

The Realist

Number 133

Editor: Paul Krassner

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The Don Imus Transcript

What follows is the text of talk by radio personality Don Imus in March before the Radio and Television Correspondents Association annual dinner at the Washington Hilton:

Thank you very much. Hmmm, this is kind of interesting. These don't appear to be my notes. Do you have the folder I gave you? Well, where did this stuff come from? Nobody leaves stuff like this just laying around [holds up folder]. Let me see if I can see what it says. "S. McDougal called again, says Dick needs check and statement. Told her both were in jail, ha, ha, ha. Jesus, she looks stupid in those tank tops." Maybe I'll just hang on to these. OK, here we go. Good evening, Mr. President, Mrs. Clinton, honored guests, ladies and gentlemen, radio and TV scum. You know, I think it would be fair to say that back when the Clintons took office, if we had placed them in a lineup — well, not a lineup — if we were to have calculated on which member of the First Family would be the first to be indicted — I don't mean indicted — I mean to have received a subpoena — everybody in this room would have picked Roger. I mean, been there, done that. Well, in the past three, Socks the cat has been in more jams than Roger. Roger has been a saint. The cat has peed on national treasures. Roger hasn't. Socks has thrown up hairballs. Roger hasn't. Socks has his girlfriend pregnant and — oh, no, that was Roger.

And as you know, nearly every incident in the lives of the First Family has been made worse by each and every person in this room, the radio and TV correspondents. Even innocuous incidents. For example, when Cal Ripken broke Lou Gehrig's consecutive games record, the president was at Camden Yards doing play-by-play on the radio with [Baltimore Orioles announcer] Jon Miller. Bobby Bonilla hit a double, and we all heard the president in his obvious excitement holler, "Go, baby, go." I remember commenting at the time, "I bet that's not the first time he said that." Remember the Astroturf in the pickup? And my point is, there is an innocent event made sinister by some creep in the media. Although, in some cases, the Clintons have not exactly helped themselves. Imagine if, back in 1978, Mrs. Clinton had not said to Mr. Clinton, "Honey, Jim and Susan are here, they've got this riverfront land for some great vacation homes, and maybe we

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Crippled Chic

by Bill Bolt

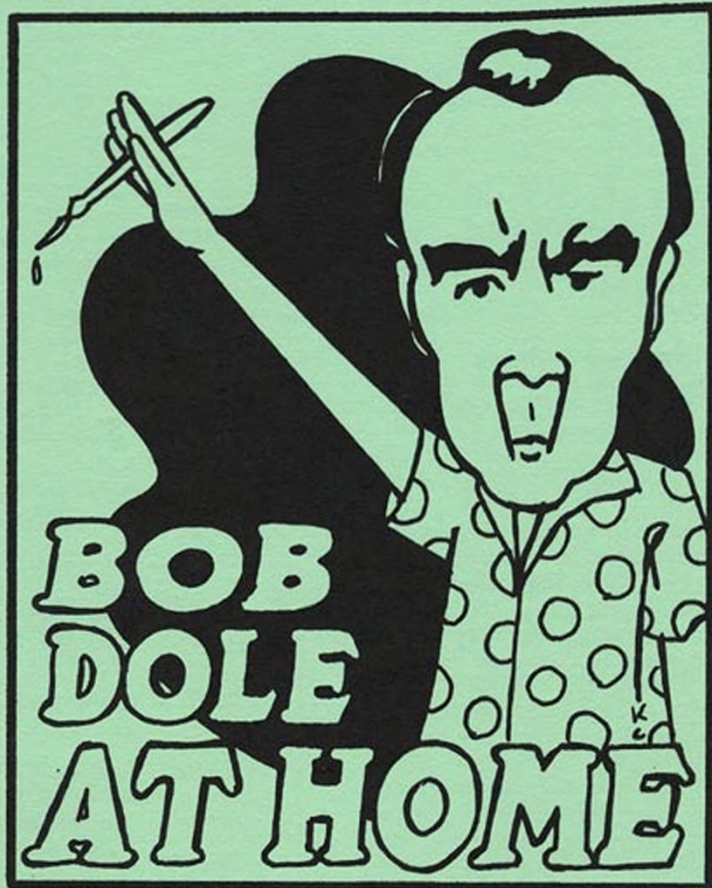
It's amazing what a little hard times can do for our numbers — that is to say, our crippled numbers. Having run out of unemployment compensation, unable to gas up the Beemer or heat the pool, millions of Americans who would have previously declared "I'd rather be dead than disabled" are now lining up at Social Security demanding that they be declared total and permanent cripples — so much so that President Clinton recently asked Congress for a special \$350 million appropriation for investigators to go after fake disability claimants.

Not just broke folk are seeing disability as a good deal. Even Senator Dole, in his race for the presidency, has started seeing pay dirt in his paralyzed right arm. After decades of hiding it, Dole went to a black church and talked about his war wounds and painful rehabilitation. "You're black, I'm crippled. I understand," he said. Later, at a weapons factory, he again brought up the arm. "You build weapons. I was wounded by one. I understand," he said.

Before this new fessing up to his disability, Dole would do anything to hide that now politically correct crippled arm. He'd have the boogered-up hand grasping a pencil or a piece of paper so no one would try to shake it. He routinely entered a stage with his crippled arm away from the audience and cameras. Now Dole does everything but plaster the arm with a sign announcing free tours every half hour.

Dole's seeming acceptance of his disability was not always so complete. I remember a sit-in of wheelchair activists in Dole's office in the Capitol a few years ago. We were demanding that he support lifts on buses. His staff was claiming that he was in a small airplane over Kansas and could not be reached. Only after a group of us arrived and announced that we had just met with the Democratic Speaker of the House did Dole's staff suddenly reach him. We were soon in conference with him. With his new attitude he'd probably drag me into his inner office for a heart-to-heart about our oppression as cripps.

(Continued on Page 2)



COURT JESTER

Great Moments in Countercultural History

In 1964, I assigned Robert Anton Wilson to do a story on Tim Leary and his psychedelic research. When it was published, Leary invited me to his headquarters in Millbrook, New York. We have been friends ever since.

At Christmas dinner last year, he told me about his first meeting with Aldous Huxley. Leary had been sharing his visionary outlook with Huxley, who then gave him this startling bit of advice: "You've got to have a jingle."

And thus was born, "Turn on, tune in, drop out."

