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# The Realist

Number 138  
Editor: Paul Krassner

• Free the Unabomber  
• Mother Teresa Goes to Hell  
• Lenny Bruce and Lotus Weinstock

## Timothy Leary's Last Interview

*Editor's note: In September 1995, I was assigned by The Nation to tape a conversation with the ailing Timothy Leary. Several months later, he died. The Nation had kept postponing publication, and eventually the editor admitted, "We blew it." The transcript is published here instead.*

"So, Tim, here's a toast to 30 years of friendship."

"And still counting. We've been playing mind tennis for 30 years. Isn't that great?"

"The one thing in countless conversations we've had that sticks out in my mind is something you once said, that no matter what scientists do, they can't decode the DNA code, layer after layer, but underneath it all, there's still that mystery. And I've enjoyed playing with the mystery. Are you any closer to understanding the mystery, or further from it?"

"Well, Paul, I watch words now. It's an obsession. I learned it from Marshall McLuhan, of course. A terrible vice. Had it for years, but not actually telling people about it. I watch the words that people use. The medium is the message, you recall. The brain creates the realities she wants. When we see the prisms of these words that come through, we can understand. Do I understand the mystery?"

"I guess the ultimate mystery is inconceivable by definition. But have you come any closer to understanding it?"

"Understand? Stand under! I'm overstood, I'm understood."

"The older I get, the deeper the mystery becomes."

"The faster."

"Let's get to a specific mystery. The mystery of you. Because everybody sees you through their own perceptions. How do you think you have been most misunderstood?"

"Well, everyone gets the Timothy Leary they deserve. Everyone has their point of view. And everyone's point of view is absolutely valid for them. To track me, you have to keep moving the camera, or you'll have just one tunnel point of view. Sermonizing there. Don't impale yourself on your point of view."

"Some people know you only through that '60s slogan, 'Turn on, tune in, drop out.' I think a lot of people don't really understand what you meant by dropping out."

"Everybody understood. Just look at the

source."

"All right, here's words. Fifteen years ago at a futurist conference you called yourself a Neo-Technological Pagan. What did you mean by that?"

"Neo has all the connotations of the futurist stuff that's coming along. Technological denotes using machines, using electricity or light to create reality. There are two kinds of technology. The machine — diesel, oil, metal, industrial technology. And then the Neo-Technology, which uses light. Electricity. Photons. Electrons. Pagan is great. I love the word. Pagan is basically humanist. I grew up in a Catholic zone, and pagan was the worst thing you could say. Of course, I'd never met a pagan in Springfield, Massachusetts, going to a Catholic school. 'Where do these pagans hang out? I wanna be one.'"

"Was there any specific thing that made you turn from Catholicism?"

"Yeah, there was a period, I know exactly what it was, I was 15 or 16, I was being sexually molested in my high school and actually seduced by a wonderful sexy girl, much more experienced than I. And, *whew!* She opened it up! The great mystery of sex. *Wow!* At that time I was going routinely to confession on Saturday afternoon. But I had a date with Rosemary that night. Sitting there in the dark church. Then you go in and say, 'Bless me, father, for I have sinned.' Absolutely, totally hypocritical! They want you to confess and repent while I have every intention in the world of being seduced by this girl tonight."

"The glands overshadowed the philosophy."

"The glands? Shit, Paul, that statement is very mechanical."

"I'm a recovering romantic."

"Because you used the word gland? Glands  
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### Great Moments in Countercultural History

In May 1969, John Lennon and Yoko Ono — shown here with Rosemary and Tim Leary — staged a Bed-In at a Montreal hotel after Richard Nixon's immigration officials refused Lennon's request for an entry visa to the United States. The couple stayed in bed for a week, recording *Give Peace a Chance* on the final night. Backup singers included the Learys, Tommy Smothers, Murray the K, Petula Clark, a rabbi, a priest and a group of Canadian Hare Krishnas. The song, with cover versions by performers ranging from the Everly Brothers to Louis Armstrong, became an unofficial anthem of the peace movement. Jon Wiener, in his biography of Lennon, *Come Together*, wrote: "As John left the Beatles, he joined the antiwar movement."



## COURT JESTER

### How to Reform Campaign Financing

The collective unconscious has been busy working its way across America. On the west coast, I suggested during a stand-up performance that campaign finance reform could be brought about by requiring all donations to be anonymous. In the midwest, Nicole Hollander created a variation on that theme in her syndicated comic strip, *Sylvia*. And on the east coast, Jim Atwood wrote an op-ed piece for *Legal Times*, a Washington weekly for lawyers and lobbyists:

"All political contributions must be paid to a governmental intermediary — a blind trust — that would collect contributions earmarked for each candidate and political party, and then pay them out to the designated recipient on a periodic basis. When making these payments, the government intermediary would not reveal the source of the funds. The identity of the contributors would be anonymous.

"It would be entirely lawful to lie (or to tell the truth) about whether you made a contribution through this system. That is, if the ACLU gave a large contribution to Rep. Barney Frank through the system, it would be free to tell him in order to gain his appreciation. But it could also tell the same thing to Sen. Jesse Helms, even if it were an outright lie. . . .

"We should be able to support candidates that we like, but we shouldn't expect political payoffs in return. And we should deny politicians the leverage to shake down constituents who fear political retribution if they fail to pay up. To achieve this result, we must break the link between contributions and access. We must be able to lie about whether we gave at the office."

A reporter from NPR asked Atwood, "Are you serious, or is this a joke?" He replied, "Yes." He told me, "It is a serious topic and, I think, a serious proposal, but it also has a whimsical element to it, and also it's designed in part to bug the politicians. It's sad (funny?) that our political system has gotten to the point that a proposal like ours is so close to the line."

### The High Cost of Free Speech

Lenny Bruce once remarked, "Chicago is so corrupt it's thrilling." Las Vegas, then, must be totally ecstatic.

Lyle Stuart, my friend and mentor who helped me launch *The Realist* in 1958, has served over four decades as the most courageous and controversial publisher in the country. In 1995, his maverick company, Barricade Books, published *Running Scared: The Life and Treacherous Times of Las Vegas Casino King Steve Wynn* by John L. Smith, columnist for the *Review-Journal*, Nevada's largest newspaper. Stuart previously wrote an ad for his catalog stating that the unauthorized biography "details why a confidential Scotland Yard report calls Wynn a front man for the Genovese crime family."

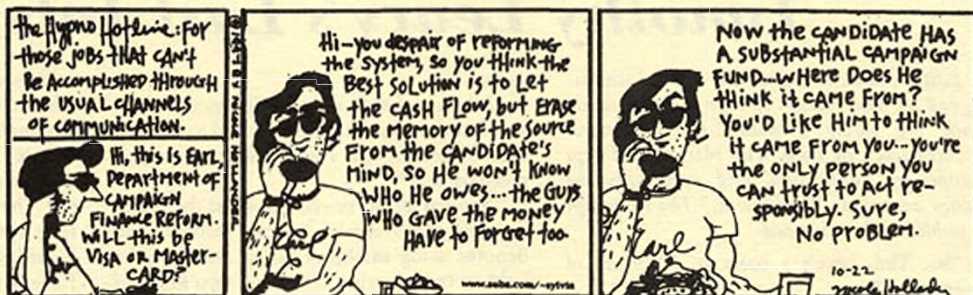
Wynn sued for libel.

The trial, held recently in Las Vegas, revolved around that one sentence in the ad, not the book itself (against which Wynn has brought suit in Kentucky). The defense was not permitted to argue the "fair report privilege," which allows the press to be held blameless for any errors in a government report. Judge Sally Loehrer imposed the "republication rule," which states that if you quote from an official document, you're responsible for what you write. Stuart testified that when he wrote the ad he had "every reason to believe" the Scotland Yard report and still believes that Wynn had help from people with mob associations.

Wynn's character witnesses included Las Vegas Mayor Jan Jones, to

whom Wynn contributed \$40,000, and Nevada's Governor Bob Miller, to whom Wynn contributed \$80,000. A dozen state judges recused themselves from the case because they had received campaign contributions from Wynn. Judge Loehrer, who had been appointed to the bench by Governor Miller, was also the recipient of a contribution from Wynn. The jury decided that Stuart should contribute \$3.1 million to Wynn. That, plus interest and court costs, would total nearly \$4 million.

