroes who turned their parents in for cultivating marijuana plants and eating cannabis-laced brownies in the home, Sally set up a courageous program of peering through keyholes and holding drinking glasses to the walls.

Often at night she heard her parents moaning and gasping in unison, and she smiled to herself in the knowledge that they were engaged in true connubial bliss in the manner sanctified by God and law. But sometimes, she noticed, only one of her parents would groan while the other remained silent. Having watched *Body Heat* on television with her parents, she realized what must be going on.

"It is singularly appropriate," Judge Trembling Hand stated while sentencing Sally's parents each to a year in prison, "that a film dramatizing the proven link between sexual crimes and crimes of violence should have inspired this young lady to cut short the outlaw careers of her parents. We can only hope that she has awakened them to the fact that what begins as a little 'harmless' oral foreplay may shortly end . . . in murder!"

Sally agonized for many nights, asking herself what she should do. After all, her parents were still her parents, even if they were violating the law of her state. But a public service announcement about child abuse during a rerun of *Father Knows Best* finally opened her eyes to a higher imperative. She looked for a person of goodness and truth in the only place she felt safe — the TV set — and found him in the Reverend Babbitt.

After her session with Ms. Spiegelman, little Sally determined that she would try to reform her scrofula parents by herself. "Once she wanted to play in the backyard instead of doing her homework," Sally's father remembered. "I told her to go to her room and she said if I didn't let her stay out she'd call the police. Of course, I ignored her." We realize now that Sally must have suspected that her father, in the guise of parental responsibility, really wanted her confined so that he could perform illegal acts upon her mother.

Soon after, Sally asked her mother for chocolate ice cream instead of liver for dinner. This innocent request to partake in a modest sensual delight was denied out of hand by her mother, no doubt too preoccupied by her own sexual indulgences to consider her daughter's happiness. Little Sally, in a last bid to reach her mother's heart and soul, warned her of what her crimes might lead to. But to no avail. "When she said I'd go to jail for that, I just laughed," her mother said ruefully afterward.

Along with so much else, TV had also taught little Sally the importance of gathering evidence. It was her dramatic Polaroids of the crime in progress, accompanied in the mail by a moving handwritten note, that spurred local police to dust off the state's old sodomy law and haul in the Walkers.

"It's not something anybody took lightly," said Officer McClean. "What with the Swat team and the photographers and all, we were afraid it would be pretty hard on the little girl. When I found her in her bedroom she was just sitting there crying, playing *I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus* on her little record player, over and over. But when I explained to her how the courts would take her away from her parents and put her in a special home where she'd get lots of attention and therapy and chocolate ice cream, why gosh, you should have seen that brave little tyke's face light up!"

Sally's courage and sacrifice have set off repercussions across the country. Several states which had abandoned their sodomy laws due to the difficulty of enforcement have been reviving them again, encouraged by the legion of junior detectives springing up around the land. A network Afterschool Special, *It's Ten O'Clock . . . Do You Know What Your Parents Are Doing?*, inspired many other vigilant young folks to keep a close eye on their elders' morality.

Next, evangelist Pat Robertson established a 24-hour toll-free

Humor Convention

(Continued from Cover)

What do you do at a humor conference for serious relief?

The schedule for Saturday evening called for a trip to Rawhide with Cowboy Dan. Instead, Scot Morris, "Games" columnist for *Omni*, Peter London, standup comedian, and I decided to watch *Comic Relief*, the all-star comedy special, hosted by Robin Williams, Whoopi Goldberg and Billy Crystal, a benefit for the nation's homeless. After much hassle, we found a hotel on the outskirts of Tempe that carried HBO.

There we were, three men without luggage, explaining to the desk clerk that we only wanted to rent a room for a few hours so we could watch a certain TV show. He gave us a look of bemused skepticism and said, "That must be some flick."

As it turned out, there had been a misunderstanding about broadcast time, and in fact it appeared as though we might have missed it altogether. We simply collapsed into uncontrollable, high-pitched, rolling-around, fist-thumping belly laughter at the sheer frustration in which our quest had culminated.

When *Comic Relief* finally did come on, nothing in those three hours was able to evoke an encore of that laugh.

We gave our key and fast-food leftovers to a couple of street people to spend the night in luxury, in keeping with the spirit of the show, and went back to our own hotel rooms.

* * *

Perhaps the most bizarre intellectual pursuit of the humor conference took place on Sunday morning—a study of laughter itself—"Acoustic Correlates of Young Adult Laughter."