The Winner of the Slow Bicycle Race

I'm pleased to announce that Seven Stories Press has shipped to bookstores copies of *The Winner of the Slow Bicycle Race: The Satirical Writings of Paul Krassner*, with an introduction by Kurt Vonnegut. My promotional tour kicks off in New York City on May 30 with a reading at a gallery — for information call 966-7745, ext. 14 — and continues with the following stand-up comedy performances:

- May 31, N.Y. — 8 p.m. at Learning Alliance, 324 Lafayette St.
- June 4, Minneapolis — for information call (612) 874-7715.
- June 5, Seattle — 8:30 at Oddfellows Hall, 915 E. Pine Ave.
- June 7, Portland — for information call (503) 224-8499.
- June 8, S.F. — 10:30 p.m. at Marsh Theater, 1062 Valencia St.
- June 9, Berkeley — 8 p.m. at Freight & Salvage, 1111 Addison St.
- August 4, Santa Monica — 8 p.m. at the Ash Grove, on the pier.
- August 23 & 24, Chicago — for information call (312) 486-7767.

That's the weekend before the Democrats' convention. I'll also perform at the Alternative Convention in San Diego while the Republicans are there; for information call (619) 229-8899.

CRIPPLED CHIC

(Continued from Cover)

No question about it, this new crippled chic is due to Christopher Reeve breaking his neck. Hey, if Superman now uses a wheelchair, wheelchairs can't be all that bad. I think that his performance at the Academy Awards was a bit overdone, what with the pontificating about taking chances in the name of goodness and right. Let's face it, *Superman 1 thru 4* were not exactly cutting-edge, socially-conscious films.

Reeve is turning wheelchairs into status symbols. Dole is making shrunken extremities into symbols of power. Instead of the usual Jag, Mercedes, and Range Rovers, we may soon be seeing a line of expensive German and Swedish wheelchairs being valet-parked at Century Plaza. Instead of bottles of Perrier in hand, the beautiful people will be toting those cute little oxygen bottles on wheels with color-coordinated tubes running into their noses.

If Dole is elected President we may see politicians in future races crippling themselves or faking it to get that 1% they need to go over the top.

Reeve has vowed to be walking in a decade. For the sake of the rest of us crips, I hope not. "If Christopher Reeve can do it, why can't you?" will replace the ooohs and aaahs I now get as I whiz by babes. Never again will I hear, "Don't you look fiine on those seeexy wheels, baybee!" I'll be relegated to having thin guys in white short-sleeve shirts and black pants following me around parking lots shouting, "If you believed in Jayeezzus, you wouldn't be a cripple!" Every other coffee-house table will come equipped with a California health nut ready to lecture me.

"If you thought positively and ate a healthy diet," they will nag, "you could throw away that wheelchair and walk again!"

So, a toast to Senator Robert Dole of Kansas and Christopher Reeve, actor: May you live long, successful, healthy, and crippled lives! I need it.

We Have Ways of Making You Laugh

Case history of a comedy album:

September, 1994: I learn that Danny Goldberg, head of Atlantic Records, liked my autobiography, so I write and ask him about my doing a spoken-word album. He calls and suggests that a performance before an audience would be more lively. I agree. He assigns me to Tim Sommer at Atlantic.

December, 1994: Goldberg gets transferred to chief executive of Warner Brothers Records.

January, 1995: Atlantic (a division of Time Warner) tapes my show at the Marsh Theater in San Francisco.

June, 1995: Sommer's other assignment by Goldberg, Hootie and the Blowfish, have become extremely popular, the band's first album is the second-biggest-selling debut album of all time with sales of 13 million, and — without Goldberg to oversee it — my project gets totally ignored in the process.

July, 1995: The *Hollywood Reporter* reports speculation that Goldberg will be fired by Warner Brothers.

August, 1995: I have lunch with Goldberg while he is being fired by Warner Brothers. As his last act there, he has re-assigned me to Reprise Records, another subsidiary of Warner. Howie Klein, the head of Reprise, had once booked me to speak at his college. Now he wants me to tape another show with new material. He encourages me to be irreverent and controversial.

September, 1995: Reprise tapes my show at L.A. the Bookstore in Santa Monica. *Variety* publishes a story by Rex Weiner about the project.

October, 1995: I edit an hour and 40 minutes down to 70 minutes. Reprise spends almost \$10,000 on engineering and mixing. Everybody seems to be enthusiastic about the results. Klein even goes around quoting lines from the album.

January, 1996: An all-day photo shoot. The photographer has flown in from London. Reprise spends \$12,500 on art and packaging. I am invited to write the liner notes, which the legal department has to approve.

February, 1996: Sample CDs are ready. A press release has been prepared. Several hundred promotional cassettes are about to be sent out. Suddenly I get a call from Reprise. They have decided not to release the album — "We don't know what to do with it," is the explanation — but I retain all rights. I call up Danny Goldberg — now CEO at Mercury Records — to tell him what happened and offer him first option. He accepts.

July, 1996: Mercury releases my album, *We Have Ways of Making You Laugh*.

The Realist, Dept. 133
Box 1230, Venice, CA 90294

Enclosed please find:

- \$12 for a six-issue subscription to *The Realist*.
- \$23 for a twelve-issue subscription to *The Realist*.
- \$10 for *The (Almost) Unpublished Lenny Bruce* — a collection of the controversial comic's articles, columns, stories, essays, bits and pieces.
- \$25 for Paul Krassner's autobiography, *Confessions of a Raving, Unconfined Nut: Misadventures in the Counterculture*. "Uproarious . . . soulful humor" — *Village Voice*
- \$30 for both of the above books.

Name _____ Apt _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Tim Leary Is Tripping Again

by Robert Anton Wilson

I have known Timothy Leary for 32 years and have loved him as a friend. Now he will die soon, and I cannot feel depressed about the fact at all. Visiting Tim has absolutely no resemblance to any experience I have ever had in visiting any other dying man. Tim refuses to show fear, despair or self-pity, and after each visit it becomes harder to have any of those feelings myself. At least, not for long.

Don't assume that Tim has achieved Total Transcendence in the usual mystic sense. He leaves that kind of routine to the charlatans who can play it with a straight face. Tim can't keep a straight face about anything. "Sometimes," he said to me recently, "I feel awfully sorry for myself. I think of all I have given to humanity, and how much I have suffered, and I just wallow in self-pity, maybe for as long as three minutes. Then I start having fun again."

I thought, yeah, I'm like that, too, but it usually takes me a hell of a lot longer than three minutes to work my way out of the slough of despair. Often it takes an hour or longer. Some people I know can remain in self-pity for months and years on end. Tim has learned to shorten bum trips, stupendously, and I don't believe those who claim to have stopped bum trips entirely. I think "gurus" who make such claims just want disciples, and for a long time I have regarded disciples as assholes seeking human beings to attach themselves to.