Stuart has filed for bankruptcy to protect Barricade Books from annihilation. He had to file personally as well to prevent Wynn from seizing his stock in the company and closing its doors. An appeal is being prepared, and an *amicus* is being financed and supported by 30



media entities, including the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Time* magazine and the American Association of Book Publishers. If the appeal is unsuccessful in the Nevada Supreme Court, an attempt will be made in the U.S. Supreme Court which, however, receives 4,000 applications a year of cases wanting to be heard, and accepts only 85.

"In the halls of justice," said Lenny Bruce, "the only justice is in the halls."

### With Liberty and Niche Marketing For All

The International Women's Media Foundation recently held a \$200-a-plate luncheon, emceed by CNN's Judy Woodruff, at the Miramar Sheraton Hotel in Santa Monica. Courage in Journalism Awards were presented to Bina Bektiati, a dissident freelancer in Indonesia who cannot use her own byline; Corinne Dufka, Reuter's chief photographer for East Africa who has worked in El Salvador, Sarajevo and Bosnia; and Maribel Gutierrez Moreno, blacklisted in Mexico for reporting on the activities of a local peasant group opposing government controls.

Ironically, the event was sponsored, at worst by the same multinational corporations that on some level may bear some responsibility for the conditions reported upon by those recipients, and at best by companies that in this particular context seemed guilty of sexist insult. As attendees departed, they were each handed a gift bag with an AT&T logo, containing: Mickey Mouse ears from the Walt Disney Company; Protectant Shampoo that "Gently cleans, remoisturizes, protects color-treated hair" from Clairol; Chocolate Mousse powder ("Naturally and Artificially Flavored") and Pancake Mix from Jenny Craig Personal Weight Management; Creme de Corps ("Superb All-Over Body Moisturizer of Superb Quality for extremely dry, or flaking skin"), Coriander Non-Soap Moisturizing Cleansing Bar, Lip Balm #1, and "For the Ladies Close-Shaverettes 'Simply Mahvelous Legs' Shave Cream" from Kiehl's; a plastic bookmark and ball-point pen from the *Los Angeles Times*; a copy of the *New Yorker* ("The Next Issue" dealing with the future); a box of three Proflite golf balls from Spalding; and a rubberized calendar of upcoming movies on ABC from The Wonderful World of Disney.

When Disney originally bought the ABC network, editorial cartoons around the nation depicted Peter Jennings delivering the nightly news while wearing Mickey Mouse ears. And now, thanks to the fearlessness of foreign female journalists, a few hundred of L.A.'s media elite were enabled to join Jennings and participate in that contemporary fashion statement.



## Obedience Threatens Economy by Jesse Harrington

A sharp decline in the nation's crime rate has experts concerned about the health of our economy, but America may be uniquely prepared for the crash.

Reports of murder, rape, assault, theft and forgery were all down by 35% or more since last year, according to the FBI's 1998 National Crime Index. But this is unwelcome news, coming at a time when the punishment industry has been experiencing robust growth, and providing new economic opportunities to employees and investors alike.

"Any serious slump in crime is going to mean layoffs at prisons," explains Theo Penney, who has been researching the issue for the Institute of Technical Ethics (ITE). "A lack of crime means police departments could lose funding, and private security companies will definitely lose business," he says. "A decrease in prison construction would silence the booming construction industry, which could mean a slump in local real estate markets as well. Many privatized prisons are now in a position to destroy entire towns if a prisoner shortage forces bankruptcy," says Penney.

Michael Webster of the Prison Guards' Local 115 echoes this analysis. "In states like Oregon, where they're getting tough on marijuana, business is booming," he says. "Crime means jobs for families. This is good for America." And it's good for stockholders, too. Stock in the CAC Prison Realty Trust has been up dramatically in the last two quarters, as has been the stock of the God-like Corrections Corporation of America. Could a stock crash be in the cards?

Special Agent Robert Forsyth of the FBI dismisses all prophecies of doom. "Any de-

crease in crime is only temporary, because Congress can always pass more laws for us to enforce," he says. The institutions of law-enforcement are indispensable to all forms of government. "So long as there are police, judges and jailers, there will be a structural demand for crime," says Forsyth.

Whatever the true risk of economic collapse, the prison industry still retains one recession-proof crime-benefit: prison labor. In Oregon criminals sew pants, and in Illinois they are welding machine parts for tractor-builders. Two Florida telephone-marketing

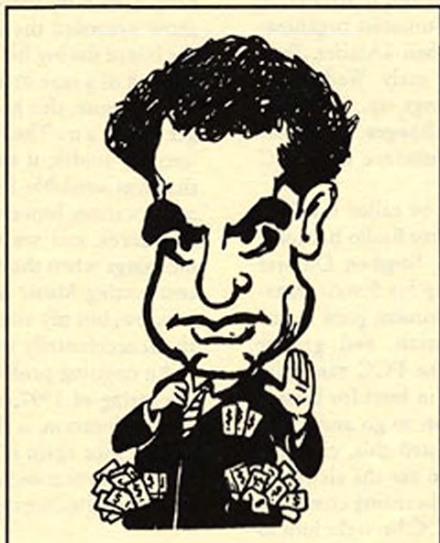
companies now employ female inmates who work from their cells. And they all work for a fraction of the pay that volunteers work for.

"They don't call in sick, they don't call in hung over, you know where they're at. Prisoners make perfect employees," explains Warden Jack Block, of the Berger State Prison in the remote desert of eastern Oregon. "A lot of people think that inmates would not be motivated to work for such meager pay, but if you ever visited the 'blind cell,' you'd volunteer to work 24 hours a day too," says Block.

These lower production costs trickle down to the consumer. "Cheaper labor means lower prices at the supermarket and more affordable cars," says Penney of the ITE. "Given a reliable increase in the crime rate, we could staff more and more industry with cost-effective prison labor," he says. "America could return to a slave economy in which criminals are bought and sold, providing a life of luxury and idle pleasure for the victims and the obedient, law-abiding people."

In fact, slavery was never outlawed in the United States. The 13th article of the Constitution states: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, *except as punishment for a crime* . . . shall exist within the United States." This clearly leaves the door open for a non-racist rendition of that peculiar institution, which even black conservatives could support.

"I'm not saying that an increase in crime is the only way to ward off the next Great Depression," says Penney. "Another war could serve the same purpose, or even an epidemic of disease; AIDS and cancer have been boons to the medical industries. But what we've learned from focus groups and polling is that most Americans would elect for 'more crime' over 'more disease,' and in the end, it's their voice that counts."



### Deep Pockets Chopra

From *Newsweek*:  
 "Spiritual guru Deepak Chopra's enterprises bring in about \$15 million a year. He says he enjoys wealth but is not attached to it."

## Ah Sordid Announcements

• There are now eight more issues to come before *The Realist* ceases publication. A subscription to those final issues is \$16. If you wish to subscribe for a friend, send \$18 and we'll start with this issue.

Our address: Box 1230, Dept. 138, Venice CA 90294.

• Previously I had announced that *The Realist* would no longer be available at newsstands or bookstores, but changed my mind out of loyalty to L-S Distributors, which has fought a few censorship battles on our behalf. Now, L-S has decided to end distribution of periodicals, so henceforth *The Realist* will be by subscription only.

• Back issues #99 thru #137 are available at \$2 each, or all 39 for \$75, via priority mail. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a listing of their contents.

• On the Internet, Amazon is selling my 1993 unauthorized autobiography, *Confessions of a Raving, Unconfined Nut: Misadventures in the Counterculture*, for \$58.25, but we have copies of the Simon & Schuster hardcover edition for \$25, including postage. Also available: *The (Almost) Unpublished Lenny Bruce* — a collection of his articles, stories, columns, bits and pieces, \$10. And my New Age media fable, *Tales of Tongue Fu*, about a man with a 15-inch tongue who goes to a summer camp for gurus, with a non-introduction by Ken Kesey, \$7. Or all three books for \$40.

• Seven Stories Press has published a paperback edition of *The Winner of the Slow Bicycle Race: The Satirical Writings of Paul Krass-*

*ner*, with a foreword by Kurt Vonnegut. Mercury Records has released my two comedy albums — *We Have Ways of Making You Laugh* and *Brain Damage Control* — and I will soon be taping a third. The title, based on a swingers convention I recently covered for *Playboy*, will be *I Was a Wallflower At the Orgy*.

