

The Realist

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Andrew Dice Clay
v. Lenny Bruce

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Editor: Paul Krassner

Spike Lee Meets Tom Wolfe

Recently black filmmaker Spike Lee and white novelist Tom Wolfe participated in a fundraising event for the sixth annual Coro Foundation leadership dinner at the Pierre Hotel in New York City. The following is excerpted from a transcript of their debate.

Wolfe: It seems to me that *Do The Right Thing* is somewhat idealized. That is to say, you give the impression that drugs and crime don't even exist among the inhabitants of Bensonhurst. They're guilty only of wanting music in their ghetto blasters, pizza on the table and photographs of black heroes on the wall.

Lee: That's a racist attitude you're revealing. I mean, does this give you the right to go to the opposite extreme in *Bonfire of the Vanities*? The South Bronx has to be a drug-infested, crime-ridden sewer? You know, the residents there are very unhappy about that.

Wolfe: You're talking about the movie. But I don't know if there are a lot of people in the Bronx who feel slighted by the book. I don't think you can go through life as a writer worrying about public relations. You either write what you see, honestly and frankly and candidly, or you should get out of the business and go into something else.

Lee: What, it's not public relations for Warner Brothers to agree to put a disclaimer at the end, reassuring the audience that the story is only fiction and the characters are purely coincidental?

Wolfe: I think the whole business of disclaimers has gotten to be a joke. There's no one naive enough to believe them, so why tack them on? It's an empty ritual to avoid lawsuits.

Lee: Everybody cares about how they're portrayed in the media. It has to do with the truth, not lawsuits. Black people are upset about the way they've been portrayed in films ever since *Birth of a Nation*. Because it's from TV and movies that a lot of white Americans get their opinions on blacks, especially ones that don't live anywhere near black people. That's exactly what's happening with *Bonfire of the Vanities*.

Wolfe: Look, I wrote about a white Wall Street bond trader who accidentally runs over a black teenager. The trial becomes a media circus and the victim lapses into a coma and dies. Now how can you say my book is causing racism?

Lee: No, not your book, but the movie that's being made out of it. They've changed the ending into a racist conclusion.

Wolfe: I haven't even seen the script.

Lee: Well, I have. And now, in the last image, in the hospital room, the black kid looks around, sees that nobody's looking, he



takes the tubes out of his nose and stuff and just runs smiling out of the hospital. Like the whole thing was a nigger scam! I mean, how do you feel about that?

Wolfe: Well, that's news to me. Maybe I better read the script. If the idea is that it's just been a shuck and he's been pretending, that would be a pretty startling change. But I'm wondering about your double standard. In *Do The Right Thing*, it's perfectly acceptable for the black youths to let a fire hydrant drench the inside of a convertible being driven by a white man—after assuring him they won't—but then there's a sudden buildup of racial tension on the block when a white man is walking his bicycle on the sidewalk and the wheel *inadvertently* goes over a black's sneaker. Incidentally, you have a terrible moment of inconsistency there, because the white man walks *behind* the black youth, and yet he complains about a mark across the *front* of his sneaker. But don't get me wrong—I love Hollywood.

Lee: Oh, boy, now that's really nitpicking. Listen, I saw *Total Recall*—and that's a multi-multi-fuckin'-multi-million-dollar film—and there's this crucial scene where Arnold Schwarzenegger's girlfriend spits right in the face of the Bad Guy, but there's *no saliva* on his face! So let's not use America's Wackiest Movie Bloopers as a diversion from my point. I mean, you write a great book, you don't care what they do with it?

Wolfe: Of course I care, but if I sell the rights, I lose control. Which would happen even if I were hired to write the script. But I write books, not screenplays. The book is my art, and the movie is Warner Brothers' commerce. So don't confuse their water with my pump.

Lee: So you just take the money and say, "Go on, do with it what you want?"

Wolfe: Isn't that what you do with your TV commercials for Nike sneakers? Just take the money and run? There are black kids getting killed for their sneakers. Don't you have any responsibility? After all, you're helping to attach the status to those sneakers. I would never pay \$125 for a pair of sneakers, and I can afford it; but you *personally* participate in that commercial, you *personally* participate in creating that false value, for which black kids have been killing each other.

Lee: What are you talking about? *Society* creates false values, not me. Only when black entertainers or athletes get big visibility do they have to be the moral conscience of America. That commercial has never gotten anyone killed. I challenge you or anybody to show me that connection. *You* gotta understand what a pair of Air Jordans means to a poor black kid, but what do you want *me* to do, make a special announcement that they should always buy their own and never kill anybody for them?

Wolfe: Just do the right sneaker. . . .

COURT JESTER

Satirical Prophecy

As a standup satirist, I have performed lately at a couple of conferences—in San Francisco at the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex (where I heard a new oxymoron, “co-dependency support group”) and in Minneapolis at the *Utne Reader*’s “Alternative Media and the Environment” (where I learned a new word, “greenwashing,” which is what corporations do to clean up their ecological acts). In the course of commenting on stage about the flagburning issue, I have uttered a couple of things which turned out to be prophetic.

Once I predicted that there would be condoms imprinted with American flags because the fight against AIDs is in the interest of national security. Sure enough, there are now Old Glory Condoms which “utilize the power and image of the American flag to mobilize the country for the war against AIDs and sexually transmitted diseases.” Although the condoms themselves are the standard latex color, the company’s logo is an unfurled condom imprinted with an American flag.

On another occasion, I remarked that although it had become legal to burn the flag it was also legal for cops to look the other way while vigilantes beat up flagburners. But now Louisiana legislators have passed a bill that lowers to \$25 the fine against those who assault people who burn the American flag. Representative David Duke, former Ku Klux Klan leader, led the fight for this bill. Apparently it’s all right to burn a cross, but not the flag.

On October 26, I begin performing every Friday night at the Saxon-Lee Gallery in Hollywood (for information and reservations, call 629-2205). In view of my psychic ability, I will try to choose my words carefully. We mustn’t let this power get into the wrong hands.

Why Andrew Dice Clay Is No Lenny Bruce

I would never even mention them in the same breath except that Andrew Dice Clay’s manager has been hyping him as another Lenny Bruce. And then a radio talk show caller asked, “What’s the difference? Lenny talked dirty. Dice talks dirty.” But Lenny served as a semantacist trying to demystify the language; Clay needs dirty words to make his act work. I started to make a tally sheet of how many times Clay said *fuck* on his HBO special, but after the first 25 I got bored, and besides, I was beginning to feel like one of those cops who used to take notes out of context when Lenny was performing.