I remember visiting Tim, back in the 1970s, when they had him in jail for poor usage of the First Amendment. I always went to prison with high moral drive, feeling it my libertarian duty to cheer up a poor suffering martyr to Scientific Freedom; but I always came away paradoxically cheered up by him. His humor and endless intellectual excitement about new ideas made me see my own worries as petty by comparison. It seemed impossible to pity him, and thus it became harder to ever pity myself.

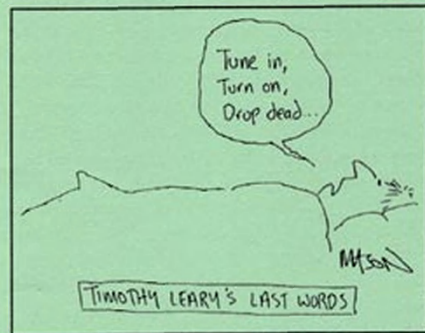
Now at the edge of what the Bard called that undiscovered country from which no explorer has ever returned, Tim remains the funniest, the bravest and the most intelligent man I have ever known. He again cheers me up more than I can cheer him up. And unlike previous explorers of that Great Mystery, he plans to return. Many well-informed scientists think he will return.

Memories, new and old, flood over me. In Durango, where both of us spoke on future evolution two or three years ago, Tim lost his thread in mid-sentence — something that happens to all of us who lecture frequently. He stopped and said, "You know, I've found a new way to get high and stay spaced out for hours, and the government can't stop me. It's called senility. It has four major effects. First, increase in long-term memory — I can recall all of evolution while I'm walking to the kitchen. Second, decrease in short term mem-

ory — when I get to the kitchen, I can't remember what I was going there for. I forget what the third is. And the fourth is — I don't give a fuck any more."

In this humorless, puritanical society, reports of that joke got around and some pundits declared triumphantly that LSD had made Dr. Leary senile. In his mid-70s? — and as if many men who never tried acid once didn't get Alzheimer's as early as their 40s? Aside from memory lapses, Tim does not show any other symptoms of senility, in the judgment of those who know him. With his usual blunt honesty and wit, he makes jokes about his partial memory loss. Oh, well . . . trying to correct the media about Dr. Leary reminds me of trying to correct them about Vietnam: every time a lie seems dead, they wait five years and recirculate it again.

During my most recent visit to Beverly Hills, Tim offered to come down to Santa Monica, where I had a lecture gig, and introduce me. And, wheelchair and all, he came — a kindness I found profoundly touching. He



also directed the driver, showing several shortcuts along the way. His brain-map of the tangled Los Angeles area seems more accurate than that of most Angelinos half his age. Senility? Now that Tim has prostate cancer, some pundits will blame that on LSD, too, I suppose. After all, nobody ever got prostate cancer before LSD.

Dr. Leary intends to have his head cryonically preserved, gambling on the very good odds that future science will eventually reanimate him from the neural and genetic information he will have frozen. He also intends to exit on the day he chooses, not on the day when Medical Science decides they can't drain any more money out of him by keeping him in infantile misery in a hospital.

"I won't have them changing my diapers twice a day," he says bluntly. He has a legal paper that prevents any hospital from holding him longer than 24 hours, and he has planned everything else carefully, to die when he decides, not when somebody else — some Proper Authority — decides. So Timothy will die (perhaps temporarily?) as he lived — once again demonstrating his utter refusal to submit to any bully who wishes to invade his most private decisions. He just ain't got no respect for authority, folks — even if it calls itself Attorney General, Archbishop, Grand

Dragon of the A.M.A., or that most terrifying of all deities, Public Opinion. He said recently that he will drop two hits of acid the day he goes into cryonic suspension.

I regard this last act of Tim's life as the most revolutionary and most important thing he has ever done. His 1960s struggle for the right of each individual to determine our own consciousness against all those who would determine it for us still seem to me a major civil liberties struggle; but his determination now to choose his own time and manner of death against all those who want to determine it for him, seems even more important and, in the deepest sense, more heroically libertarian.

Just as in the LSD wars, Tim's effort will benefit everybody, even those who cannot understand this and will oppose him most bitterly. But every person suffering needless pain, every person lingering in an infantile state having their arses wiped by orderlies or nurse's aides, everybody who has lost control over their final fate to the twin tyrannies of the ever-encroaching State and/or the ever-superstitious Church owes Tim Leary a debt. His last act of rebellion against stupid Authority does not just deliver himself from the Dictatorship of Stupidity but creates a model for all of us.

Perhaps only a few will learn from this model, at first. Those few, and unknown millions later in less superstitious ages, will take advantage of what Tim has taught us, not just about Freedom in Life but also about Freedom in Death.

As for the cryonic gamble: I won't argue that here, except to say that with nanotechnology the chance of identity reconstruction seems a hell of a lot better than it did when this idea first dawned 30 years ago. Unless cryonics fails utterly due to some barrier we can't conceive, I expect Tim back and sassy as ever, not in a million years or a thousand as I wrote in earlier discussions of scientific progress, but in fifty years — or forty.

I remember when Tim finally got out of prison, we appeared several times on panels together, both of us preaching the gospel of SMILE (Space Migration + Intelligence + Life Extension), Tim's acronym for the most exciting futurist scenario thinkable in the '70s. In more recent years he has moved on, and mentions Outer Space less often, pushing Cyber Space instead. It took me a while to catch up with him on this. I now see that if a large part of human neurological liberation awaits us in outer space, the part that we can get our hands on right now exists (and continues to grow rapidly) in cyberspace. I have found communities in cyberspace that have more freedom and more hope for us alive today than can possibly appear in space colonies for the next 50 years.

Nonetheless, Tim has not forgotten Outer Space. We sat looking at three paintings in the Phoenix bookstore, before my lecture.

"Which do you like best?" he asked.

"The middle one, the abstraction," I said.

Homeless & Panhandling Expo

by Dan Dion

Newly coronated Mayor of San Francisco Willie Brown will reign over opening ceremonies of the new Frank Jordan Pavilion at Moscone Center by attending the Homelessness and Panhandling Professional's Expo 1996 (see attached brochure).

Policy Note: Mayor Brown will speak briefly and extemporaneously on his whim to allow the homeless to camp in urban parks.

Photo Op and Fashion Note: Mayor Brown will be giving us a first look at Eddie Bauer's new Indian Summer line of urban campwear — dapper, flattering, and water repellent. Wool cap by Oleg Cassini.

Due to the success of last year's Sponge-Con and BumCon, Thunderbird Fortified

"Me too," he said. "I don't like any painting you can't turn upside down."

While I reflected that he had just articulated the most original attitude on modern art I ever heard, he added, "The up-and-down gravitational paintings" — pointing at the other two — "imagine how pre-historical they'll look when humanity lives normally in zero gravity."