• *The Realist* ceased publication once before — after 98 issues, in 1974, when it was a magazine — but that was because I had run out of money and taboos. This time it's voluntary. In 1985, with a \$5,000 grant from Lorenzo Milam's secret slush fund, I found some new taboos and reincarnated *The Realist* as a newsletter. One of the reasons I've now decided to retire it (by gradual withdrawal — three issues a year) is to give me time to work on a few novels. But first I'm writing a non-fiction book, *The Trial of Peter McWilliams*. He is a bestselling author — *Ain't Nobody's Business If You Do: The Absurdity of Consensual Crime* has sold 125,000 copies; *How to Survive the Loss of a Love* has reached two million — and publisher (Prelude Press) — *Hypericum (St. John's Wort) & Depression* by Harold H. Bloomfield, M.D., Mikael Nordfors, M.D. and Peter McWilliams has already sold 450,000 copies. McWilliams has AIDS and cancer, and was arrested in Detroit for possession of seven joints. Judge Tina Green said she would allow a medical-marijuana defense, then changed her mind a week later, a decision that is now on appeal.

The prosecutor has legally changed his name to Luke Skywalker. May the farce be with you.



## Rebels Without a License

by Alan K. Lipton

Having spent much of my adult life refusing to join any group that would have me as a member, I'm still amazed to find myself in an organization on the cutting edge of the free speech movement. Free Radio Berkeley first poked into my awareness with hand-lettered posterboards appearing all over town in late 1994. They were secret, they were illegal, they'd play anyone's tape. Totally cool. And so totally Berkeley. A year later, after checking them out on the car radio and hearing their name dropped at parties (sometimes as Radio Free Berkeley), I was at one of their public meetings with Bill, my stepdad-to-be, hoping to sign up for a show. After watching three hours of impassioned comic opera, we left, showless, shaking our heads in disbelief. Meanwhile, Bill was active in Berkeley's Humanist organization, whose founder Jim was friends with Stephen Dunifer, Free Radio Berkeley's daddy. Jim had some airtime early Wednesday mornings, and he invited us aboard to live things up. Suddenly, in my usual ass-backwards style of executing life changes, I was part of a guerrilla action against corporate radio dominance and FCC enforcement.

To those unfamiliar with the station that could be called the flagship of the micropower broadcasting movement, Free Radio Berkeley began in 1993 as a one-man portable operation. Stephen Dunifer would ascend into the Berkeley hills at night, set up his 5-watt transmitter, and reach out to his community. The experiment grew to include more equipment, a stable physical location, and greater community access. Somewhere along the way, the FCC tuned in, tracked him down, and slapped him with \$20,000 in fines for broadcasting without a license, along with an injunction to go and never darken the public airwaves again. Dunifer contested this, claiming that he was exercising his 1st Amendment rights to use the airwaves, which, despite heavy regulation and astronomical licensing costs, the government still considers public property. The FCC brought him to federal Court and, in April 1996, effectively lost their case. Judge Claudia Wilken, sympathetic to the cause of low power, low budget stations, took the FCC's motion under submission with a promise to issue a ruling at some undetermined point in the future. Meanwhile, microstations began to spring up all over the Bay Area. Taking advantage of their high profile and respite from court battles, Dunifer and a core of FRB activists have helped meet the station's operating costs by conducting workshops around the country and selling micropower startup kits internationally for as little as \$1000.

It's a good thing to be on the angels' team. To be honest, though, I should admit that this heroic backstory is just an excuse for my weekly routine of entering a broadcast studio at an ungodly hour of the morning to play music, read aloud, and have conversations. My inner exhibitionist grooves to the possibility that maybe a few dozen people are listening to me at 6 a.m., that weird twilight time during which I'm usually unconscious and locked into bizarre REM cycles.

The new, improved Humanist Hour went on the air in the darkness of Valentine's Day morning, 1996. I was stunned to find the studio located in a North Oakland group house once occupied by an ex-lover and her political friends in the early '80s. We broadcast for five months from the space that used to be her bedroom. Anyone I had known there was long gone, and the squalid living conditions of the current residents made me feel like a ghost haunting some bleak future. Until Judge Wilken handed down her non-ruling, I felt like a criminal and tried to bring as few forms of ID and personal possessions as possible.

Within the volatile politics of that collective household, Free Radio Berkeley held a position somewhere between an honored guest and a single-vote entity. Naturally, there were problems when inebriated DJ's made noise at the front door, or when station personnel brought in guests who turned out to be petty thieves. But in this ideologically charged atmosphere, the residents found it necessary to voice their opinions on some of the more outrageous programming content. Even as the FRB collective tangled with the issue of self-censorship

(does adhering to the mission/vision statement mean infringing on the free speech rights of those whose content is deemed sexist or racist?), it happened against a growing mutter of background noise from the hosting house, whose penalties for political incorrectness included restricted access and a rent increase.

Pressures like these led FRB to move its studio to a mixed use commercial/residential building in a more upscale neighborhood during the summer of 1996. The improved conditions of tenancy came with their own set of problems. Neighbors complained about how the signal from FRB's tiny transmitter spread out to swallow two or three powerhouse stations from across the Bay in San Francisco. Also the lack of couches and funky nooks and crannies made for more obvious slumber parties by the few homeless DJ's, homeless friends of DJ's, or people with no place better to go. Music Man, whose Night Flight show preceded the Humanist Hour, would sometimes fall asleep at the board during his 4-hour graveyard shift, not always waking up at the end of a tape or album side to save the station from dead air time. At the house, this had been only a minor obstacle when we needed to get in at 6 a.m. The residents had conveniently wired a loud doorbell into the studio; if that failed, the room had a ground floor window that was available for knocking and, in the worst cases, access. The new location, however, was on the 2nd floor without any kind of bell or buzzer, and we were shit-out-of-luck if nobody was awake on mornings when the stairwell door was locked. Jim had marginal success getting Music Man's attention by hurling pennies at the studio window, but my aim and velocity were never that good. (I have issues about accidentally waking the neighbors.)

An ongoing problem that contributed to the studio's next move in the spring of 1997, and one that has been even more obvious in the current location, is the presence of smokers in a smoke-free environment. Once again it's the tension between "total freedom, man" and the sad fact that certain guidelines must be followed for easy interface with the adult world. As of this writing, the broadcast studio oper-

### PROMISE KEEPERS DECLARATION





## Mother Teresa Goes to Hell

The following was discovered in cyberspace by web-surfer Jed Mattes:

In what is widely believed to be the result of clerical error on the part of Heaven's massive soul-evaluation and punishment bureaucracy, the *Calcutta Daily Telegram* reported that beloved missionary caregiver Mother Teresa was condemned to agonizing, eternal torment in Hell following her death at the age of 87. Widely expected to ascend into Paradise and take her rightful place among the saints to the glorious fanfare of horns and choruses upon her passing, she was instead hurled from the firmament into the bowels of the Lake of Fire.

"We can only assume that some sort of mix-up occurred in the processing phase," said Saint Peter, the heavenly official in charge of the Book of Life, in which the names of those chosen to ascend to the gates of Heaven are written. "Unfortunately, when you deal with over 70 million souls a day, these kinds of mistakes happen. What can I say? I don't know what else to tell you."

Mother Teresa, who for decades inspired the world with her selfless devotion to the starving, disease-ridden masses of Calcutta, was unavailable for comment, as she was being lowered upside-down into a vat of boiling human excrement by a trio of pitchfork-wielding demons. Similar punishment reportedly awaits her for the rest of eternity.

Heavenly angels, cherubim, seraphim and other secondary celestial entities have been working around the clock to keep up with the enormous volume of intercessory prayers arriving daily on Mother Teresa's behalf. Despite the tremendous number of pleas, however, Heaven essentially has its hands tied.

"It's sad that this happened," the archangel



Gabriel, a spokesperson for Heaven, told reporters. "But we really can't do anything about it. The whole point of eternal damnation is that it is inescapable, absolute and irrevocable. If the Lord were to turn around and pull her out of Hell now, he'd be turning his back on millennia of Catholic doctrine, on everything Mother Teresa stood for."