Although Andrew claims that Dice is only a character he plays—that’s not *him* up there—at a certain point you can’t really separate them. It was on the basis of *Andrew*’s calculated dishonorability that *Dice* recited his tongue-in-ass Mother Goose rhymes at the live broadcast of the MTV Awards—so who broke his agreement, Andrew or Dice?

Lenny once told me that if he ever went on television, he would change his language but not his point of view. Clay doesn’t have any point of view. His job is to milk the prejudices, frustrations, insecurities, fears—and, mostly, the taste—of his fans. His style is a combination of Don Rickles, Rodney Dangerfield and Morton Downey. Here he is, every fuck in context:

“You get these fuckin’ bums in the street, the panhandlers with birds peckin’ at their fuckin’ feet, they come over to ya, they like, ‘Hey, buddy, you got some spare change’ ‘Hey, get the fuck away from me, huh? Hey, you’re a fuckin’ bum, ya know that? You’re a piece of *shit*! Whattaya gonna do with a quarter, huh, open up a fuckin’ *business*? Go rob somebody, earn your fuckin’ money, *you fuckin’ piece o’ shit!*”

And the audience is roaring. He segues into a bit about Hare Krishna and Moonie flower-vendors—almost always Caucasian in this country, but this particular one is Clay’s vehicle for Asian-bashing.

“They come up to ya, ‘Would you like to buy a flower?’ ‘Yeah, and I’m gonna plant it in your asshole!’ More fuckin’ morons, huh, and they try to embarrass you like when you’re with your girlfriend, and they’ll ask you right in front of her face, ‘Would you like to buy a flower for the lady?’ ‘Hey, lemme tell you something—I fucked this lady four times already today, awright? Catch me early evenings, you fuckin’ chink bastard! [Now the crowd is cheering wildly.] You

slanty-eyed cocksucker, what you are!’ They’re all the same—Japs, chinks, it’s all the same *shit*. Where are the Japs coming from anyway? Didn’t we drop two bombs on them a few years ago? What was in those bombs, fuckin’ Sony radios or somethin’? And they’re the worst drivers. I mean how do you drive with your eyes three-quarters closed, huh? You can blindfold these people with fuckin’ dental floss, you don’t give ‘em keys to a car. . . .”

* * *

It was with a combination of integrity and humor that feminist attorney Gloria Allred donned a 1900s bathing suit complete with bloomers to enter the sauna room at the Friar’s Club which she had worked so diligently to integrate.

The Club had always been a hangout for the Good Old Boys of Show Biz. The dinners consisted of a bunch of males telling dirty jokes about their male guest of honor. In 1977 Lucille Ball became the first woman to be so honored, and the Friars made a specific decision not to “roast” her in the usual fashion.

However, by the time Phyllis Diller got roasted, the climate had changed. Pat McCormick announced to her that “This is indeed a rare occasion—you’re in a room with 500 men and not one of us wants to fuck you.”

McCormick has one of the raunchiest, most irreverent minds in comedy. At a recent roast of Arnold Schwarzenegger, he said that “Ted Kennedy was very happy when you became a member of the family—he admired you because you had the strength to open a car door under water.”

There were all men at that roast, except for one table, which Gloria Allred and her female companions were now legally allowed to occupy. But they had to sit there, cringing amidst uproarious laughter, as Pat McCormick, in a burst of safe machismo, honored Arnold Schwarzenegger with a description of his wife: “In her high school yearbook, Maria Shriver was voted most likely to be found unconscious in a barrack.”

Whereas Lenny Bruce represented a conscious break from this Milton-Berle/Jerry-Lewis/Bob-Hope/Jack-Carter/Henny-Youngman/locker-room-cum-stag-party tradition, Andrew Dice Clay is a throwback to that tradition, only now he can exhibit on cable all the sexism and racism, all the homophobia and xenophobia, which they used to be able to spout only at Friar’s Club roasts. (But then, it’s also considered progress that you can now get free X-rays of the candy that children get on Hallowe’en to make sure that there’s no razor blades hidden inside.) In fact, it was a black-tie banquet with a roast mindset that provided a turning point in Clay’s career.

He has a bit in his act that goes: “Hey, you don’t see black guys being gay, that’s for sure. How do you give a guy head from three



blocks away and say 'I love ya?' That's why blacks are proud of their penises. They hold onto it like someone's gonna rip it off. They come down the street—'Yeahhh! You know, a lot of people sez to me, Moby, why are you always holding your dick? Well, y'know, it wouldn't be gentlemanly to leave it, like, draggin' on the ground behind me and shit. Children get hurt with this motherfucker.' Yeah, well, while you're at it, why don'tcha snake the toilet, okay? And plunge the kitchen sink, it could always use it.' Yeah, the blacks know what I'm talking about. Where are you tonight—smile—I dig you people. [The camera focuses on a black man in the audience.] Just throw it up here, lemme show 'em, hah? There he is, what a fuckin' guy. This guy gotta go for a fitting just to wear a condom, lemme tell ya somethin'...

Vanity Fair reported that "Dice Clay was embraced by the cream of American comedians at the annual Big Brothers benefit, a stag night of blue humor attended by Red Buttons, Jack Lemmon, Walter Matthau, and most of the studio, network, and agency chiefs. His shining moment came in the middle of his big-black-dick schtick, when he spotted Sidney Poitier sitting at Marvin Davis' ringside table. 'C'mon, Sidney,' he hollered, 'you know what I'm talking about. Throw it up here. Show it to 'em.' Poitier guffawed, and so did the rest of the room."

According to Clay, "By the time I was done, Carl Reiner was saying, 'I don't know what just happened, but tonight, Andrew Dice Clay became a star in this room.'"

The very next day, 20th Century Fox called to make a deal.

Sam Kinison, of all people, says that Clay "doesn't have a lot of tact." Clay in turn accuses him of having "a black heart." Kinison says he hopes that Clay "will die of stomach cancer from the inside out, like Bette Davis." Now there's tact.

George Carlin points out that "Clay's targets are underdogs—gays, women, immigrants. He plays to the biases of his audience. But he's Jewish, and I wonder if he realizes that somewhere down that list come the Jews." Dice's real name is Andrew Clay Silverstein. Kinison calls him Andrew Jew Silverstein.

When *Saturday Night Live* cast member Nora Dunn girlcotted the show to protest Clay's appearance, *L.A. Times* comedy critic Lawrence Christon wrote that "if one was going to protest any of the company's endlessly dumb, snotty routines in which satire is confused with derision, you would've thought someone might have acted sooner, during the years, say, when Garrett Morris was demeaned week after week. And where was Executive Producer Lorne Michaels, nee Lorne Linowitz, when the cast put together a game show sketch called 'Jew or Not Jew'?"