If my most recent visit proves to be my last visit, I will remember that bit of Art Theory more than anything — except for a cartoon on Tim's living room wall. It comes from *The Far Side* and shows some cryonic heads in a freezer — a careless janitor has just knocked the plug out and they will all melt, of course. One of the heads has had professional re-touching and looks like Tim himself.

Tim caught my quizzical expression as I studied this cool wit.

"We don't want to get too serious about all this," he said, with his old Leary grin. I have never heard a greater line from a dying man.

It occurred to me that Tim really has used LSD as he says we should use it — to imprint new realities. Where the best and brightest among us (i.e. those who seem best and brightest to me) have entered the computer age, the space age, even the cryonic age, they have only entered in an abstract "mental" way. Tim has imprinted these realities because he has imprinted the future. He not only thinks, but due to acid he also sees and feels, in the normal reality-grids of the next millennium.

No wonder he had so much trouble in a country where the majority still live neurologically in the late dark ages, and the "intelligentsia" have painfully, kicking and screaming, arrived at the early 20th Century. Most of them don't even like that Model-T era much and, like the Unabomber, would prefer to go back to the late medieval.

As for me, I sincerely hope to see a lot more of Timothy Leary in the future, where up and down rank among forgotten superstitions, out among the stars.

Wine is proud to sponsor the Homelessness and Panhandling Professional's Expo 1996 (HAPPE '96).

While many sectors of the nation's workforce are facing cutbacks and downsizing, economists agree that panhandling is one of the most exciting growth industries of the '90s. Impending budget cuts in Washington and Sacramento foretell a continued boom in business as more people recognize the exciting world of sidewalk solicitation.

We've assembled the world's top homeless and panhandlers, and they're ready to share the tricks of their former trades. Whether you're a seasoned pro, or just recently evicted, HAPPE '96 can give you the edge you need in our ever crowding streets.

Keynote address: Jesse Brown, U.S. Secretary of Veteran's Affairs, often recognized as the single most influential non-partisan organization in the advancement of homelessness. Brown reminds us that without the V.A.'s historic denial and neglect, many of us would never have gotten our start.

No Place Like Home: Learn the Three L's — location, location, location. The same principles apply to restaurants, retail, or panhandling. Your success depends on knowing where to set up, and when to move on.

Dress a Mess for Success: Learn accessorization, how to be comfortably shabby, and the ironic effectiveness of commemorative Gulf War T-shirts. Try the latest in cosmetic facial filth — cruelty-free, not tested on animals.

Gimme Shelter: Boy Scout Troop 285's Vulture Patrol demonstrates quick and easy weatherproof lean-tos, and how to gather supplies in any urban jungle.

Beggars Can Be Choosy: Eat nutritious, gourmet food any time if you learn the ins and outs of successful dumpster diving.

Target Your Audience: World renowned homeless marketing specialists explain the TLC System. Tourists, Liberals, Churchgoers — the triumvirate of easy marks.

Shopping Cart Maintenance: Homeless East German engineers will show you how to turn an ordinary shopping cart into a performance cart. You'll see how balanced, aerodynamic packing of your possessions can improve speed and handling.

Public Speaking: Communications graduates from around the country will explain message, tone, eye contact, closing the deal, and the use of "God bless you."

Guilt: Experts agree there is no single greater force that inspires giving like guilt. Destitute Jewish and Catholic mothers have teamed up to show you how to maximize inflicted guilt.

Mrs. MPD: Beverly Shepherd will chair a roundtable discussion with herself on making the most of Multiple Personality Disorder.

Humor: Did you know that one good joke can make three figures a day? It can, if it's delivered right. The stand-up comedy bust has created many homeless comedians, despite *Evening at the Improv* credits. Learn timing,

writing material, handling hecklers, and drawing a crowd to your corner.

Lean But Green: Our California delegation facilitates this uplifting seminar in which we are comforted that while most people only consume, and few actually produce, we represent a positive re-use of our natural resources. And at 5¢ a bottle, we're laughing all the way to the recycling center.

The Doctor Is Out — On the Streets! Motor oil cures dandruff. Mayonnaise stops lesions from oozing. These and many other streetwise remedies revealed. Pediatricians on hand with complimentary band-aids to show why Proposition 187 is "¡No problema, Señor Wilson!"

Competition: This Vacant Storefront Ain't Big Enough For The Four Of Us: Despite unprecedented expansion, there always seems to be someone else hustling for the same coinage you are. How can a healthy, mid-30s guy compete with the amputee vet? The trust-fund Deadhead? The diseased crone? Through niche marketing, learn how to create an advantage, exploit it, and send the other guys packing.

Mac and Windows of Opportunity: Most off-ramps from the information superhighway are vacant. Former Pentium programmers will set you up with a virtual cardboard sign, a sad multimedia bio, and an e-hat for donations.

Spay You Love Me: A single cat or dog can inspire sympathy, but a litter only infuriates. Chinese officials show their country's do-it-yourself technique of sterilization.

Law Enforcement Relations: The beat cop can be your worst enemy or your best friend. Learn ego stroking, appearing grateful, and feigning respect. San Francisco Matrix survivors demonstrate the cutting-edge style of passive-aggressive panhandling.

Mi Bambino! Learn what European homeless have known for decades — pathetic-looking children can bring in big money. Italian mamas explain image, frantic begging, and the revolutionary waif rental program developed in Milan.

Beg to Differ: Yukiko Nguyen-Chen explores the unfair deficiency of multiculturalism in our field, and the progress of affirmative action groups to insure that layoffs allow the disadvantaged to catch up.

The Golden Tarp: The apex of any HAPPE '96 conventioneer-retirement through the civil rights lawsuit. Learn how to spot opportunities, instigate incidents, and, most importantly, document the abuse. Special instructions on teamwork and the use of existing surveillance cameras.

Guests of Honor — California Governor Ronald Reagan's class of 1966: Meet the men and women released *en masse* from mental institutions and left to their own devices 30 years ago. These ground-breaking old-timers share secrets, give advice, and tell anecdotes from the lighter side of poverty and despair. Dinner and dancing follow.

We Remember the Unabomber

Realist correspondent Hal Muscat solicited the following comments from former campus acquaintances of Theodore Kaczynski.

Richard: "I took a math class from him in Berkeley. He taught us Fibonacci's theory of sequential analysis and set theories. He was most helpful in my understanding of why marijuana plants have a sequence of 3, 5, 7 or 9 leaves."

Brenda a.k.a. Daisy Girl: "He wasn't very hip — always a far off look in his eyes. He never got high. I don't remember if we had sex. We went on walks, and he would quote Planck or Bobby Fischer."