Her arthritic limbs snapping like twigs as her frail, 4'11" frame was rent asunder by the

claws of grotesque, multi-limbed demons, Mother Teresa reportedly screamed in indescribable agony as the superheated gases of Hell's unholy furnace blackened and charred her hair and face.

According to a *New York Times* report, her skull has already been used as a drinking goblet by Satan, the Great Deceiver himself, and the esteemed nun's rape at the hands of insatiable, barbed-penis-wielding hellhounds in

ated in a modernized, completely commercial building, and the terms of the lease are clear: absolutely no smoking. And yet ashes, butts, and roaches litter the table, the microphone-covers stink of stale tobacco fumes, smells travel throughout the building, and belligerent graffiti appears on the no-smoking notices. The subject is raised with characteristic righteousness at meetings, but it's pretty clear to everyone that the honor system just isn't working on this one.

The monthly general meetings are the place to go for anyone who really wants to see Free Radio Berkeley in action. Although women, ethnic minorities, and seniors are represented in the programming, the populist station of America's most PC city seems to be mainly the work of white men in their mid-20s to early fifties. Business happens within the framework of an agenda proposed at large, facilitated discussions, motions, and show-of-hands voting. This all comes apart around occasional hot-button issues, like free speech vs. the mission/vision statement, DJ's losing privileges or access through unacceptable behavior, and meaningful ways to acknowledge the donors who help keep an anti-capitalist operation afloat in a capitalist world. At such times, tempers will flare, ideologies will spew, and people will repeat one another just to have their own say. All the concerns and clichés of The Movement, or The Struggle, or The Revolution come boiling out at these moments, as if the loop of everything visionary and tedious about Berkeley is playing one more time in the tape deck of history. If there's anyone who can restore order, it's often Stephen

Dunifer, champion of the micropower movement, the one who started FRB, the one who takes the initiative and the heat in legal matters, the one who has already paid far more for this project than he ever intended. He speaks quietly, his affect sometimes flat, and the room falls silent for him. He is the semi-acknowledged leader of an organization that claims to function as a collective.

Presently, I am the Humanist Hour's lone host/DJ/technician, Jim's and Bill's lives having taken them in other directions. Not being much of a dogmatist, I call myself a Humanist sympathizer, carry out my own agenda, and try to infuse things with the Humanist sentiment. Meanwhile, outside my little 6 a.m. world, Free Radio Berkeley has become \$10/Month Radio Berkeley, at least for the members, a majority of whom voted in June to start paying dues. The 50-watt station feels big enough in the community to go live as Flea Radio Berkeley every Saturday morning at the Ashby BART station flea market. Dunifer and company have supplied Mexico's Zapatista rebels with a micropower setup. And after Judge Wilken's November 12 ruling that FRB is in fact operating within the 1st Amendment, the FCC has responded with SWAT-team raids on microstations in Tampa, Kansas City, Boston, and elsewhere. One station in Philadelphia thwarted their raid by turning it into a media circus. The Center for Constitutional Rights has added micropower free speech to its national agenda. The airwaves of America may never again be safe for corporate interests.



## At the Copa

by Stanley Young

Shirley Ann Allen had barricaded herself inside her Roby, Illinois house with a rifle, and the last thing police wanted was a repeat of the deadly shoot-out at Ruby Ridge. For days she refused all communication as the negotiators tried every technique they knew. But when the black, unmarked FBI van appeared outside her modest two-story house, everyone knew the situation had taken a turn for the worse.

With a practiced precision the "roadies" (as the flak-jacketed Special Agents were called) set up a 1,000-watt Macintosh amplifier and two large JBL concert speakers. Then a hushed silence fell over the assembled sixty-odd law officers as two men in military uniforms gave the order and the speakers came to life. Suddenly the air was filled with a 115-decibel, ear-splitting rendition of *Copacabana* sung by Barry Manilow.

"The auditory adjunct was implemented in accordance with standard Psych-Eval procedures," explained Special Agent Sonnenfeld about the use of Manilow's album, *Greatest Hits, Volume III*. Sonnenfeld refused all further comment, but sources at the scene indicated that the reclusive Ms. Allen adored Manilow as much as she did her Winchester .303, and the FBI experts felt that his music would calm her down. They played it non-

stop for three days.

This was not, of course, the first time that blaring music had been used in hostage or standoff situations. Manuel Noriega in Panama was subjected to the Rolling Stones for 36 hours, and the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas suffered through Mitch Miller Christmas carols and Nancy Sinatra's *These Boots Were Made for Walkin'*.

But a new study shows that we all may be hearing a lot more music in crisis situations in coming years. Undertaken with the help of the Freeburg Charitable Trust and the Harbington Committee for Pentagon Accountability (HCPA) the study indicates that the military uses of music have been researched for at least 15 years. And while hard figures are difficult to come by, Richard Niemeyer, Director of Pentagon Studies at the HCPA, thinks that hundreds of millions of dollars — possibly as much as \$180 million in 1996 alone — have been spent on the music programs to date.

The money, hidden within the "black budget" of the Department of Defense, goes to not only deploying Music Strike Force Teams but also to promoting the artists whose music is felt to be particularly effective in hostage and standoff situations. "We used to joke here about names of groups like the B-52s and U2," says Niemeyer, "but not any more."

The impact of the HCPA study is sobering enough, but the investigations now reveal,

according to documents leaked by sympathetic workers in the recording industry, that the major music labels are more likely implicated. Said one executive secretary at a well known record label once affiliated with the media conglomerate Time Warner: "They may not know it, but the Pentagon is now one of the music industry's largest silent investors."

The system apparently works like this. Promising artists are scouted by undercover Department of Defense operatives posing as managers. The groups are promoted until they release a first album, or a professional-level demo tape. This music is then tested both in night clubs (which are also partly funded by the Pentagon) and in military camps where recruits are subjected to the music subliminally in their barracks as well as on the field.

If the psychological evaluations indicate that the music incites unruly behavior or, by contrast, tends to calm the passions, the artists responsible are promoted with additional funds to increase their output and build up a library of what has come to be known in military circles as E.M. (for Effective Music). The artists themselves have no idea that they have essentially become a part of the Pentagon's long-range military preparedness program. At present, it is not yet clear whether Manilow is aware of the fact that his career may have been a fabrication by the Department of Defense. Says one source close to him, "Barry just likes to sing."

the near future is considered "highly likely."

"I can't believe this happened," said stunned Catholic Cristina Fontanez, 38, of Petaluma, California. "She must have been so shocked when, after a lifetime of good works, she found herself face-to-face with Satan. Instead of being thrust into the living and redemptive light of Jesus' love for all time upon her death, she instead found herself being slit from crotch to sternum and suffering the pain of red-hot instruments of torture repeatedly being plunged deep into her writhing entrails." Speculation varies as to what could have caused such a miscarriage of heavenly justice.

While some contend that Mother Teresa's policy of not administering medication to the sick and dying in her clinics may have caused some in Heaven to doubt her true compassion, others believe that her constant speeches against birth control — a contributing factor to mass overpopulation, poverty and starvation throughout the Third World — may be to blame. Still others posit that Teresa may have sinned in her heart at some point during her long life, qualifying her for eternal damnation despite a history of good works. "According to Catholic doctrine, even one moment of lust would be enough to justify Mother Teresa's banishment to the flame," said Archbishop Janusz Wolsczyza of Krakow. "It is possible that after years of celibacy and self-denial, her natural desires for sexual release may have

built to a breaking point. I imagine that sleeping alone on that hard cot all those years and donating every ounce of her strength to the care of the poor, she must have been very lonely. The compulsion to masturbate must have been enormous." Most observers, however, reject these explanations, firm in the belief that the eternal punishment is undeserved, the result of simple bureaucratic error on the part of Heavenly officials.

"I promise a full investigation into this matter," the Apostle John, seated at the right of Christ Almighty, told reporters. "If any evidence of incompetence or error on the part of the officials who conducted Mother Teresa's afterlife evaluation is found, I assure you there will be serious repercussions."

Despite such strongly worded statements from Heaven, a majority of followers on Earth are calling the promise of a full investigation a case of "too little, too late."