Don Mowrer reasoned that "Laughter is an acoustic event and therefore is subject to the same sophisticated empirical scrutiny which speech scientists have employed successfully in analyzing speech sound for over four decades."

He defined a laugh as "any non-verbal vocal behavior that occurred beginning at the onset of the vocal behavior to the termination of the vocal behavior as marked by a 250-millisecond or longer unfilled pause."

His associate, James Case, described the machinery which "gave us an intensity readout of the laugh burst." Also, "pitch measurement analyzes fundamental frequency of the voice signal up to every burst in the larynx." Conversation samples were "compared with measurement of the actual laugh signal."

They concluded that "We laugh at around the same burst rate as we speak" and, similarly,

that "We laugh and speak at about the same pitch level." However, "the chief departure from speech behavior was the lack of phonemic variation in laughter."

Specifically, "laughter usually contains only reduplicated neutral vowels and glottal-stop consonants." Consequently, "Laugh syllables are devoid of consonants typically used in speech." Of course, "h" is the most popular consonant. Thus, "you'll probably seldom hear people laughing using a consonant reduplication such as ka-ka-ka-ka-ka-ka or fa-fa-fa-fa-fa-fa. You will never have mixed consonants with vowels in a laugh such as ta-ha-ka-sa-fa-ka."

Nor was the official nerd laugh ignored: "Some laughs occur on inhalation, but we never speak on inhalations in speech."

* * *

There has been developing in the humor movement a slight conflict between the theoreticians and the practitioners.

In 1982, Des McHale proposed a humor conference in Ireland in which "all of the papers would have to be funny to be accepted." The academics protested loudly.

At the 1984 WHIM conference, Larry Wilde proposed a requirement that all papers delivered at a humor conference should be at least 15% funny. He was 100% serious.

At the 1985 conference, Larry Mintz gave a presentation lamenting that "the scholarly, intellectual component of the humor conference has been steadily taking a back seat to the activities of humorists, humor aficionados, humor hucksters, and people who use humor in various forms of social, 'human potential' activities... None of this leads to arguing that a paper dealing with humor cannot be funny; the point is that it need not be funny. Our purpose is to inform, not to entertain; to learn rather than be amused."

Wilde disagreed: "I think academia often ruins the very essence of what humor is by over-analysis. Humor is spontaneous, gleeful, fun. Putting it under a microscope so that it can be categorized, analyzed and subjected to scrutiny beyond reason actually defeats its very purpose. There is no question that some studies should be made, but unfortunately I find that most of the people making them are humorless, poorly-trained and ill-equipped to make the necessary judgments."

"If you had agile comedy minds like Art Buchwald, Russell Baker, Woody Allen, Steve Allen, Shelley Berman et al doing the proper research and subsequent papers, you'd have brilliant analysis that would stand the test of time, but they're too involved in the business of making people laugh. I suppose the business of

understanding the whys and hows must be left to academics. I only wish they had more first-hand practical experience in the field to be able to guide them."

Mintz responded: "I guess we just come from different traditions. Papers which are well-researched and which deal with interesting, important issues just don't bore me even if they're read in a monotone by a little old guy in a wrinkled brown suit. Ironically, the collecting of jokes which you've done is worth more, in the long run, than the scholarly work of most of us, since you can't do much without a database, and yours is probably the best in the world...."

* * *

It was at the 1986 TAASP/WHIM humor conference that mutual respect seemed to break down.

Louis Androes was reading his paper, "Test Patterns for Living: The Rajneesh Approach to Play." It triggered an anti-cult antagonism in Gershon Legman, who in the '50s had written in *Neurotica* an exposé of Epizootics, a satirical takeoff on Dianetics, which later became Scientology.

At one point, Legman knocked over a chair and walked out blustering, then came back to heckle.

Legman: What was the purpose? Why did you give us all this? Are you a member of that cult? Have you got money invested in it?

Androes: Let me answer you in about three different ways.

Legman: That's too many. One way.
Androes: Okay, one for you, one for you, and one for you. (The mounting rage could now be heard in his voice.) I'm not enlightened. I'm not a Rajneeshian. I'm not a supporter or a detractor—

Legman: —and not a detractor either, that's for sure.

Androes: This is one thing I want to make clear. What I'm interested in is what happened. The first thing that happened is, I submitted an abstract that got in WHIM's hands instead of TAASP's. Don't ask me why.

Legman: Very appropriate.
Androes: Obviously my interest lies somewhere outside of — what would you call it—humor?

Legman: You pretend it's a study of play, but we're talking about a con game, we're not talking about play.