John a.k.a. Johnny Spirit: "He was very funny — hysterical when he was tripping. I almost forgot how he used to explode with laughter when someone said three plus three equals six. Sometimes he'd laugh for no apparent reason. He used to speak of fractals and crystals. I got into crystals because of him."

Don a.k.a. Che: "He was one of the few from the Math Department who was against the war in Vietnam. He said he could add up the numbers and we should believe him. Was he right? It came as a complete surprise that he was an environmentalist. I always thought he was into politics."

Cheryl: "We used to do a lot of acid together, back when it was legal, and we would try to fuck, but he really got off better with a slide rule. There was a rumor that he would do unspeakable things with his slide rule in private, but no one ever saw him so no one spoke of it. But he used to analyze the dynamics of exponential factors in multiple orgasms — after I explained what they were. I didn't have any with him that I know of."

Mickey: "He was torn between the dialectic in Humanistic Mathe-

matics and something else. Who knows? At a department picnic during one of the strikes, the punch was dosed and Ted got naked and began to quote Alan Turing and scribble math formulas in DayGlo on some hippie girl's thighs. He used to mumble about wanting to understand pubic hair and fractal theory, but while he understood fractals like no one else, he had never seen pubic hair. Even when girls were dancing naked in front of him."

Fred: "Did you speak with Cheryl? She was in another faction. You should know that's not her real name. Anyway, whatever she said Ted did with a slide rule, we did too."

DON IMUS

(Continued from Cover)

can make some serious money." And he said, "God, I love this Reaganomics." Or later, she said, "Bill, I talked to Webb, and he said put down 600 hours." And he said, "Wow, that's a lot." And she said, "Yes, I think it makes more sense." And recently, *somebody* said, "I don't know, I left them in the book room."

Which reminds me, in light of the controversy surrounding the publication of Mrs. Clinton's book, perhaps Anonymous should have written *It Takes a Village*. And then there's Senator D'Amato's book, *It Takes a Village Idiot*. The senator suggests that the Clintons hung around with unsavory characters in Little Rock. What the hell is he talking about? All of his friends have bodies in the trunks of their cars. By the way, my candidate for *Primary Colors* is Susan Thomases, the literary agent. I think she wrote it and simply can't remember.

When I was asked to speak here tonight and was told who would be in attendance, my initial thought was, well, I've already said almost every awful thing you could say about almost everyone in the room. And then I thought, well, almost everything. And I recognize I'm not going to be invited to Renaissance Weekend, or that Bohemian deal where Newt, Rush and Dick all sit in a teepee, naked, beating on tomtoms. I won't be having lunch with Peter Jennings and some Hollywood nitwit, so this could actually be fun. Let's start at the bottom with folks in the media and work our way up.

You remember the infamous curbside shooting photograph from the Vietnam war. Well, I'm watching one night with Dan Rather and Connie Chung — things are not going well — and I'm thinking, we're a couple of nights away from another hideous photograph. I mean, everyone in this room knows Dan Rather is capable of anything, including pulling a gun out on the set of the *CBS Evening News*. Dan has these utterly incomprehensible, bucolic expressions that he punctuates conversations with. Several times after talking with me he would say, "Side 'em up solid," having something to do with fortifying sides of underground tunnels that his father dug for reasons that remain unclear.

Now I'm hard of hearing, or hearing impaired, from wearing headphones for a long time. So I thought he was saying, "Tampons are solid." And I'm thinking, why would he say that? I mean, I know he's nuts, but what does that mean? Anyway, I would laugh and I would say, "Uh huh," and I would hang up. He's a great reporter, but he does not have all his bait in the water. And he's a little dense. I mean watching Dan Rather do the news, he look like he's making a hostage tape. They should have guys with ski masks and AK-47s standing off to the side.

And yet, he is one of the three or four people most Americans get their news from, along with Tom Brokaw, of course. By the way, nobody wants us out of Bosnia more than Tom does, simply so he doesn't have to pronounce Slobodan Milosevic. Or a report of fighting on the outskirts of Velica Kladusa. Or describe how Slobodan Milos — [fumbles over pronunciation, laughs]. I can say this — how Slobodan Mil — [fumbles pronunciation again]. No, I can't say this. And we know Brian Williams is standing in front of the White House thinking, "I'm two Serb war criminals away from Tom's job."

And then there's Peter Jennings, who we are told more Americans



Mad Cow Disease — The Final Solution

The following is a Reuters dispatch datelined March 30 from Phnom Penh:

While much of the world shuns British cows, a Cambodian newspaper suggested yesterday that the animals be shipped to Cambodia and allowed to roam free and detonate the millions of land mines littering the country.

"The English have 11 million mad cows, and Cambodia has roughly the same number of equally mad land mines. Surely the solution to Cambodia's mine problem is here before our very eyes in black and white," the *Cambodia Daily* said.

"The plan is simple, practical, and will make mince-meat of the problem overnight," the paper said.

get their news from than anyone else, and a man who freely admits that he cannot resist women. So I'm thinking, here's Peter Jennings, sitting there each evening, elegant, erudite, refined, and I'm wondering, what's under his desk? I mean, besides an intern. The first place the telecommunications bill should have mandated that a V-chip be placed was in Mr. Jennings' shorts.

My favorite moment on *World News Tonight* was when Peter threw it to Cokie Roberts, who we were told was standing outside the Capitol building. Remember that? When they chroma-keyed Cokie outside the Capitol? That happened during my friend Rick Kaplan's watch. Bill Clinton's worst media day, when Kaplan left as executive producer of *World News Tonight* because he'd humped the Clinton administration harder than O.J. has his video. The only thing he didn't do was run a crawl of the Clinton Defense Fund's 800 number with a shot of Sally Struthers sobbing into the camera.

By the way, I like Sally Struthers. I think she's a sweet, harmless soul doing God's work. But if you're going to go on television and beg for food for starving children, I mean, shouldn't you maybe eat a little bit less of it yourself? I mean, I don't personally think that the plight of suffering children is amusing. I've raised millions of dollars for children with cancer and millions of dollars for parents who've lost children to sudden infant death syndrome, but what are these people thinking about when they send her into a village in Ethiopia full of starving people? They might as well send the fat guy from Wendy's.

And by the way — this is really awful — if you're Peter Jennings and you're telling more Americans than anyone else what's going on in the world, shouldn't you have at least a clue that your wife was over at Richard Cohen's house? [*Audience makes disapproving noise.*] She wasn't at my house. Bernard Shaw and — Peter couldn't be here with us tonight, he went to the movies with Alanis Morissette — Bernard Shaw and Judy Woodruff round out our network news anchors and deserve mention only to recognize that Bernie has greater nut potential than even Dan Rather. If not for CNN, Bernard Shaw is at the post office marching someone around at the end of a wire coat hanger and a shotgun.