Furthermore, when *SNL's* ratings didn't skyrocket as the result of an appearance by triple-platinum recording artist L.L. Cool J, Michaels vetoed a guest spot by Terence Trent D'Arby, promising "No more black people on the show—they don't have a loyal audience." More recently, he turned down a black comic, explaining, "The trouble with black people is they can only play black people."

Although Clay says so patronizingly, "I dig you [black] people"—and, in *Ford Fairlane*, sucks up to a black rap group—I'm waiting for him to court arrest by performing in Florida as an act of solidarity with 2 Live Crew, but he obviously doesn't have the courage of his strut. Forget about convictions.

Lenny Bruce had principles. Andrew Dice Clay has an attitude. Lenny's persona was gentle. Clay's is harsh. Lenny's act exuded compassion. Clay's reeks of hostility. Lenny was humble. Clay is smug. Lenny tried to liberate taboos. Clay exploits them. Lenny challenged stereotypes. Clay perpetuates 'em. Lenny was complex. Clay is one-dimensional. Lenny was poignant. Clay is pathetic. Lenny tried to unite people. Clay seems to divide them. Lenny loved subtlety. It makes Clay nauseous. Lenny aimed for the highest common denominator. Clay aims for the lowest. Lenny was a legendary talent. Clay is a flash in the pan. Lenny fought for freedom of expression. Clay is the ultimate risk of that freedom.

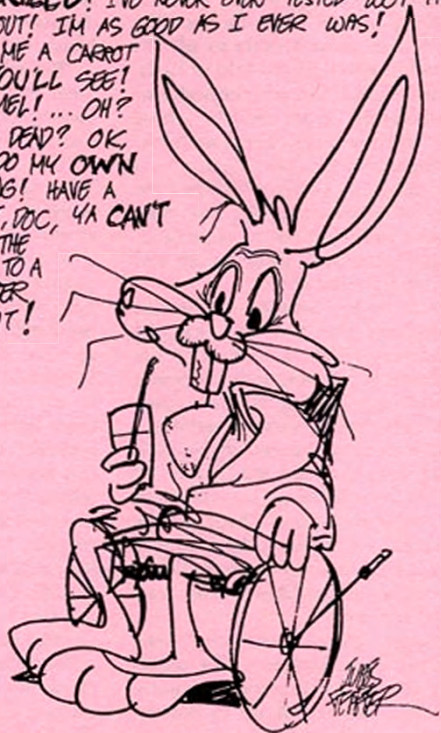
So yeah, sure, Lenny Bruce died to make the world safe for Andrew Dice Clay, but what the fuck, I'd rather see bad comedy than good violence any day. In Tennessee, the legislature actually considered reducing the penalty for assaulting a flagburner to a one dollar fine!

Now that's funny.

—Paul Krassner

BUSHWA, MOVIES ARE A YOUNG RABBIT'S GAME! EVEN IF I HAVE SLOWED DOWN A STEP OR TWO I CAN STILL OUTFUN THAT THAT THAT WOTZISNAME? - HARRY NORMAN-SEYMOUR-ELMER! YEAH, ELMER! ARE YOU KIDDING, DOC? WHAT I'VE LOST IN YOUTH, I'VE GAINED IN SAVVY! I'VE GOT SMARTS I HAVEN'T EVEN BEGUN TO USE YET! PLUS A B.M.W. IN THE DRIVEWAY, TUNED UP MOTOR THREEBING! WHO NEEDS RABBIT FEET WHEN I GOT WHEELS? WARREN BEATTY CAN AGE BUT I CAN'T? GIMME A BREAK, DOC! ; COUGH; THIS CHAIR IS MOTORIZED! COM-PUTERIZED! I'VE NEVER EVEN TESTED WOT IT CAN DO FLAT OUT! I'M AS GOOD AS I EVER WAS!

LEND ME A CARROT AND YOU'LL SEE! ASK MEL! ... OH? MEL'S DEAD? OK, I'LL DO MY OWN LOOPING! HAVE A HEART, DOC, YA CANT GIVE THE PART TO A YOUNGER RABBIT!



What's Out, Doc?

Bugs Bunny's popularity is largely due to his irreverent, even anarchic charm, but Warner Brothers apparently feels the Wascally Wabbit should be treated with respect. For the just-released Bugs Bunny magazine—part of the studio's media campaign to celebrate the character's 50th birthday and push Bugs merchandise—Warners commissioned tributes from some of America's top comic-strip artists (Jim Davis, Charles Schultz and Matt Groening among them). But Jules Feiffer is conspicuously absent—Warners turned down the Pulitzer Prize-winner's cartoon.

"They asked me for a drawing, then rejected it with the sort of excuse I've been getting for years: 'We love it, but we think it would offend other people,'" Feiffer tells us. "They said they were afraid it might offend Warren Beatty, because I refer to his age, and Mel Blanc's family, because I announce the fact that Mel is dead" (a fact that's mentioned at least twice in articles in the mag).

"It's one of those loony-bin situations that recur in America. You've got a character whose style is based on irreverence, but when you celebrate him, the one thing you can't be is irreverent. That attitude proves Bugs is dead and in the hands of the morticians."

Warner Brothers representatives had no comment.

The final irony: Feiffer says someone from Warners brought the original of his cartoon—after it had been rejected.

—Charles Solomon

Art Rats

by Jody Procter

Up against the wall time again for art. The NEA has been backpedalling toward respectability, cutting away funding to suspect artists, withholding support from avant garde venues that put smut on the walls and dare to call it "art." Jesse Helms is waving the flag, and really, don't you have the feeling you've heard all this before? I mean, isn't this just the same ole same ole; hasn't this hue and cry been raised for centuries? Art moves a step forward, genitalia goes up on the walls of cathedrals, the guardians of public morality climb up with their paint brushes to add the discreet fig leaf, the well placed fold of cloth.

Take the case of Zelda Screech, the performance artist/sculptress from Seattle whose piece—"J.C. and the Boys, The Last Suck-Fuck Rat Supper and Cruise-o-Fiction"—is currently on display at the Art Mall in New York, an institution which, by the way, does not now receive and never has received (and, one could say, after this show never will receive) funding from the NEA.