"I feel like this has forever weakened the foundation of my faith," said 73-year-old Giancarlo Rossetti of Milan, one of over 300,000 protesters who crowded Vatican Square to call for an immediate reversal of the condemnation of Mother Teresa to Hell. "She was a good woman, and she does not deserve to have her eyes torn out of their sockets by flaming packs of ravenous demon-dogs." Satan, speaking from deep within his fortress in the Hell City of Dis, described the late Mother Teresa's soul as "succulent and tasty."

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## TIMOTHY LEARY

(Continued from Cover)

are very interesting. People don't talk about glands very much."

"Talk about machines then. What's the relationship you see between acid and technology?"

"Well, LSD is one of the many drugs which are based on neuroactive plants. Peyote and grain on rye. Those crazed experiences which happened in the Middle Ages, what did they call them? 'The madness of crowds,' simply because of some plant they had chewed. The point is that the human brain is equipped with these receptor sites for various kinds of vegetables that alter consciousness. So our brains evolving over 50 million years have these receptor sites. The reason why certain people like to take these drugs is because these receptor sites activate pleasure centers. Now this was not a mistake. The DNA didn't fuck up. The devil didn't do it. There was obviously some reason for those receptor sites that would get you off on peyote, psilocybin. And there are dozens of compelling receptor sites and drugs we don't even know about."

"In the changing counterculture, then, do you see a continuity from psychoactive drugs to cyberspace?"

"Of course. It's a fact. Every generation developed a new counterculture. In the Roaring



'20s, jazz, liquor. In the '60s, the hippies with psychedelics."

"The counterculture now, it's not either/or, it's not necessarily drugs or computers. I'm sure some do them simultaneously. But how do you think that the drug experience has changed the computer experience?"

"I did not imply that you can't do both. The brain is equipped to be altered by these receptor sites. So we can see these receptor sites overwhelm the mind. The word-processing system. Then suddenly you can take psychedelic plants that put you in different places. I'm being too technical. But there's an analogy between receptor sites for marijuana and for LSD or opium, which activate the brain and the way we can boot up different areas of our computers.

"Back in the 1960s we didn't know much about the brain. I was saying back in 1968, 'You have to go out of your mind to use your head.' But head simply is an old-fashioned way of saying brain. We didn't know about brain-receptor sites. But now, we can use biochemicals to boot up the kind of altered realities you want in your brain. So you smoke marijuana because it gets you in a mellow mood. Grass is good for the appetite. That's operating your brain. But now it's specific: 'Use your head by operating your brain.' That's the new concept. Use your head! That's hot. Operate your brain because the brain designs realities."

"Do you see a connection between the war on drugs and the attempt to censor the Internet?"

"Oh, absolutely, yes. The censors want to control. We have to have people to impose to keep any society going. I don't knock rules, rituals. We have to have them. The controllers censor anything that gives the power to change reality to the individual. You can't have that happen."

"My theory is that the UFO sightings and all the people who claim to have been abducted by aliens, that this is really just a coverup for secret government experiments in mind control."

"That's a very popular theory, Paul. I get like ten mimeograph letters a day about UFOs and the government. Boy, the governments are really fucking busy, trying to program our minds."

"And of course those U.N. soldiers in Bosnia can hardly wait to get back in their black helicopters so they can attack Michigan and Arizona."

"I'm happy about UFO rumors. I'm glad because at least people are doing something on their own. The 60-year-old farm wife in Dakota thinks she's been taken up and serially raped by UFO people. *Wow!* They came all the way from another planet a thousand light years away to get this lovely grandmother and pull her socks off and have an orgy with her. *Wow!*"

"Or at least an anal probe. To your knowledge, is the government still doing experi-

ments in mind control? We know they used to, with the MK-Ultra programs and all. Do you know if they're still at it? I can't imagine they would've stopped."

"G. Gordon Liddy would give you the current CIA line. Liddy says: 'Yes, it is true. When we learned that the Chinese Communists were using LSD, the CIA naturally cornered the whole world market for Sandoz LSD. They didn't realize that LSD comes in a millionth of a gram. The CIA found LSD to be unpredictable.' Well, no shit, Gordon! Can you name one accurate CIA prediction? The fall of the Shah? The rise of the Ayatollah?"

"What did you think of Liddy getting that free speech award from the National Association of Talk Show Hosts after he said that if

### Radio Daze

In 1980, Timothy Leary served as a disc jockey on KEZY. He was fired after reporting "the disappearance of the San Diego Freeway" and concluding a commercial with "Hey, you can get that dreamy, hallucinogenic, new Toyota truck."

the ATF comes after you, they're wearing bulletproof vests so you should aim for the head or groin?"

"That's pure Liddy. He's basically a romantic comedian."

"When you were debating him, if you had listened to his advice retroactively when he led the raid on Millbrook, then later you would've been on stage debating yourself, because he would've been shot in the head and groin by somebody, if his advice had been followed."

"He was a government agent entering our bedroom at midnight. We had every right to shoot him. But I've never owned a weapon in my life. And I have no intention of owning a weapon, although I was a master sharpshooter at West Point on both the Garand, the Springfield rifle and the machine-gun. I was a Howitzer expert. I know how to operate these lethal gadgets, but I have never had and never will have a gun around."

"But when you escaped from prison, you said, 'Arm yourselves and shoot to live. To shoot a genocidal robot policeman in the defense of life is a sacred act.'"

"Yeah! I also said 'I'm armed and dangerous.' I got that directly from Angela Davis. I thought it was just funny to say that."

"I thought it was the party line from the Weather Underground."

"Well, yeah, I had a lot of arguments with Bernardine Doerhn."

"They had their own rhetoric. She even praised Charles Manson."

"The Weather Underground was amusing. They were brilliant, brilliant, Jewish, Chicago kids. They had class and dash and flash and

smash. Bernardine was praising Manson for sticking a fork in a victim's stomach. She was just being naughty."

"She was obviously violating a taboo. What are the taboos that are waiting to be violated today?"

"There is one taboo, the oldest and the most powerful — I've been writing and thinking about it for 30 years. The concept of death is something that people do not want to face. The doctors and the priests and the politicians have made it into something terrible, terrible, terrible. You're a victim! If you accept the notion of death, you've signed up to be the ultimate victim."

"Is that why you announced publicly that you have inoperable prostate cancer? Friends knew it but —"

"I actually have been planning my terminal graduation party for like 20 years. Of course, I'm a follower of Socrates, who was one of the greatest counterculture comic philosophers in history. He took hemlock."

"The Hemlock Society was named after that."

"I've been a member of the Hemlock Society for many years. They talk about self-deliverance. That's the biggest decision you can make. You couldn't choose how and when and with whom you were born."

"Although there are people who say you can."

"All right, well, go for it. But for those of us who don't have that option —"

"Ram Dass even once said that a fetus that gets aborted knew it didn't want to be born so it chose parents who wouldn't carry it to term."

"Richard's so politically correct. Isn't that fabulous?"

"Are you planning to do what Aldous Huxley did, which was to make the journey on acid?"

"That's an option, yeah."

"Do you believe in any kind of afterlife?"

"Well, I have left an enormous archive covering 60 years of writing, around 300 audio-tapes. It's being stored away. And I belong to two cryonics groups, so I have the option of freezing my brain."

"By afterlife, I didn't mean the products of your consciousness so much as your consciousness itself."

"My consciousness is a product of my brain. How can I know about my mind until I express thought?"

"Obviously there are people who believe in the standard Heaven and Hell and Purgatory. I'm assuming that you don't believe in that kind of afterlife."

"They're useful metaphors. I must be in Purgatory now, huh? Occasionally I have a pop of Heaven. That's not a bad metaphor. Of course we realize that Hell is totally self-induced."

"On earth, you mean."  
"Well, wherever you are. What do you think about that, Paul? Do you believe in life



after death and all that? What's your theory?"

"That you are eaten by worms and just disappear, or you're cremated and your ashes —"

"Wait, now, Paul, you have your choice of being eaten by worms or barbecued. Or you can be frozen. You don't have to be eaten by worms. You don't have to be microwaved. I'm going to leave some drops of my blood, which has my DNA, in a lot of places. I'll leave my brain with them. Why not try all these things? Not that I care, Paul, believe me. I have no desperate desire to come back to planet Earth. I think that I have lived one of the most incredibly funny, interesting lives. I'm fascinated to see what's gonna happen in the next steps. But I have no desire to come back. Most non-scientists don't realize that in scientific experiments you learn more from your mistakes. So I hope that I will leave a track record of making blunders about the most important thing in life. How to preserve your DNA. I hope someone will learn from my mistakes."