And then there are the Sunday morning news programs. *This Week with David Brinkley*. I love Mr. Brinkley, he's an American icon. He and I both had similar surgeries, and I recognize that Mr. Brinkley is 75 years old. He's adorable. He also, frankly, looks like E.T. One of these mornings, I expect him to say, "Cokie, phone home." Well, he's not the only extraterrestrial on the program. There's also Sam Donaldson and George Will. First Sam, the New Mexico sheep rancher. You would think that anyone who has taken as much money from the government in wool subsidies as he has would come up with something better to put on his head. I mean, what is that? Something Strom Thurmond threw out? A cheap doily he swiped at Arianna Huffington's house? And then there's George Will — and they call Steve Forbes a geek. Anyone that buttoned up, I guarantee you, is spending his weekend wearing clothes that make him feel pretty. The things he's picked up, we now know, at Victoria's Secret in Georgetown.

Meet the Press, with the utterly charming, gregarious Tim Russert, has brought a new sense of enthusiasm and adventure to Sunday morning television. Mr. Russert's unique probing and interrogation of guests is widely seen as bold and refreshing. Sawing off Bob Kerrey's wooden leg was a special moment. Good-natured, however, and patient to a fault, Tim is to be admired for enduring frequently insipid observations and questions from contributing correspondents who for some inexplicable reasons include the coma-inducing William Safire, the terminally tedious David Broder and Elton John lookalike Mary McGrory. Where did she get those glasses? By the way, Russert, as many of you know, came to television from the world of politics, having once worked for New York's Senator Moynihan and Governor Cuomo. He was a fine aide, whose duties included hiding the bottles for Pat and the bodies for Mario.

Some of you may have noticed Mike Wallace running around here tonight. For some insane reason, I agreed to be interviewed by Mr.

Wallace. It's a good thing, too, because frankly, time is up over there at *60 Minutes*. I mean, they've gone from biographical essays on Martin Luther King, Mother Teresa, Stephen Hawking to profiles of loud-mouthed morons on the radio. I mean, have they no standards? And if they're going to fold up like some two-dollar suitcase every time some blood-sucking weasel in a Brooks Brothers suit threatens to haul them into court, then let's load the entire cast into an ambulance now and ship them off to the [inaudible].

I mean, I hate to be harsh here, but where are the days when Mike Wallace used to stick a camera into some poor sap's face and beat him like a rented mule? Where are the sobbing confessions? And they've been doing this for a hundred years. It is over. Except perhaps for Steve Kroft, and he's hoping he can go over to NBC and blow up trucks. And Ed Bradley: Re-think the earring thing, Ed, you're a newsman, not a pirate. Molly Ivins is going to be a commentator. Why not just go ahead and get Florence King? I told Nina Totenberg plagiarism jokes weren't funny.

Speaking of people whose place on the planet is a waste of space — the White House press corps. I mean, no wonder the president doesn't want to hold any news conferences. Who needs to be assaulted by a pack of rodents whose idea of a question is to confront the president with an insulting observation designed only to impress their equally rude and arrogant colleagues? "Mr. President, Rita Braver of CBS News, we all know you're a pot-smoking weasel and you once ate an apple fritter the size of a baby's head and that you actually run a 12-minute mile, could you therefore tell the American people why that thing on your lip looks like a Milk Dud? And if it is a Milk Dud, I'd like a follow-up."

"Sir, Brit Hume, ABC News. Sir, everybody knows the closest you ever came to standing in a chow line was the cheeseburger window at a McDonald's, so tell me, tell the American people, is that where you came up with 'Buy one, get one free'?" The president gets treated better by Rush Limbaugh. Rush may not, as Al Franken suggests, be a big fat idiot, but I'm sick of him. The radio show, the television show, the stupid books and now men's ties — bold, vibrant, colorful, and all designed to look good with a brown shirt. What a surprise that Rush is selling something that goes around a person's neck.

And Rush didn't date in high school? You're kidding. You mean the varsity cheerleaders weren't falling over a fat, pig-eyed shmoo who looks like a cross between Red Dog and one of those Budweiser frogs? He should be on a beach somewhere with a pair of Bermuda shorts, Hawaiian shirt, white socks, holding a metal detector. He couldn't get a date in high school? Maybe they should have held his senior prom at Sea World. Remember the old joke, what's got a hundred feet and four teeth? The front row of a Willie Nelson concert. Well, of course now it's a Rush Room. How appropriate that these ditto dorks all get together and eat and listen to Lard Butt.

And then there's Newt. Who names a child Newt? It's only slightly better than a boy named Sue. Well, he came into the world from the right side of town, Georgia boy who was big and round, dreamin' one day he'd wield power absolute. He's a guy who spends a lot of time in the fridge, and it's no wonder he wants to bring back the orphanage — you would, too, if your parents named you Newt. Now, you atheists better beware, because schoolchildren's heads will be bowed in prayer, to seek from the Lord to get rid of the poor and the queers.

Remember Newt and his conservative proteges were going to fix this country in a hundred days, and he was so proud he was on the verge of tears? But now the ethics folks are snooping for cash, and his cheesy book was less than a smash, and the polls all report he's held in disrepute. His sister's a thespian and appeared in *Friends*, and his poor old mom's still trying to make amends. I tell you, life ain't easy for a boy named Newt. And it was Newt, remember, that wanted to give every kid mired in the poverty of urban America a laptop computer. Not nearly as popular as Phil Gramm's plan to give every white male in the country a lap dancer.

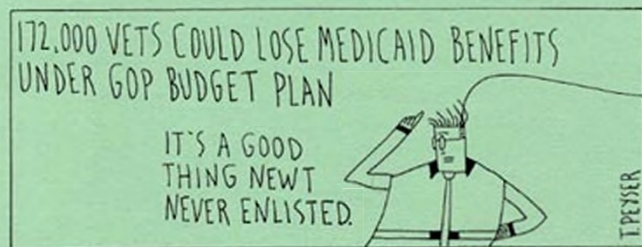
My friend Kinky Friedman, who headed Gay Texans for Gramm, told me early on that the senator was going to be president. Now, of course, we all know that. I was in Las Vegas when the news broke

that Senator Gramm had financed a porno movie. It was better than having Ed McMahon hand me a check for \$10 million. The only better news would have been had Senator Gramm actually *appeared* in a movie. I mean, how great would that have been? Like one of those farmer's daughters deals. I could see Phil in the role of a traveling salesman, Lamar Alexander as this farmer, Pat Buchanan as the weird ranch hand and one of John Kerry's old dates, right off a bale of hay on *Hee-Haw*.