Screech is a wispy, intense, intellectual woman whose pale skin and wan, haggard features stand very much in contrast to her aggressive, almost brassy role at the forefront of the art world's quest to find the outer limits of what she calls "moral disrespectability." We caught up with her at a quiet, chrome and glass Soho espresso bar a few weeks ago and asked about her latest work, an installation of stuffed rats, costumed as Jesus Christ and the Twelve Apostles, set up in a Last Supper tableau and engaged in every conceivable act of homoerotic (or, as she likes to say, "rat-erotic") sexual activity.

"It all began quite innocently," she explained, firing up a Marlboro—she chain-smokes while she talks with nervous, speedy intensity. "I had this friend up in Seattle, outside Seattle actually, who was studying pack rats. Pack rats are like collectors. They're into shiny objects. It's almost like art collecting. So I decided to try these experiments where I would print up little pictures of the great works of Western Art and leave them outside the rat nests, and see which ones they chose. Interesting, because they showed a marked preference for pictures with naked breasts—don't ask me why. Over and over again. They'd go for Gauguin, say, those Tahitian women or Bosch or *Rape of the Daughters of Leucippus* by Rubens.

"So then I did it with abstract expressionism and they always dragged the women back into their nests—the women painters, that is. They'd shit on Motherwell or Jackson Pollack and take Helen Frankenthaler back inside. Some sexual component there. Either mating rituals, like 'Why don't you come up and check out my etchings?'—or maybe they just got off on this breast stuff, like there was some Klinian connection between rats and human female anatomy.

"Then I got invited to this Arts Festival in Moscow last summer, so I figured I'd take the whole rat's nest over there—rats, twigs and all—and do an installation where they'd be in

red light, like the Koala House at the Zoo, and the Moscow art lovers could see them picking through the art, just like back in Seattle. I was planning to keep up my experiments with the female thing, throw in some Russian painters of both genders and see what happened, right? So, I rounded up the rats, got on the plane; then I had to make a connection in Bonn and it turns out there's like this twelve-month quarantine on rodents going into Russia, something to do with their sable and ermine business. Whole thing was completely crazy. So I had to make this last minute switch. I took all the rats over to this taxidermist and he gassed them and stuffed them. I had no choice."

"But why," we asked, "didn't you just stuff them in their normal habitat, like a natural history diorama? How did the idea for 'J.C. and the Boys' evolve?"

"Oh, well, that's the whole other thing. This was last June, see, when the Helms hearings and Mapplethorpe and the NEA and all that shit was going on. It was wild, you know, and there was the Serrano *Piss Christ* picture which was definitely an influence. Also I had seen a Karen Finley performance at the Kitchen where she stuffed candied yams up her ass, and another, one of Annie Sprinkle's 'Post Porn Modernist' things, and so my mind was definitely working along those lines. And going into Russia I thought, naturally, of the Christian connection because this would just challenge them on that score, where they would have to come down on smut but then appear to be defending western religion. I mean, I don't think this idea would have evolved in exactly this way without that specific combination of influences. And the fact that I was going into the Soviet Union."

"And they bought it?"

"Reluctantly. It was quite a scene at the show but they let it go through. Can you imagine this piece at the Corcoran or the East Wing? Because that was the equivalent. For them. They've got their own brand of Puritanism over there but it's not quite the same. Plus they were stuck in this kind of conceptual paradox."

"How about the animal rights side of all this? We understand you've had some run-ins with animal rights groups."

"That's true, we were picketed. But here in New York, not in Moscow, of course. Interesting how the two things are coming together. Crazy because the biggest critics are the ones—I'm talking about talk-show geeks and some of these total Neanderthal Congressmen—who say that like Mapplethorpe's picture of those guys pissing in each other's mouths is not art because it's not beautiful! Do you believe that? Actually I love it because it's such a throw-back, such a 19th Century idea that art somehow is about beauty.

"And so that guy in Vancouver, what's-his-name, Gibson, who was going to crush that rat between two canvasses, well, it turned out that was legal as long as he killed the rat quickly. I mean, this really gets into some very weird, esoteric shit, and the same with so-called pornography. Here you have some photo called 'Fistfuck' or in my case, Judas

Iscariot Rat giving it to Jesus Christ Rat up the butt and it like totally fries the brains of the middle class. I mean, right there is as close as I can get to a definition of art. But try to tell that to Helms or Senator Pell for that matter. And poor Frohnmayer over at NEA stuck in this situation where he had to say, with a straight face, yes, we thoroughly support the idea of a plastic Jesus floating in a beaker of urine—it's wild."

"And the animal rights people . . ."

"Oh, yeah, them too—I mean, I have this piece of film, for example, of an elephant being electrocuted because it went mad and killed a couple of trainers. I mean this giant elephant all wired up and then zapped like the Rosenbergs or Chessman." She pauses, lights another cigarette. "We're really talking about the threshold of shame and embarrassment. Let me give you an example. Back in the 19th century this anthropologist spent ten years writing a study called *Scatologic Rites*. He was out in New Mexico and he was invited into this tent to see some secret Zuni rituals. What he saw was a group of Indians, dressed up like priests and nuns, performing mock communion and confession ceremonies, drinking urine and eating shit. Disgusted as he was, he diligently went back to his tent and wrote this all up as part of his study. Now there is serious doubt about the authenticity of the ritual. Some people think that the Indians, knowing they were being studied, acted this whole thing out just to shock the guy and get him off their backs.

"And it goes both ways. When the Spaniards discovered the Aztecs, the Aztecs were just flat grossed out because the Spaniards blew their noses into these little white cloths and then put them back in their pockets. That was the most disgusting thing the Aztecs could possibly imagine. This is image relativity here. Remember Rabelais? All I'm saying is that if it wasn't for the NEA and Helms and all this cockeyed scrutiny, I doubt if anyone would bother with a film about some guy biting the heads off live mice, or my piece, or any of it. The response, in other words, is always equal to the provocation."

"Where does it go from here?"

"Well, who knows, really. Just like science, too—just when you think you've found the end of the universe, someone comes along with a bigger telescope and says 'Hey, wait a minute, it's way out there.' Same thing with shock art or post porn modernism or whatever you want to call it. You know, just because we can't imagine anything more shocking than the late Mayor Harold Washington in a bra and panties or some woman performance artist inviting members of the audience up on stage to stare into her vagina, doesn't it mean that two or three years from now someone won't come along and fry everybody's brains all over again? I do think these things tend to go in cycles and that we will see a period of suppression here, a retrenching for a while, before the thing breaks out again.

"I'm working on a piece called 'Bullocks, Buttocks and Bannocks—Anal Eroticism, and the Scottish Landscape Tradition.'"