"Are there regrets that you have? Things that you would've done differently, knowing what you know now?"

"I'd play the whole game differently, sure. About a third of the things I've done have been absolutely stupid, vulgar, and gross. About a third have been just banal. But a third have been brilliant. Like baseball, one out of three, you lead the league. M.V.P. Most valuable philosopher."

"When I first met you in 1965 you were talking about baseball — and games in general — as a metaphor. How would you describe your game in life? It's been a conscious game. You didn't just fall into a pinball machine and get knocked around. Although that happened too."

"Well, I identified with Socrates at a very young age. The aim in human life is to find out about yourself and know who you are. The purpose in life is to discover yourself."

"With these big media mergers going on now, giants, Times-Warner-Turner here, Disney-ABC there, how do you think the individual can fight that best?"

"Why fight it? Like Southern Pacific merges with Pennsylvania Railroad, so what?"

"But you said before they're trying to control, so aren't they trying to control the information?"

"You can't control information if it's packaged in light. In photons and electrons. You simply can't control digital messages. Zoom, I can go to my web site and put some stuff up there. Immediately my messages are accessed by people around the world. Not just now but later. The nice thing about cyber-communication is that counterculture philosophers who learn about technology can work together, can be faster than committees, politicians and the like."

"So I have great confidence. You have to learn to play their game. That's why I went to West Point and that's why I went to the Jesuit

School, and learned enough so I could play that mind-fuck game. I understood. And I moved on."

"Do you mean you knew before you went to West Point, before you went to Jesuit school, that you wanted to learn their tools?"

"I didn't want to go to either. My parents insisted on that."

"But you went with that attitude."

"Yeah. They took me around to about ten Catholic universities and colleges in New England. None of them would accept me because of my high school track record. I was the editor of the newspaper in high school and I made it a scandal sheet exposing the principal. I had a great uncle who was a big shot in the Catholic Church. He had pull in the Vatican, and he pulled some strings so I got into a Jesuit school. I just watched, repelled but fascinated."

"I don't believe in reincarnation, but if I did, I would think I knew you in a previous life. But that's only a metaphor, I don't believe in it. Do you believe in that concept?"

"In the time of Emerson, the 1830s, there was a counterculture very similar to ours. Self-reliance. Individuality. Emerson took drugs with David Thoreau. Margaret Fuller went to Italy and got the drugs. Later, William James started another counterculture at Harvard. Same thing. Nitrous oxide. Hashish. *The Varieties of Religious Experience*."

"Well, have the medical people given you a prognosis on *this* life, of how many years you have left?"

"I'm 75, and I've smoked and lived an active life but not the most healthy life. So my prognosis would be like two to five years. Jeez, I'll be 80 then."

"Are there specific things that you want to accomplish during this period?"

"Our World Wide Web site is a big thing. We are putting books up there on the screen. You can actually play or perform my books. You read the first page and my notes. And you can revise my text. We call them living books. As many versions as there are people that want to perform 'book' with me. True freedom of the press! The average person can't publish a book. This way they can."

"Do you think it's destiny or chance that one becomes in a leadership position — a change agent, as you call it?"

"Well, destiny implies that you were created that way. No, I think that the individual person has a lot to do with it. Thousands of decisions you make growing up in high school and college to get to a point where you have constructed your reality. You can be a judge or —"

"A defendant."

"I think one of the good side-effects of the Simpson trial is that people understand how totally evil lawyers are."

"You mean defense lawyers and prosecutors?"

"Yes."

"A friend of mine was scheduled to be on

jury duty and they asked him what he thought of prosecutors, and he said 'Cops in suits.' Are you optimistic about the future, even though there's creeping fascism?"

"The future is measured in terms of individual liberation. You have politicians. And the military people want to hurt other people. That's all about control. They have to devise excuses for victimizing people. I do think that the new generations growing up now use electronic media. A 12-year-old kid now, in Tokyo or in Paris or here, can move more stuff around on screen. She is exposed to more R.P.M., Realities Per Minute! A thousand times more than her great grandfather. There's gonna be a big change."

"The greatest thing that's happening now is the World Wide Web. Signups zoom up like *this*. The telephone is the connection. *The modem is the message!* You can explore around. If you're a left-handed, dyslexic, Lithuanian lesbian, you can get in touch with people in Yugoslavia or China who are left-handed, dyslexic lesbians. It's great! It's gonna break down barriers, create new language. More and more graphic language. And neon grammatics. Anything that's in print will be in neon."

"Well, that really brings us full cycle. We started talking about words, and now they've become neonized."

"Consider, Paul, death with dignity, dying with elegance. It's wonderful to see it happening. I talk about orchestrating, managing and directing my death as a celebration of a wonderful life! That touched a lot of people. They say, 'My father went through this whole thing. He wanted to die.' Amazing."

"So the response has been that people are glad to know that they aren't the only ones who are thinking about death?"

"Yeah. People are thinking about dying with class, but were afraid to talk about it."

"What do you want your epitaph to be?"

"What do *you* think? You write it."

"Here lies Timothy Leary. A pioneer of inner space. And an Irish leprechaun to the end."

"Irish leprechaun! You're being racist! Can't I be a Jewish leprechaun? What is this Irish leprechaun shit?"

"Okay. Here lies Timothy Leary, a pioneer of inner space, and a Jewish leprechaun to the end."

*Postscript:* Although Leary had decided in 1988 to have his head frozen posthumously, he became disillusioned with cryonics officials shortly before his death, and changed his mind. "They have no sense of humor," he said. "I was worried I would wake up in 50 years surrounded by people with clipboards." Instead he chose to be cremated and have a small portion of his ashes rocketed into outer space to orbit the Earth. I asked him if the remainder of his ashes could be mixed with marijuana and rolled into joints so that his friends and family could smoke him.

"Yeah," he replied. "Just don't bogart me."



## Lotus and Lenny and Joan

by Bob Weide

Years ago, Lotus Weinstock was sitting around with three of her closest girlfriends and thumbing through a magazine article which reported the grave statistic that one out of every four women would be struck with cancer at some point in their lives. Lotus put down the magazine, took a good look at her three friends and finally faced heavenward and called out, "All, right, I'll take it!" This sounds apocryphal, but no one who really knew her could ever doubt its authenticity. Last August, Lotus died from a malignant brain tumor.

In the past 30 years, any comedian worth their salt respected her place in the grand scheme of stand-up, yet she missed out on ever becoming a household name. Instead she became den mother and mentor to a younger group of comedians who loved and admired her and who *did* become household names. In a business that worships youth, she never hesitated to reveal her age, often doing so from the stage, saying it was the one line she knew that no other comic would ever steal.

She was born Marlena Weinstock in 1943. When she was 20, she scored a hostess job at the Bitter End in Greenwich Village. She was checking hats and doing *schtick* in the coat room, pulling in \$50 a night in tips which had to be turned over to the boss. A young comic, Woody Allen, found this practice unfair, and he would often pocket her tips, then give them to her at the end of the night. One night, Bob Dylan tried to get in free, but when Lotus stopped him at the door, someone informed her that he wrote *Blowing in the Wind*. She still made him pay. Eventually she started performing herself under the name Maurey Haydn.

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In 1986, I was producing a documentary on Lenny Bruce, and wanted to interview Lotus about living with him during his final year. I approached her one night as she was holding court at a comedians' roundtable at the L.A. Improvisation. She was dressed in bright yellow, from hat to Reeboks. A yellow feather boa was wrapped around her shoulders. Big Bird in drag. She had a yellow Toyota Corolla. I asked if she had maybe taken the yellow thing a bit too far.

"You don't know the half of it," she confessed. "I even married a man with hepatitis."

Lotus was 22 and Lenny was 40 in autumn 1965, when Lenny's housemate, John Judnich, brought her to their home in the Hollywood Hills to meet the master satirist. She was sitting on a couch in Lenny's office when he entered, wearing jeans and a denim jacket. He sat next to her and dead-panned, "The dentist is very bugged today, and if you don't give him some bread right away, he's gonna pull out a couple of teeth that don't have to come out." Without missing a beat, Lotus answered, "I think you're mistaken, sir. I'm here for an internal." It was the beginning of an intense 9-month relationship.