And, by the way, what was the deal with the wagon? Pull the wagon, push the wagon, get in the wagon, get out of the wagon. What wagon? Where did he think he was, the Ponderosa? Senator Gramm was fond of saying he was too ugly to be president. Well, that was not his problem. I know he has a PhD in economics, but you can't sound like you just walked out of the woods in *Deliverance* and not scare people. "You got a real perty mouth on ya there, Bubba." Not happening.

Bob Dole. What else does Bob Dole want? Willard Scott's already wished Bob Dole a happy birthday. Twice. Bob Dole should be pleased. Bob Dole says, "Tell Willard Scott to stop lying about Bob Dole's age." And I agree with Ted Koppel. Pat Buchanan has a certain inherent charm. However, if he gets elected president, two weeks later someone's knocking on your front door at 3 o'clock in the morning. "Just checking — what kind of name is Imus?"

Although, all this stuff about Pat being anti-Semitic. I don't know about that. Lots of people aren't aware that he lost a relative at a concentration camp. His uncle fell out of a guard tower. Mort Sahl made



the original observation that people who talk most about family values are all on their second and third wives. And I would point out that they all have families that you could rope off and charge admission to view. You throw up a tent with Pat Buchanan and his [sister] Bay, Newt, Mom, Candace and Hugh Rodham in it, and you're looking at a theme park.

Now, I love Ronald Reagan, as do most Americans, regardless of politics, but, man, what a weird family. Nancy, staring at him like a glass-eyed Moonie on mushrooms, checking with this nut log out on the West Coast who's charting the course of the country on a Ouija board — I mean, what was that all about? And the kid, Ron, prancing around in his underwear on *Saturday Night Live*, and Patti's naked in *Playboy*, and they all, each of them, had these Mommy Dearest book deals. And of course they all still hate Michael.

Weird families are not confined to Republicans, of course. Remember the Carters? Ham Jordan and Willie Nelson are smoking dope on the roof of the White House, and Billy's out in the middle of an airport, hosing down the runway, while Jimmy's flailing away at a killer bunny with a canoe paddle, asking Amy to weigh in on America's role in the nuclear age.

And while President Clinton's cabinet is not technically a family, they are the single oddest-looking group of people ever assembled. It's like the bar scene out of *Star Wars*. I mean, watching them file in for the State of the Union reminded me of seeing all these clowns crawl out of the Volkswagen. It's a circus.

Speaking of Congress, while Al D'Amato, Jesse Helms and Strom Thurmond are mildly amusing, as the chairmen of various committees, I miss the Democrats who were in charge, especially Joe Biden and Joe Biden's head. Tracking the progress of his plug job was like watching time-lapse photography of a Chia Pet. He was most entertaining, however, as a committee chairman conducting hearings be-

cause Senator Biden always looked to me like he was coming on to the witnesses. Usually women. "So, Anita, when this is all over, you wanna have a drink?"

And although he's disappeared, he hasn't, as have 13 of his colleagues, actually quit. Of course, there are those Democrats who are not only staying, but are doing so with renewed vigor and enthusiasm. Mostly by becoming Republicans. With several noble exceptions, John Kerry of Massachusetts among them. This now gives me the opportunity to express my regret at having referred to my friend, Senator Kerry, upon his marriage to Theresa Heinz, as the Larry Fortensky of the United States Senate.

Which reminds me of poor old John Warner. The Senator marries Elizabeth Taylor, one of the most beautiful women in the world. Three weeks later, he comes home and she's sitting in the kitchen playing Deal-a-Meal with Richard Simmons. I mean, how do you get that fat that fast and not live in a trailer? And then, he has to choose between Chuck Robb and Oliver North. I mean, what's the deal with his karma?

But back to Senator Kerry. I also now recognize that it was irresponsible to suggest that he was a suspect in his own wife's unfortunate mugging. If the authorities thought it made sense that a senator from Massachusetts would be in Puerto Rico on a fund-raising mission during a time of family crisis, it should have made sense to me as well. However, when I initially thought about it, it only seemed slightly more plausible than chipping golf balls at 10 o'clock at night. But, the senator and I are past that and, in fact, it has drawn us closer.

And, yes, some unanticipated good for other Democrats came out of the Republicans gaining control of Congress. Senator Kennedy, for example, was forced to focus and take a bride, leaving Chris Dodd the opportunity to get his bearings and realize, "Hey, I'm a United States senator. Maybe I shouldn't be crawling around on the floor of this restaurant." In fact, as you know, Senator Dodd has recovered sufficiently to become the general chairman of the Democratic National Committee and will play a pivotal role in the president's re-election effort. In fact, he has a couple bumper-sticker ideas: "Clinton-Gore, Please Raise Your Right Hand." Or perhaps "Clinton-Gore, Four More or 5 to 10." Now, we're not sure what role James Carville or his dog will play in all of this. But isn't it just like a Democratic consultant to come along and make a mess, and then expect somebody else to clean it up?

While I am not obviously one of Bill Clinton's advisers, and it's not that I think Al Gore has done a horrible job — however, if I were the president, and I wanted to make sure I won in November, I'd ask Colin Powell to run with me. Stick Dole with that dork from Michigan. However, it appears it will be Bill Clinton and the albatross, Al Gore, for the Democrats, and Bob Dole and someone slightly less cranky for the Republicans, and the jug-eared little Martian from Texas for laughs.

One of the things it seems to me that the media ought to think about in the coming months, particularly in this election year, consumed by the chaos of the campaign, is the sensibilities of the people who you cover, the way you cover them and your treatment of them as individuals. For, if nothing else, they are all good and decent people who, for whatever reasons, have chosen to devote the bulk of their adult lives to public service. People who possess a passion for ideas and ideals to which they have committed extraordinary energy. It is almost always irrelevant and shortsighted to seize only on the unfortunate human imperfections of people who, frankly, have demonstrated an often puzzling willingness to endure great sacrifice both personally and professionally at what they see as a noble summons to serve the greater good. More often than not, however, that is exactly the case. You folks focus on each misstep, every misspoken word, each testy outburst. Do they not deserve some degree of respect, to be treated with the dignity that at least acknowledges the mission of altruism they believe they are conducting? Shouldn't we be willing to give them some benefit of the doubt?

I don't think so.

MEDIA FREAK

Filler Items

• According to Ann Landers, there is no legal prohibition against first cousins marrying in Tennessee. According to *Out* magazine, Pat Robertson's parents are first cousins.