Androes: But they don't feel that way.
Legman: Because they were hypnotized.

Androes: No, no — you talk about con games — the street people conned the Rajneesh.

Legman: What about Jonestown? I don't see the difference.

number for "all you little Sallys to call us up, tell us your parents' names, and describe every wicked thing they do." Not to be outdone by a presidential challenger, mainstream Republicans created a Senate Commission on Pro-Social Uses of Education, which has recommended the addition of vice law studies to elementary school curricula, and called for the formation of therapy groups for Children of Suspected Sex Criminals.

Appropriately, Frances Spiegelman was asked to take on the high-profile, high-salary job of heading up the latter. Some were surprised when she accepted the position, given her earlier second thoughts.

"I was wrong, okay?" she said. "Let's just say this is one of those issues that liberals and conservatives can join together on. Maybe I'm not crazy about the sodomy laws, but there are more important things than that. It's about time we realized what kind of tyranny is inherent in the nuclear family. I mean, we can't leave the responsibility of socializing the next generation of humans up to a bunch of untrained individuals whose only qualification for parenthood is their ability to have sex. I think it's high time for the government to tell kids the truth: 'All your parents did was make you. We're the ones who really love you.'"

—Gerard Jones

Androes: Why do you think the way you do? Who brainwashed you?

Legman: I don't have any victims.

Androes: How do you know you don't have any victims? How do you know I don't feel like a victim right now?

Legman: I believe you do.

Androes: I just made my point.

Legman: Are you writing a book about this?

Androes: No. My interest in Rajneesh is pretty well done. I've got three articles out there in publication right now, and that'll be the end of it.

A woman in the audience asked, "Does it bother you that you were included in a WHIM breakout session as opposed to a TAASP breakout session? Does there have to be that much division between humor and play, when they're integral?"

Androes replied, "Yes, it bothers me to one extent—I prepared this for a TAASP presentation, and I find myself in a WHIM situation. I might add (his voice is now shaking) I think what's going on in WHIM is very typical of the Rajneesh. They (sarcastically) laugh an awful lot. They are the most exuberant—and I can't think of a better word, unless you want to give me ecstasy and all that kind of stuff which you get from meditation — but they are the most exuberant group of people, five thousand of 'em, that I have ever seen, not just now and then, but all the time. And I say to myself, are you people real? Those of you here in this room (bordering on the edge of hostility) — you're playing with jokes, and you write 'em for people to get up and perform and make their living. Is this real? I don't know. For those people, it was very real. I made three trips there. . . ."

There was something utterly poignant about this confrontation. Androes had begun his presentation with a question: "How long has it been since anyone knocked on your door or called you on the phone and asked, 'Can you come on over to my place and play?'"

The humor conference had indeed invited him to play, and now he found himself being attacked instead.

* * *

On Monday, I deliberately sat next to Louis Androes at "A Study of Empathy for Victims of Practical Jokes, Pranks and Hoaxes." He was still quite upset. "I just wanted to show how Rajneesh was able to tap the ritual power of many religions. . . ."

Mary Ann Rishel was describing various prank situations which test-students had to rank on a horizontal line from Least Offensive to Most Offensive, first as they responded and then as they thought each victim might respond.

Ranked as "Not Offensive At All":

The niece and nephew of an elderly couple put their names in a magazine ad for couple-swapping.

Someone let loose greased pigs at 3 a.m. in the middle of sorority houses.

Students planted corn in a field in back of the Cornell Student Union, and when the corn sprouted it spelled out FUCK.

McDonald's sponsored a \$50,000 sweep-

stakes that offered a year's free groceries and a Datsun as top prizes. Three Cal Tech students took literally the contest rules in fine print that read "Enter as often as you wish." Helped by a computer, they printed over a million entries, deposited them at 98 McDonald restaurants across southern California, and won 20 of the top prizes, including a Datsun station wagon, \$3000 in cash and \$1500 worth of McDonald's gift certificates.

Ranked as "Somewhat Offensive":

Stanford's humor magazine floated the hoax that the university's bowling team had been killed in a plane crash.

The U.S. military academy at West Point had female cadets bite the necks of chickens as an initiation prank.

Young adults sunbathed in a cemetery on Memorial Day.

Students in a junior high school in Canada used stink bombs to explode the school's toilets.

Ranked as "Very Highly Offensive":

On Hallowe'en outside New York City, a 16-year-old boy sprayed a synagogue with shaving cream, forming a swastika, a large X, an obscenity and the word Jew.