At that time, Lenny's only personal appearances were in front of his parole officer. Club owners were afraid to put their licenses at risk for presenting an "obscene" show, so the bookings dried up. He had little time for the stage anyway. He was holed up in the house full-time, surrounded by law books and legal briefs, working on his appeals for obscenity and narcotics convictions. Legend has it that he had lost his sense of humor. Lotus didn't remember it that way.



"We laughed a lot," she told me. "And Lenny's laugh involved every cell in his body. It was a head-to-toe laugh. His standard outfit for the last few months was this long, white denim nightgown. Whenever people started to get too reverential around him, I would pull up his nightgown to expose his tush and shout, 'Everybody, look!' It always made him giggle. But, yes, he was obsessed with his appeals during that last year and rarely left the typewriter. He wasn't even questioning his 1st Amendment rights. He was absolutely obsessed with the fact that he had never been given a fair trial. But he still respected the system. The same way Anne Frank still believed that people were basically good, Lenny totally believed that the Constitution worked."

He called her by her original name, Marlena, because he thought Maurey sounded like an aging vaudeville tap-dancer. One night in bed, he whispered in her ear his entire classic "Frank Dell At the Palladium" routine. She had never heard it before. When he brought her a flower from the garden one morning, she playfully told him that if he really loved her, he would retrieve the one lone rose that was hanging over the cliff behind the house. She then watched, terrified, as he climbed up the hill in his nightgown and hung precariously over a ridge to pluck it.

Some days were shockingly domestic. One morning she was making breakfast and caught him reading the stock-exchange section of the paper. She teased him about his lack of business acumen. "You don't even know what you're looking at," she said. "You just think those are tiny sentences." He burst into a long laugh. When he recovered, he said, "I think we should get married." She put down the spatula and asked, "Is this a trick?" He assured her it wasn't. They both called their mothers to give them the news, and even set a date for February. Later that day, Lenny got very quiet and bemoaned that all Lotus would be getting was "an old jailbird."

"In the last three months," she recalled, "he had two very clear messages that he was giving himself. One was his plan to live and one was his plan to die. One Friday night, he said to me, 'I just need to air something, and I don't want you to have a dramatic reaction. I feel I'm gonna die this year.' And I said to him, 'Well, if I get you some raisin cookies, will you wait a year?' And he laughed, he said yes. So I ran right out and got him some raisin cookies. I thought for sure he was going to wait at least another year, and by that time I'd come up with another way to postpone it."

In June of 1966, he hand-wrote a cryptic note to her, mysteriously dated it 1961. It read: *Dearest Marlena, This is the last message I shall be allowed to write you. Oh my dear, sweet Marlena. Tomorrow they take me to D-Area where I will be reoriented to forget. To forget, dear, sweet Marlena. I weep with regret that I am forced to forget.*

On August 2nd he assured her, "You can always trust me. I'll never hurt you." So, two days later, when there was a report on the radio that Lenny had died from an apparent drug overdose, she went into denial. She assumed it was a misunderstanding stemming from the premature eulogy of Lenny that Paul Krassner had published in *The Realist* two years previously. She called the house and Judnich answered. "John," she begged, "let me talk to Lenny." "Oh, baby," he replied, "sit down."

"I screamed and flipped out into the next part of my life. I went outside and screamed up to the sky, 'How could you do this? You said you'd never hurt me!' Of course, I took it personally."

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If Lotus' friends were each to compile their top five adjectives to describe her, the word "magic" would come up repeatedly. That magic was part of the metamorphosis that came from the love and loss of Lenny. She reclaimed the name Weinstock, but traded in Marlena for Lotus. The oxymoronic implication of her adopted name was not lost on her. "Lotus," she said, "wants to be totally free. Weinstock will settle for a discount."

Her spirituality now ran deeper. Her love of humanity and her compassion for the world's lost and lonely souls was amplified. She also started to find her own irreverent comic voice, never putting down other people in her act, drawing a distinct line between humor



and ridicule. She married, but never lived with, a man who inspired some of her best material, including the signature line: "I married Mr. Right. Mr. *Always Fucking Right*." It's a bit of an injustice to pull quotes randomly from her act, out of context, but here are a few of my favorite lines:

- "Use a woman — go to Hell."
- "With so many Jews being comics, how come Israel doesn't have a Laughing Wall?"
- "Dear Abby: Is it wrong to fake orgasm during masturbation?"
- "My goal is to be able to say, 'Fame and fortune just didn't bring me happiness.'"
- "It may be lonely at the top, but it's so fucking crowded at the bottom."
- "Even if you don't believe a word of the Bible, you've got to respect the person who typed all that."
- "Laughter is one of the strongest medicines on the planet. If it's strong enough to kill an orgasm, surely it's strong enough to kill cancer."
- "It's later than it's ever been."

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"Fame for a comedian is like a degree to a doctor," Lotus would say. "You can't practice without it." Although she was one of the most quoted (and least credited) performers on the scene, she remained in need of the big break that would finally put her on the map. Bill ("My name — Jose Jimenez") Dana suggested she collect some of her bits and personal anecdotes for a book which he would help get published. Thus was born *The Lotus Position*, published in 1982. Lotus would often hawk it from the stage: "You can buy it from me after the show. It only costs five bucks, and if you don't like it, I'll pay you back."

Lotus had a long-term casual acquaintance with Joan Rivers. Although the content and style of their respective acts bore no resemblance, they shared the distinction of being women who had broken through in a field predominated by men, and both were raising daughters in the midst of their showbiz careers. Prior to its publication, Lotus was looking for an established performer to write a foreword to her book, hoping to lend it a stamp of validation. She submitted the manuscript to Rivers, then at the peak of her power.

Rivers agreed, but then declined the request, and the manuscript was returned. When Lotus found the package in her mailbox, the envelope had already been opened. Somebody had obviously read the enclosed rejection letter and had scrawled their own bizarre message of sympathy to Lotus — something about Joan Rivers not getting away with this. Well-meaning wackos and hangers-on were not uncommon in Lotus' life.

Although she was disturbed that someone was breaking into her mail, she was prepared to dismiss the incident until Gavin DeBecker, the not-yet-famous security consultant to the overpaid, showed up at her apartment to question her about the "death threat" that was sent to Rivers supposedly on Lotus' behalf. A stunned Lotus was shown the plastic-encased note, handwritten in red ink. Dazed and confused, she got as far as a reference to feeding Rivers her husband's testicles when she let out a scream and ran into her bedroom.

Her friend, actress Lucy Webb, was visiting that day and asked to see the note. She assured DeBecker that anyone who knew Lotus knew that she was the *last* person capable of even *entertaining* the thought of writing such a letter. DeBecker thanked her for her time and submitted his findings to Rivers — that Lotus was definitely behind the note and her "drugged-out roommate" knew more than she was saying. To Lotus' extended family, the only thing equally as preposterous as Lotus orchestrating the letter was labeling Lucy Webb as drugged-out.

Rivers, not prepared to accept the fact that she had wasted her money on DeBecker, passed his findings on to as many influential people as possible, taking very public opportunities to bad-mouth Lotus and encourage those in a position to hire her, not to.

Lotus was horrified to be falsely accused of such a hideous crime. She would call Rivers, pleading for a minute on the phone to clear up

the mess. Rivers' husband, Edgar, would not put Joan on the phone. Compassion-seeking letters sent to Rivers by others in defense of Lotus went unanswered. At a time in Lotus' life when her career was best positioned to take off, she found herself on a sort of "graylist" which kept her from working the kind of gigs that would have brought her national attention. Fifteen years later, long after Rivers' own fall from grace, Lotus, literally on her deathbed, said she was still haunted by the false accusation that wouldn't go away.

Even after Lotus died, Rivers reshaped her misguided version of the episode for the *New York Post*. In an article titled "No Rivers of Tears For Dead 'Pal'" she was quoted as saying, "[Lotus] left a sick note in my mailbox. It gravely disturbed me and my family. We had to get the Los Angeles police to investigate." Outraged that the *Post* would spread an unfounded libel against Lotus even in death, a rebuttal letter was sent to the paper, signed by 27 of her friends and associates, including Jerry Seinfeld, Jay Leno, Bill Maher, Paul Reiser, David Steinberg, Kevin Pollak, Sandra Bernhard, Larry Miller and Paul Krassner. The *Post* never printed the letter.