Is Alan Cranston Full of Shit?

by Robert Anton Wilson

Back in March, I wrote to "my" Senator, Alan Cranston, and "my" Representative, Mel Levine, objecting to the proposed new FCC ban on "indecent" speech. The term "indecent" is not defined in the applicable law, which would make radio and TV stations subject to fines on a 24-hour-a-day basis if they broadcast anything which might get the FCC bureaucrats pissed off. In late May, I got a reply from Alan Cranston. It read as follows:

Many thanks for your message about the question of "indecent material." I appreciate the opportunity to communicate with you regarding the issues of censorship and objectionable material and apologize for the delay in responding.

In regard to indecent broadcasts, during the 100th Congress, legislation was passed directing the Federal Communications Commission to ban indecent radio and television programming on a 24-hour-a-day basis. Previously, the FCC allowed sexually explicit programming between midnight and 6 a.m., when children are unlikely to be listening. The new 24-hour ban has been challenged in court on constitutional grounds, and the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia has placed a temporary stay on the ban while the case is pending.

The question of regulation of indecent broadcasts and other indecent material, such as some printed matter and record albums, is very complex. The curbing of First Amendment rights of free thought and free speech must never be considered lightly. Occasionally censorship may be justified in case of grave danger to national security or to the rights of others. The entertainment media usually involves questions of individual moral values. What some find offensive, others find acceptable.

Should these issues come before Congress, rest assured that I will give them careful consideration. I appreciate your contacting me—please do continue to stay in touch.

Sincerely . . .

Below this was the signature "Alan Cranston," looking very much like the kind of fake signatures obtained by using a rubber stamp.

On first reading this letter, I thought Senator Cranston could not express himself very clearly. On second reading, I thought that maybe he did not wish to express himself clearly. On third reading, I became even more confused. Cranston seems to throw a bone to the proponents of censorship by treating "indecent material" as an objective fact rather than a subjective opinion, but then he waffles and points out the Constitutional difficulties of this position; his only direct statement is that he "will give . . . careful consideration" to this issue (or to "these issues," as he prefers to say) some time in the indefinite future.

Why couldn't he say in plain English, "I haven't made up my mind yet"?

Looking at the letter a fourth time, I had another bright idea. Maybe he has made up his mind, but doesn't want to tell the voters yet. The letter looks like a form sent to everybody who might have written to him, and while it would hardly satisfy anybody on either side of the issue, it also carefully avoids overtly offending either side. Who could possibly be offended by the promise that at some hypothetical future date, when he doesn't have his snout in the S&L trough, good old Alan might "give careful consideration" to "these issues"?

I tried an experiment. I showed the letter to several friends. Nobody felt sure Cranston was on the side of the FCC; nobody felt sure he was on the side of freedom of expression; everybody agreed with my verdict that the letter uses a lot of weaseling to avoid telling us which side he's on.

By now, the issue had become personal. Roy Tuckman on KPFA

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(midnight to 6 a.m., interestingly) mentioned some of the tapes he would be afraid to play if the new FCC rule is upheld in court. He said that the speakers who might cause problems included Alan Watts, Timothy Leary and me.

Alan Watts? I admit that stumped me for a while. How could his witty and philosophical ramblings about Zen and Taoism be construed as "indecent" even by the idiots at the FCC? Then I remembered: Watts mentioned sex every now and then (about once in every three hours of tapes, I think) and he avoided euphemisms. He would say "fucking" instead of "sexual intercourse." The same "problem" exists with Tim Leary's taped lectures; he also prefers Shakespearean or Joycean English to genteel academes. And I, too, have let a "fuck" slip into my lectures now and then, amid my usual shticks about Bell's Theorem, the Copenhagen Interpretation of quantum mechanics, brain chemistry, primate psychology and Space Colonies.

So: in the opinion of Roy Tuckman, a broadcaster with a lot of experience with FCC rulings, Alan Watts' ideas about psychotherapy and Eastern mysticism, Tim Leary's notions about brain change technology and Futurism, and my own science-fiction speculations, all might result in heavy fines, just because we talk, on stage, in the same language that our audience uses off-stage. (Do you know anybody who actually says "sexual intercourse" or even "coitus"? At the most, some of us might write those words, and only if we were submitting to an academic journal.)

I suddenly remembered the immortal interview with musician Bob Geldof published in the *Irish Times* when I was living in Ireland. The reporter asked if his use of "improper language" did not detract from the humanitarian causes for which he has worked so hard and long.

"I don't know what the fuck improper language is," Geldof replied. I only read this and wasn't at the interview, but I've always been able to hear it, in my head, delivered in his inner-city Dublin brogue: "I don't knah wot the fook improper language is."

Then I recalled some remarks by the eminent philosopher George Carlin (himself once the subject of FCC censorship). Carlin, in his latest tour, has been doing a routine about the three most dangerous groups in America. He says these groups are: first, the stupid, who make up the majority. (You all know how dumb the average guy is, right? Well, mathematically, by definition, half of them are even dumber than that.) Second, there is the group made up of people who are full of shit, such as used car salespeople and baseball stars (who will do a 30-second commercial endorsing anything, including leper's dung for breakfast, if they get paid a million dollars). Third, there is the vast army of those who are totally fucking crazy. It is because of the influence of these three groups, Carlin says, that we now have a Vice President who is stupid, full of shit and totally fucking crazy, all at once.

As usual, I find George Carlin more enlightening than most professional psychologists and sociologists.

Which brings me back to Alan Cranston's letter and its high word count and low information content. Instead of wondering if Senator Cranston can't express himself clearly or just doesn't choose to express himself clearly, I now find myself asking if he writes that way (or approves a staff member who writes that way over his signature) because he is just plain stupid, or full of shit, or totally fucking crazy.

I have tried asking some other friends to read the letter and judge between those three interpretations. Nobody, thus far, has decided Cranston is stupid or totally fucking crazy; they all think he is full of shit. While this was not a randomized double-blind scientific study, I think it accurately registers normal reactions to Cranston's prose. To most people who speak English, Cranston seems to be full of shit.

Meanwhile, I have finally heard from "my" representative in Congress, Mel Levine. He leaves no doubt at all that he opposes the proposed FCC ban. Judging by his eccentric voting record, I am still not utterly delighted with Levine, but I can assure you he is not full of shit.

I myself have no final opinion on whether Cranston is full of shit—or none that I care to publish. The Supreme Court has just ruled that *opinions* are no longer protected by the First Amendment. I leave it up to the reader to decide—is Senator Cranston full of shit?