American international college students pledging a fraternity were forced to consume large quantities of wine and spaghetti, vomit, then consume more, then eat garbage, sit in a chair that jolted them with a car battery, lie soaking wet in the snow, get paddled, and be branded on the buttocks with a coat-hanger shaped into Greek letters.

Residents of an upstate New York county received phony reports that a young boy was castrated in the restroom of a local department store, and that he was either in a coma or dead.

A group of students dressed up as the Ku Klux Klan, with a white student in blackface as a slave crawling at the end of a rope, and walked into a black caucus meeting.

Rishel proceeded to examine the varieties of misunderstanding in empathy.

Sometimes preconceived values couldn't be shaken. During a welcome-back party, a 55-year-old teacher who underwent cancer surgery was served marijuana-laced brownies by her 10th grade students. Testees found this only Slightly Offensive; they didn't find marijuana-laced brownies as something to be criticized so they focussed on that and didn't see that she was a cancer patient.

Other times there was a failure in cognition. Several members of a rugby team rolled seven human skulls they had stolen from a dental school onto a playing field in an attempt to intimidate opponents. This was rated Not Offensive At All, and the testees didn't think the victims would find it offensive. All they thought was that one team was scaring another, merely a discourtesy since it interrupted the start of the game. It was offensive because the skulls were stolen, and highly offensive because they were human skulls.

Suddenly a man dressed as a clown appeared on stage.

We had seen him before — or at least someone in that costume and makeup—at a previous session, "The Limits of Comedy: How Far Can

a Circus Clown Go?" — and now we were laughing at his antics again. He took the wooden pointer from the green blackboard and pranced among the audience. He stopped in front of Gershon Legman, then lunged at him. The clown and Legman shrieked simultaneously. We thought they were laughing. Nobody did anything. The clown ran out. We all assumed this was some kind of April Fool's joke, perfectly timed to coincide with the session on pranks. And what better "victim" than Legman?

But now he was bleeding. Somehow we still expected him to stand up and shout, "What is the taste of human blood?" But he sort of melted onto the floor.

As a group, we had been conditioned by the conference in general — and by this session in particular—to accept what had happened as an educational hoax.

* * *

While the conference continued, Legman was taken to a hospital, where he died of a hemorrhage. Police investigators were led to believe that Louis Androes was the most likely suspect, but I assured them that he had been sitting next to me when the incident took place. I'm ashamed to admit that even though I knew the cops were doing their job, I somehow resented the fact that their questioning had detained me from attending a session on "Training College Students to Utilize Laughter As a Means of Reducing Stress." I had really been looking forward to that.

Although Legman had offended and irritated countless professors, a sense of shocked confusion engulfed the entire convention, that somebody's outrage toward him would result in fatal revenge. The Tempe Police Department had not a clue as to who the clown was who did it.

That evening, an aura of subdued hysteria permeated the Holiday Inn ballroom as we watched the "Humor in Flamenco Dancing" demonstration. There was even an element of violence in the Joke-Telling Competition. The first place winner:

Once upon a time there was a lion. And the lion was in the jungle. And he said to the monkey in a tree, "Hey, monkey, who's the king of the jungle?" And the monkey said, "You are, oh great one, king of the jungle, your majesty." Then the lion turned to the giraffe and said, "Hey, giraffe, who's the king of the jungle?" And the giraffe said, "Oh, you are, oh great one, king of the jungle." Then he turned to the elephant and he asked, "Hey, elephant, who's the king of the jungle?" And the elephant picked the lion up, smashed him against a tree, and then threw him down on the ground, *kerplunk*. The lion picked himself up, brushed himself off, and said, "Hey, listen. Just because you don't know the right answer, you don't have to get sore!"

Ah, well. How strange I felt, having come to an innocent humor conference, only to end up serving as the alibi for an angry anthropologist accused of murder. I could only chortle quietly to myself: fa-fa-fa-fa-fa-fa. . . .

—Paul Krassner

MEDIA FREAK

The Fake Captain Midnight

While federal authorities were busy tracking down the real video pirate, professional hoaxer Alan Abel fooled the *Village Voice* and countless radio talk show hosts with phony interviews.

"It's not against the law," he told *The Realist*, "to impersonate a fugitive."

Suppression of Humor

Screaming comedian Sam Kinison was bleeped out on the west version of *Saturday Night Live* when he said: "We're in the middle of a drug war. There is no pot. They've taken the pot. Give us back our pot and we'll forget about the crack."

Hispanic comedian Paul Rodriguez has a Spanish-language record album which has been censored in Chile because he does a bit about dictator Pinochet meeting Margaret Thatcher on *The New Dating Game*.