• On *Larry King Live*, Marlon Brando spouted a slew of movie stereotypes: "We've seen the nigger, we've seen the greaseball, we've seen the chink, we've seen the slit-eyed dangerous Jap, we've seen the wily Filipino, we've seen everything, but we never saw the kike." CNN, having overdosed on the N-word during the O.J. Simpson trial, bleeped out only the word *nigger* from all replays of Brando's politically incorrect litany.

• Kato Kaelin on Bosnia: "I'm not into those foreign dances."

• MTV News reported the case of a judge who dismissed a marijuana case against two individuals because "they were too stoned when they let the police search their place and therefore didn't know what they were doing."

• A letter from Donald Wildmon of the American Family Association — "In *Toy Story* the main characters, Woody — note sexual reference — and Buzz — note drug reference — are owned by a child in a single-parent household in which the father is noticeably absent. Woody and Buzz have equally disturbing toy friends, including a sex-obsessed talking potato, a sex obsessed Bo Peep doll who cannot keep her hands or lips off Woody, and an Etch-a-Sketch whose knobs must be adjusted to produce results" — turned out to be a hoax.

• Bob Dole, who was once a staunch defender of Richard Nixon, later described a reunion of former presidents Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford and Nixon as "See no evil, hear no evil and evil."

• A tennis coach testified that Jose Menendez pushed his sons to win, saying, "Finishing second is like kissing your sister."

• On March 1, the *Columbia Journalism Review* sent renewal forms to readers with subs due to end with the November-December issue, warning that "your subscription is now approaching expiration."

• *Rock & Rap Confidential* reports that, "Perhaps in the interest of fostering international peace, Bob Dylan recently played a corporate meeting at the Arizona Biltmore in Phoenix sponsored by Japan's Nomura Securities. Dylan was paid \$250,000 for entertaining 800 real estate big shots. . . ." Presumably he did not sing *I Ain't Gonna Work on Maggie's Farm Any More*.

• When the rock band, Rage Against the Machine, appeared on *Saturday Night Live*, they attempted to hang U.S. flags upside-down from their amplifier grilles as a protest

against the guest host, former Republican presidential candidate Steve Forbes, and against a political system geared to the wealthy. The flags were removed by stagehands because according to the show's policy, bands are not allowed to "dress" the set.

• Graffiti of the month: "There's nothing like senseless violence to snap you out of a depression."

• *Jewish Week* reports that a Manhattan phone line has been set up by a man who — at the request of three rabbis — wants to find a wife for Yigal Amir, the religious Zionist who gunned down Israeli Prime Minister Rabin: "Wanted: Orthodox woman, between 18 and 23, under 5-foot-3 with a Yemenite background. Must be physically and mentally healthy, and highly idealistic. She seeks to marry a great Jewish hero, a 25-year-old Israeli, former law student with international name recognition, to start a family. Living in Israel a must."

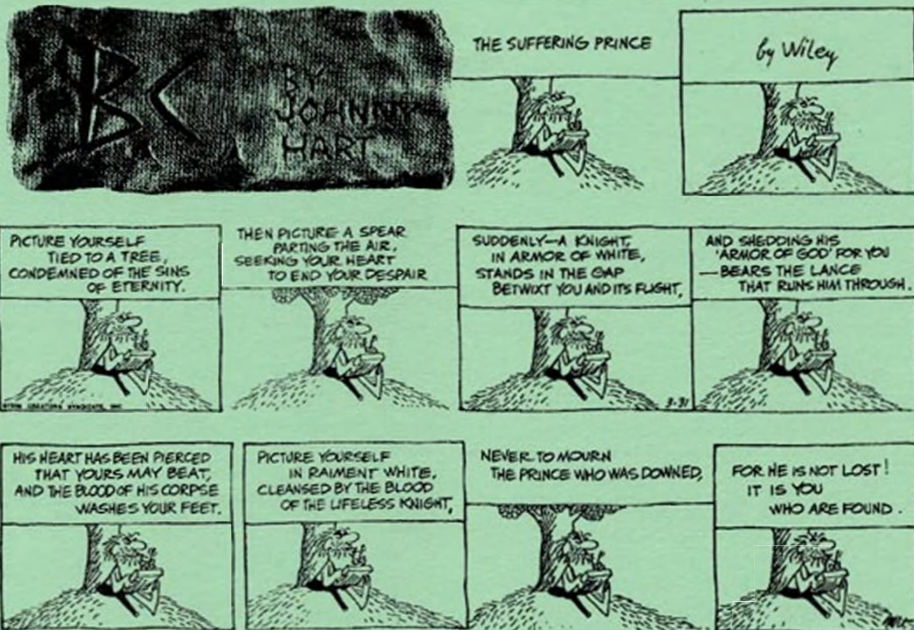
• When the Supreme Court rejected a parental challenge to a school program that makes condoms available free to junior and senior high school students, attorneys for the American Center for Law and Justice called it

"a dangerous precedent that would leave school officials free to provide students with everything from cigarettes to syringes to soft porn to weapons instruction."

• When the Democrats hold their first convention in Chicago since 1968, Tom Hayden — California State Senator and probable Los Angeles mayoral candidate — will be there, this time as an elected delegate. Meanwhile, the Santa Monica College Vegetarian Club has launched a petition drive to persuade Hayden to become a vegetarian, pointing out that "it's almost impossible to be an environmentalist without being a vegetarian." Hayden responds, "I am not a pure vegetarian, but I am one of the leading opponents of the cattle-ranching and agri-business special interest groups in California."

• The infamous V-chip can be bypassed by routing any TV program through a VCR.

• *The Realist's* sound-bite of the year award goes to Oklahoma bombing suspect Timothy McVeigh. When the *London Sunday Times* asked him how it feels to be labelled the worst mass murderer in history, he replied: "Better, I guess, than being one of Princess Di's lovers."



Separation of Church and Comics

The *Los Angeles Times* regularly publishes the comic strip *B.C.* by Johnny Hart — but not the one he drew for Palm Sunday, which had a Crucifixion theme (see above). Evangelist-politician Pat Robertson alerted viewers of his *700 Club* TV show, who protested to the *Times*, as did the Christian Coalition, founded by Robertson. Coalition director Ralph Reed accused the *Times* of censorship.

Associate editor Narda Zacchino said, "We are mindful that the *Times* is a secular publication serving a large and quite diverse and

pluralistic community. While we respect affirmations of personal religious faith, we also are aware that aggressively urging such affirmations on others who have not sought them out may be considered proselytizing and inappropriate for the comics pages."

However, the strip in question was published on the Religion Page of the *Times* six days later as part of a news story about the controversy. The original cause of it all, cartoonist Hart, describes himself as "a professing Christian." Perhaps he should have named his comic strip *A.D.*