Robert Anton Wilson's latest book is Quantum Psychology: How Brain Software Programs You and Your World.

The Ultimate Memorabilia

by Jerry Hopkins

A sleek new, high-tech nightclub dedicated to the flash and speed of the American automobile has opened in Waikiki. It's called Hot Rod and it features more chrome than you've seen since the 1950s, when most of the Cadillac fins and Lincoln bumpers on display arrogantly rolled through the American streets.

You can spend a couple of hours looking at all the memorabilia from the Hot Rod era, because this is a place in the Hard Rock Cafe school of interior design. There are posters from movies that featured cars. The dance floor is illuminated by flashing headlights. Tables are built on top of engine blocks. And there are dozens of products you can buy to pay tribute to this most American preoccupation, up to and including a \$215 studded leather jacket with the Hot Rod logo.

The best part is the club's catering to the fan's morbidity. Just as a new field was plowed in bus tourism by the Grave Line Tours in Hollywood—"a lively look at death styles of the rich and famous" where you get to see the apartment house where Freddy Prinze blew his brains out and the motel where Janis Joplin overdosed—Hot Rod breaks new ground in nightclub necrophilia.

Back near the mens' room is a nicely framed photograph of the mangled Porsche Spyder in which James Dean died in 1956. A sandwich on the menu is named for Dean. The most prized auto-related memento in the whole impressive collection is the speeding ticket that Dean got a half hour before he crashed into a pickup truck and ended a promising film career. It seems appropriate that the club is owned by an attorney.

Because of the Hot Rod Cafe's success, that attorney, David Schutter, is now building another bar, the theme bar to top them all. This one will take its cue from the popularity of the James Dean speeding ticket.

"People get a real big bang out of looking at that ticket," Schutter said. "I mean, I could have put Dean's bongos or his red jacket from *Rebel Without a Cause* on display and I don't think it would have the same impact. The speeding ticket gives Dean's fans that last touch, a final contact just before he passed over. It gives the fans a chance to say goodbye."

The theme of the new bar is death. Schutter says he's going to call it the Aloha Bar & Grill. After all, *aloha* does mean "hello" and "love," but it also means "goodbye."

In some ways what Schutter plans is not all that original. The Hard Rock Cafe has a classic Woodie over the bar in its Honolulu club (with some surfboards sticking out the back), and a vintage Cadillac projects from the roof of its Los Angeles place. The Aloha Bar & Grill will occupy more than 20,000 square feet of space, allowing display of a number of vehicles. Choices being considered are the crushed fuselages and airplane parts from crashes that killed Ricky Nelson, Jim Croce, Desi Arnaz and Mike Todd; the destroyed cars that killed Karen Silkwood, Jayne Mansfield, Eddie Cochran and Harry Chapin;

and the mangled motorcycles that snuffed Richard Fariña and Duane Allman.

Another major attraction will be the small weapons display, rivaling the one at FBI Headquarters in Washington. The guns that killed the Kennedys, Martin Luther King and John Lennon are not available, Schutter says, but those that did in Malcolm X, Sam Cooke, Marvin Gaye and Ernest Hemingway already are in Honolulu in Schutter's personal vault—along with the knives that ended Sal Mineo and Sid Vicious' girlfriend Nancy Sunken.

Some of the more unusual instruments of death have also been purchased, for exhibition throughout the club in individual Plexiglass cases. For example, Schutter has acquired the "live" microphone that electrocuted Les Harvey of Stone the Crows when that group was performing in concert in Wales; the belt Phil Ochs used to hang himself; the fork employed by the Charlie Manson gang to kill Leno & Rosemary LaBianca; and the helicopter blade that decapitated Vic Morrow in *The Twilight Zone*.

Schutter said he will maintain offices in a loft, overlooking the dance floor. The steps leading to the loft will be the ones that killed either Sandy Denny (Fairport Convention), Who manager Kit Lambert or Tammi Terrell, all of whom died in stairway falls. Schutter, who has an eye to franchising the concept worldwide, said he is in negotiation now to acquire all three stairways.

Kennedy Conspiracy Lives

Eclipse Books has issued a new set of trading cards, *Coup D'etat*, a handy guide to understanding the plot behind the slaying of President John F. Kennedy. One card states: "In the first hours after the assassination, Dallas police questioned and released many suspects without recording their identities. Among these were three 'tramps' arrested in a railroad car near the grassy knoll and photographed en route to the police station. One of them bears an uncanny resemblance to E. Howard Hunt, whose whereabouts on November 22 are officially unknown. . . . Another of the 'tramps' resembles Hunt's fellow Watergate burglar and CIA agent Frank Sturgis."

However, the tabloid *Globe* indicates that the latter tramp was actually Charles Harrelson (father of *Cheers* star Woody Harrelson), now in prison for gunning down Texas federal judge John Wood, who was probing organized crime ties to the narcotics trade. He has confessed that he was involved in the killing of JFK, drawing a map showing exactly where he was positioned in Dallas' Dealy Plaza—behind a fence on the grassy knoll where witnesses saw gunflashes and heard gunfire.

Photographic expert Jack White, a consultant to the House Select Committee on Assassinations, which determined that Lee Harvey Oswald did not act alone, states that "Unless Harrelson has an identical twin—and he doesn't—there's no way he's not 'the tall tramp.'"

TV's *Hard Copy* has asked viewers to vote on whether the investigation should be reopened. Of 46,000 calls, 98% said yes.

Other memorabilia on display in the club will be related to a pop star's death in the way that James Dean ticket was: a menu from the London restaurant that sold Mama Cass Elliot the sandwich on which she choked to death; and the bathtub in which Jim Morrison was found dead in Paris. The *piece d' resistance* will be the bed Marilyn Monroe was found nearly nude and very dead upon, with a wax figure in repose, of course, and the telephone inches away.

For catered parties there will be a separate Elvis Presley Room, with framed prescription forms (for Demerol, Methaqualone, and his favorite, Dilaudid), tickets to the concert he failed to show up for that fateful August 1977, some of his tent-sized costumes, and the book he was reading when he fell off his toilet seat for the final time (a book about the shroud of Turin).

A video room will project non-stop death and destruction on large screens. Film clips already obtained include the chickie run in which James Dean narrowly escapes death in *Rebel Without a Cause*. Schutter is also planning annual James Dean, Elvis Presley and Marilyn Monroe film festivals.