Cartoonist Mary Lawton's feature has been dropped from the Somerville (Mass.) *Journal* because of complaints about her strip which recalled the experience of going to church as a little girl: "My knees ached, my stomach growled, I had to fart... I couldn't focus on the priest... The Host stuck like glue all over my mouth..." Lawton's response: "I cannot apologize for my childhood impressions. I am glad that I remember these things. Those who deny and attack the childhood innocence of others are denying their own inner child."

The Price of Success

Bill Cosby has become a popular target these days.

Spy magazine depicts him as a fiscal opportunist planning to ditch his hit sitcom after completing five seasons, once its syndication future is assured, and as an egomaniac who "refused to speak at Stanford because the invitation didn't include a free doctorate."

The New Republic pointed out that the Cosby show is the most watched program on South African television (*Dallas* and *The A-Team* are among others) and called for a ban on the export of American TV shows, since 94% of white homes there have sets, compared to 22% of black homes. "That's where the Cosby sanction comes in. Though it's possible that Dr. Athcliffe Huxtable broadens the thinking of the Boers, Mr. T. and J. R. Ewing probably not. Let whites contemplate Dallas-less homes — and reflect on what they and their parents have done to inspire so much revulsion around the world."

Nation, in a cartoon by Ed Sorel, had him speaking: "So this buddy says, 'I didn't buy your commercials for Jello, Del Monte, Mr. T, Ideal toys or Coca-Cola, although they do business in South Africa. But, why do you do commercials for those crooks at the top?' My buddy didn't understand that commercials improve race relations. Showing that a black man can be just as hungry as a white man, I'm proving we are brothers."

Olfactory Cover-Up

According to *Dollars and Sense*, the city of Duluth, instead of cleaning up the waste in Lake Superior, has been testing "masking agents" to find the scent that best hides the odor emanating from the sewage-filled lake. So far, they've tried more than a dozen different aromas, including cinnamon, bubble gum, and neutral pine.

Respect For the Dead

Private newsletters often fill in certain gaps left by the mass media.

Lyle Stuart's *Hot News* published a complaint about "all the bullshit about Roy Cohn since his illness and especially his death. This man ruined a lot of lives and caused a tremendous amount of damage — and all we have are a bunch of celebrities, journalists, etc., talking about how nice the 'real' Cohn was." Stuart summed up Cohn in four words: "He was a slime."

Arthur Hlavaty's *Dillinger Relic* pronounced him "Dead, at an untimely age (far too late)..."

Legal Brief

The profession has been attacked by writers from Shakespeare ("The first thing we do is kill all the lawyers") to Gore Vidal ("This country is run for the enrichment of lawyers"). Now Running Press is preparing *The Lawyers Joke Book*. Sample: "What's the difference between a dead rat in the road and a dead attorney in the road? There are skid marks in front of the rat."

Celebrity Status

Mort Sahl claims that when President Reagan called Jerry Lewis during the Muscular Dystrophy telethon, Lewis said, "We'll have lunch soon—I promise."

Statistic of the Month

Every NBC evening newscast includes a total of 80 seconds of their Statue of Liberty logo.

Editorial Coincidence

The *Washington Monthly* had a full-page ad for Ford cars and trucks on the back cover and a 10-page article praising Ford Motors on the inside.

Penthouse ran a piece about how "Men are broadly and unjustly accused of being the sole perpetrators of domestic violence." Facing this was a full-page ad — with the headline, "Men Could Use Some Protection From Women" — for Trojan prophylactics.

AIDS Fallout

A *New York Times* memo has been sent to their telephone sales staff: "Effective immediately, the cause of death may not appear in a paid death announcement unless it is placed and authorized by a member of the deceased's family or by the funeral home acting on behalf of the immediate family... We will continue not to accept ads that include the word 'lover,' but we will accept 'friend, companion and partner.'"

Disinformation Blues

Secretary of State George Shultz refused to take a polygraph test, but willingly took a drug test. Apparently, he doesn't mind lying to the American public, but wants to be sure they know he's not stoned at the time.

The Supreme Court Sucks

Upholding Georgia's outlawing of consensual homosexual sodomy made front page headline news. A few months later, it was only a small inside item when the same Court refused to reinstate an Oklahoma law outlawing consensual heterosexual sodomy.

This means that if Sandra Day O'Connor participates in a *menage a trois* with Justices Rehnquist and Scalia during recess, indulging in an infinite variety of positions, only the two men could be arrested. Is this affirmative action, or what?