The club's juke box will contain only songs about death, such as *Long Black Limousine* (Elvis Presley) and *Dead Man's Curve* (Jan & Dean); about drugs, like *Cocaine* (Jackson Browne) and *Junker's Blues* (Michael Bloomfield); alcohol, e.g., *Tequila Sunrise* (The Eagles) and Jerry Lee Lewis' *What's Made Milwaukee Famous (Has Made a Loser Out of Me)*; and tribute records, e.g., Marvin Gaye's *Abraham, Martin & John* and *Rock and Roll Heaven* by the Righteous Brothers.

The bar will feature the brands favored by the hardest drinkers—for example, Southern Comfort (Janis Joplin) and Coors (Jim Morrison). Autographed pictures of the stars with the appropriate bottles and cans in their hands will greet the customers as they enter the club. (Advertising agencies take note: James Dean has done wonders for Converse sneakers.)

Schutter said that like the Hard Rock Cafe chain and his own Hot Rod Cafe, there will be a variety of products for sale at the door. Because negotiations with various estates were not complete at the time this was written, Schutter said he could not disclose precisely what those products would be. However, he did say there would be reproductions of garments the deceased were wearing at the time of death. Plus: key chains utilizing bits of metal from wrecked automobiles and airplanes that were too small to put on display.

"I can't name all the names just yet," Schutter said, "but take my word, this is not junk we're selling—every item will have a practical use. And everything we do in the club will be tasteful. I believe one of the things that's wrong with America is we don't have any heroes. What I'm doing is creating a special tribute to the heroes of yesterday. My hope is that it will be an inspiration to the heroes of tomorrow."

The Aloha Bar & Grill is scheduled for a Christmas opening.

Jerry Hopkins' latest book is *The Condom: Its Life and Hard Times*.

Don't Let Peace Spoil the Party

by Gerard Jones

Major Phil D. Kauffer was the very picture of reassuring authority, a straight-backed, wavy-haired, smiling-lipped embodiment of the Defense Department's genial smugness. That's no doubt why they picked him for this job. Because what all of us in America's defense-related industries need these days is reassurance.

Before my hand had even begun to cool from his warm, secure shake, I was pouring out my heart. I told him how my tool-and-die company no longer made anything but screws specially fitted to the widgets in the warheads of Pershing missiles; how I'd starve to death if I had to sell my screws at Ace Hardware prices; how defense cutbacks were already ruining me, and these rumors of peace had me terrified.

"I mean, I love global peace as much as the next guy," I said. "But what's going to happen to the economy? Entire states have prospered through industries that sell unusable technology at thousand per cent mark-ups. Now the California real estate market is already slowing down. Texas is desperate. Alabama's in a depression. What are we going to do?"

The major fixed me with his gray eyes and gave me a grimace that looked just like his smile. "I won't pull punches," he said. "The worst rumors you've heard are true. The U.S. and the U.S.S.R. are on the verge of a historic agreement to reduce the total number of warheads on both sides. . . to zero."

It was like a punch to the solar plexus. But I bowed my head and tried to be noble. "Well, I suppose it's for the good of humanity," I said. "But what about the jobs? What about the lives that will be ruined by. . ."

He held up a hand. "Now, don't get ahead of yourself," he cautioned. "I said we'd reduce the number of warheads to zero. I didn't say we'd stop building them."

"Huh?" I said. Even after a lifetime of dealing with the Defense Department, that one caught me off-guard.

He leaned close, and lowered his voice to its most soothing pitch. "Your Defense Department has developed the final solution to the peace problem. We call it 'The Readiness Cycle.' Here's how it works. We continue the production of superweapons at the same rate we currently maintain. Heck, if we do our public relations right, we can increase the level. We can spiral past the heights of the 'Evil Empire' years. We can even export weapons to the Russians, if they can squeeze a few more points out of their GNP. As long as they keep up with their disassembly."

"Their. . . disassembly," I echoed, wondering what I was missing.

"Don't you see? It's obvious. Next to every factory assembling warheads and missiles, we set up another factory to disassemble them. For every one that rolls off the assembly line, one gets taken apart and thrown in the trash. The result? A thousand warheads get built, providing thousands of jobs. . . a thousand warheads get *un*built, providing thousands *more* jobs. And on the diplomatic balance sheets, the total is. . . zero warheads."

"But. . . do you think the public will. . ."

He cut me off. "We can actually pump more money into the economy this way than we have been. Disassembling weapons shouldn't be tough, so we can even get some of those illiterates and homeless into the work-force. And if it proves to be trickier than we think. . . well, any personnel losses will be sacrifices for the cause of world peace. And who wouldn't want to make that sacrifice?"

"But the public will still be paying huge taxes to the Defense Department for nothing but. . . nothing."

A Tale of Two Celebrations

In Amsterdam, at an event honoring Vincent van Gogh, entrepreneurs were marketing a perfume called *Suicide* and selling cookies shaped like human ears.

In Yorba Linda, the Richard Nixon Library opened on the same day that Pete Rose got sentenced for tax evasion. Nixon told CNN's Bernard Shaw that not only should Rose be elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame, but also Shoeless Joe Jackson.

Be on the lookout for a perfume called *Cover-Up* and cookies that keep changing their own shape.

"No," he said, with a sudden paternal firmness. "They public will be paying huge taxes. . . for *readiness*. We'll have zero warheads in the books, but if we ever need to kick a little sense into the Russians, we will halt the disassembly process and. . . *bam!* Instant arsenal!"

He shrugged. "And anyway, we won't have a total cash drain. After disassembly we can always sell the used components to the Third World as radioactive farm implements."

I shook my head. Something wasn't adding up for me. "I don't see how you're going to sell this readiness angle," I said. "I mean, with global interdependence, and this arms agreement and all. . . what chance is there of us ever going to war with Russia anymore?"

"Absolutely none," he smiled.

"Then this whole thing. . . has nothing to do with what's actually going on in the world. It's just a gimmick to keep pouring federal money into businesses like mine."

He frowned confusedly and said, "Well. . . sure it is."

"That's insane!" I snapped. "Do you seriously expect the American public to accept a system of incredible, pointless military expenditures just to maintain the economic status quo, when there's obviously no real danger of global war at all?"

He looked at me blankly. "Well, I don't see why they wouldn't," he said. "They've been accepting it since 1945."

Gerard Jones is working on a book about the sitcom as social history. He wrote the above piece before the invasion of Kuwait.

The Last Facade

by Nancy Cain

I didn't feel anything but slight disappointment when they closed down the little restaurant where I used to have my breakfast. It was just going to be closed for a short time. For renovations, they said. Actually, they closed all the shops on the block. Not only the restaurant, but the bodega next to the restaurant, and the T-shirt store next to that, since they were all connected. So I started eating my breakfast elsewhere, always intending to return to my favorite spot as soon as the renovations were completed.

Time passed and one day nostalgia took me back to the little greasy spoon, hoping that maybe, just maybe it might have re-opened. There they were. The restaurant, the bodega and the T-shirt store, looking exactly as they always had. At least from the front. Faded paint on the front wall still delineated the stores from one another on the cement facade, but the sides and back were blocked from view by plywood.

I came closer and peeked through the window of the restaurant. And there, on the other side, was nothing. Absolutely nothing behind the wall but a razed field. There was some rubble, but no floor or walls. Nothing. Just the cement facade facing the avenue. Some renovation!

Upon investigation I discovered that this was a story about the building codes in Los Angeles. Seems it costs a lot more to build from scratch than it does to renovate, and you can call it a renovation as long as some piece of the old structure remains. Even if it's just a door frame. Saves all that hassle with the city and the inspectors, I guess.

So, for a long time, maybe a year or more, the front of my old restaurant was hiding the empty field behind it. Only the facade stood erect. My eyes were opened. Everywhere I looked, I saw facades. It became obsessive, and it didn't stop with architecture, either. Take, for example, the Chrysler Corporation. Big ad campaign for driver's side air-bags. Because they *care*. But what about the passengers?

Chrysler presents the *facade* of caring.

On the front page of the Metro section in the *L.A. Times* is the day's top murder story. Two 18-year-old women killed in their carport. Just blown away for no apparent reason as they returned home with a box of pizza. As I read, my mouth watered, and I suddenly realized that *I too* had only the facade of caring. I went out for a slice.

Who really cares? *American Family Physician* reports that by the age of 18, the average American child will have seen 52,000 murders and attempted murders on TV. Those with cable and VCRs will have seen 72,000. When I was a kid, other kids would torture me by squashing ants on the sidewalk. That was then.

Now, will I have plain or pepperoni?

Nancy Cain is a producer of The '90s.

MEDIA FREAK

Brat Power

The popularity of *The Simpsons* has its fallout. Even while foolish educators were banning T-shirts with 10-year-old bratty Bart boasting, "Underachiever—and proud of it, man!"—a newsletter was launched by Overachievers Anonymous (membership: 10,000), critical of advertising that portrays successful executives as anxious, overworked and competitive, warning that such images heighten business people's insecurity and drive them to endanger their health and ignore their families.

And yet that imagery is extremely accurate, judging by TV network policy of turning down commercials that in effect promote a program on a competing network. Thus, NBC and ABC have refused to accept ads for Butterfinger and Burger King featuring *The Simpsons*. CBS, however, "recognizes that animated characters only exist in their on-screen persona. In an effort to support our advertisers' creative needs, CBS will generally approve the appearance of competitive animated characters, provided they do not name the program, or mention its time and date."

In any case, it's a pretty safe bet that the Burger King commercial will *not* have Bart Simpson spouting his catch-phrase, "Don't have a cow, man!"

Package Deal

Village Voice comedy critic Laurie Stone writes that *Comic Relief*, "with its enormous audience, superstar hosts and good-guy image, has also become the premier 'please-book-me-please-please' comedy event of the year. Who does get booked? Nearly all of the performers, who are overwhelmingly white, have solid ties to HBO. The nation's largest subscription network produces, among this year's lineup, shows starring each of the three hosts [Billy Crystal, Whoopi Goldberg and Robin Williams], as well as Elayne Boosler, Bob Goldthwait, Alan Havey, Richard Lewis, Steven Wright, Robert Wuhl, Rita Rudner, Paula Poundstone and many more. HBO gets to write off the production costs of *Comic Relief* as charity, at the same time gaining five hours of promotion time for its talent."

Only Goldthwait had the nerve to bite the hand that feeds others. Referring to the highly visible Canada Dry and HBO banners, he announced: "*Comic Relief*, brought to you by major corporations forcing people to live in the streets."

Filler Items

• A California company now advertises their Stun-Gun "As seen in *Die Hard 2*."

• When you call the Philip Morris 800 number for a free copy of the Bill of Rights, ironically the first thing an operator does is invade your sense of privacy by asking for your phone number. Their justification—it makes "processing" easier. Other irony: Philip Morris' role as chief contributor to Jesse Helms' re-election campaign.

• The *Jerusalem Post* reports on Safebris, a disposable kit for performing circumcisions

at home. Each kit contains a knife, shield, gauze, scissors, alcohol pads, suction tube and other equipment. The Israeli manufacturer has applied to the FDA for approval.

• A Venice Beach ice cream parlor has a new flavor, "Marion Berry."

• David Letterman has plugged the new blockbuster movie, *Iraqnophobia*.

• Membership in Mensa requires one to score in the top 2% of the population on the standard I.Q. test. At their annual convention, speakers ranged from Audrey Wegner, discussing the aerodynamics of the bra, to Alan Vaughn, channeling the spirit of a 13th century Chinese guru "who has learned to speak English better over the years." The word *mensa* is Latin for *table*—implying a center of philosophical discussion—but in Spanish it's the feminine form of *stupid*.

• New York State legislators have approved a bill which bans dwarf-tossing and dwarf-bowling in bars and other businesses that serve liquor.

• Gay author Randy Shilts, when cited on ABC News as "Person of the Week," said that he's "burned out" and doesn't want to hear another word about AIDS. However, the *San Francisco Bay Guardian* reports he was "happily boasting that he had gotten a date with a 19-year-old-activist one night and a gay cop the next" at the International Conference on AIDS. "If I can't get laid at a San Francisco AIDS conference," he was quoted, "they should take my homosexual card away."

• Joan Rivers at a production meeting: "Wouldn't it be great if she [Helen Hayes] died right after the show, and we had her last interview?"

• A San Francisco gallery featured artist Gu Wenda's display of sanitary napkins and tampons collected from female friends and students around the world, to be accompanied by contributors' statements about menstruation. "I'm treating this work as a social, cultural and psychological test. Used and unused sanitary napkins reflect a natural human phenomenon."

• While Sammy Davis Jr. was still alive, Harry Shearer taped off the satellite—and then broadcast the audio on his radio show—CBS' Dan Rather and ABC's Brit Hume each announcing Sammy's death, just in case. Said Shearer: "And they both looked so sad."

From top to bottom: Editorial cartoons by Paul Conrad and Mike Smith, and Ace Backwoods' vision of Bart "seeking solace from his failed career in the mind-numbing comforts of drugs, alcohol and cartoon sluts."