There were times, of course, when Lotus needed no one but herself to put the kibosh on a meaningful career move. One week in 1986 she was headlining at a midwest comedy club when she received a call inviting her to perform at the first *Comic Relief*. She was concerned about bailing out of her scheduled gig, though she certainly understood the benefits of a highly publicized national TV shot. But when hardcore Lotus fans showed up at that night's show with yellow T-shirts in her honor, she lost the nerve to cancel the club date and decided instead to forego *Comic Relief*.

Lotus would continue to perform for less-publicized causes. At one benefit for a friend who was undergoing treatment for breast cancer, she spoke of the healing power of the kiss, recalling how our mothers would kiss our hurts to make them heal. She could sell such a notion like no one else. Lotus encouraged her audience to take the stage and kiss the ailing woman's breast. They did.

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Around Thanksgiving in 1996, I had dinner at Canter's Deli with Lotus and her daughter Lili. Lotus was concerned that over the past few months her coordination and short-term memory had been repeatedly failing her. I laughed it off, saying that coordination and short-term memory had never been her strong suits. But when I took a moment to really look in her eyes, I could tell she was scared. I asked her when she first started noticing the symptoms. She replied, "Right around *Politically Incorrect*." She had done the show three months earlier.

Within days, Lotus went for an MRI which revealed a very large, very aggressive brain tumor. It was deemed untreatable, but she decided to go to a clinic in La Jolla specializing in alternative medicine. The night before she was scheduled to leave, she suffered a seizure that resulted in a herniated brainstem, leaving Lotus in much the same condition as a stroke victim: partially paralyzed with limited motor skills and difficulty speaking. Much of what she did say didn't make much sense, but she was clearly cognizant of her surroundings. Through the haze, friends like Larry Miller and Kevin Pollak could still make her laugh from her hospital bed.

On one of my visits, I got curious as to which of her circuits were still fully functional. Pointing out some yellow tulips near her bed, I asked her what color they were, reminding her that they were her favorite. She turned toward the flowers, then smiled at me and said, "You're a tricky one." She wouldn't admit that she didn't have the word. Moments later, though, I heard her humming perfect harmony to a song on a portable CD player. She could still understand jokes and carry a tune. Her music and humor circuits were fully intact.

A week after her death, a memorial tribute was held at the Improv. Long before the scheduled starting time, the club was overflowing. Scores of well-wishers, including Richard Lewis, Bill Maher and David Steinberg, were turned away at the door. Laughter beat out tears 3 to 1. The marquee read: *Lotus Weinstock, 1943-1997, Humorist and Humanist*. "I used to want to save the world," she once said. "Now I just want to leave the room with dignity."



## Smart Bombs

by Reverend Chris Korda

I think we can all agree that violence is best left to the experts. The Unabomber killed people, and he didn't ask for permission first. He even made his own bombs. Now how do you suppose the economy is going to work if people start making their own bombs? When Nixon wanted to blow something up, he called his pals at the Air Force and said, "I've got a map of Cambodia here, and some pins, and wherever I put the pins, I want big holes. No need to tell Congress, though. It'll be our little secret, okay?" And his pals said, "Can do, Mr. President," and pretty soon Cambodia looked like the surface of the moon.

Now when you bomb a country back to the Stone Age, you ensure that only the toughest, most ruthless people survive. So

suddenly it's year zero, and the Khmer Rouge are marching everyone out of the city into the countryside, or what's left of it, to fend for themselves. People couldn't stay in the cities, because there wasn't any food. We bombed all the food. But that's okay, because — as the *New York Times* pointed out at the time — "the destruction was mutual." All over America, farmers are still being maimed by unexploded land mines. That's why President Clinton wants to outlaw them. Here in Boston you can hardly walk down the street without falling into a bomb crater. We never hear about it because history, as we all know, is written by the conquerors, not by us, the poor conquered Americans. It was a noble effort, but they beat us, didn't they? We slaughtered millions of them gooks, ravaged their land, and completely destroyed their way of life, but we lost the war. We didn't actually

manage to make them love America.

So violence is best left to the experts. Like George Bush. He was no draft-dodger. He was an expert. No one ever questioned his credentials. When Iraq threatened America's inalienable right to control the price of oil, did George make a pipe bomb and send it to Saddam? He called up the Pentagon and said, "Pave Iraq." The Joint Chiefs sure do love a chance to test those nifty new weapons that you — the hard-working taxpayer — pay top dollar for. So they said, "Can do, Mr. President," and pretty soon there were burning oil wells, and the bodies of a hundred thousand dead Iraqis were baking in the sun. Kinda makes you thirsty, don't it? Pass the bottled water. It's hard work, but hey, we can't let those towel-heads tell us what to do. Wait a minute, they're the terrorists, we're just peace-keepers. We're on a mission from God! What are you, some kind of Communist? Do I sound like Noam Chomsky yet? Bear with me. Sure the Unabomber was violent, and got away with it, but that's not so unusual.

The peculiar thing was that he used violence to gain access to the media. And he didn't just want to go on the Jerry Springer show, he wanted 35,000 words in the *Washington Post*. Eight pages, in small type. Unmediated access, with no editorial clearance. This made reporters mad as hell. They have to deal with editors every day, telling them what to write, cutting up their stories, dropping them for no reason, and here this Unabomber comes along and publishes a whole manuscript, footnotes and all, right there in the damn newspaper. Who's his agent? I mean we can't have this, for God's sake, it's totally irresponsible. He could have said anything. He could have criticized our corporate clients. It's funny, I didn't see any advertisements on those pages, I wonder why. And what if everyone wanted access to the media, then where would we be? Out of a job is where. The American people need us to decide what's important and newsworthy. That's why the TV news is half weather. Americans have a right to know what the temperature is out there.

The Unabomber stormed the media fortress, and he captured the flag, but his strategy had a fatal flaw. In the end, most people skipped his manifesto, either because they'd already been convinced that he wasn't an expert, or because they just didn't care. Computer literacy is one of those oxymorons, like "sustainable shopping" — why read when you can click on things? The average American is unlikely to read 35,000 words on any subject, not even sports, never mind the future of industrial society. Too many words, not enough pictures, and who reads the *Washington Post* anyway? He should have cut it down to a page and run it in *USA Today*, or better yet, made it into a screenplay. A Unabomber video game. Merchandise rights.

It's probably just a matter of time.



Ted Kaczynski Has His Head Examined

Nancy



## MEDIA FREAK

### Reality Outpaces Satire

Patrick Goldstein in the *Los Angeles Times*:  
During his research for *Mad City*, the new John Travolta and Dustin Hoffman film about a hostage drama that mutates into a media circus, Costa-Gavras stopped to gawk at something he found on a local TV news anchor's desk.

The anchorman had adorned each page of the script for his nightly news broadcast with a simple code. Being a good filmmaker, Costa-Gavras doesn't tell you the code. He shows you, scrawling it on a pad of paper in his hotel room. At the top of each page is a crudely drawn face. A happy face for an upbeat story, a sad face for a tragedy.

The look on Costa-Gavras' face isn't happy or sad — he's bemused. "It was quite an unusual sight," he says. "The newsman had these visual cues for how he should feel about each story he was reading."

At first, Costa-Gavras was determined to use the happy faces in his film. What could be a better metaphor for a film that depicts TV news as a medium that best communicates emotion, not information? But after talking it over with Alan Alda, who plays a ratings-conscious network anchorman in the film, he abandoned the idea.

"It's an example of where something is real — I saw it with my own eyes — but it wouldn't be believable in the film," he says.

### Another Judgment Call

Dennis Prager read the following news item on his KABC radio talk show:

"The infant girl dubbed Princess Jasmine was in good condition two days after she was found in a toilet at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. She apparently was only minutes old when found Saturday night. The baby's head was above the water with the umbilical cord wrapped around her neck. 'She will be released from a hospital in two or three days,' state child welfare officials said. 'A search for the parents is underway. Numerous inquiries about adopting the child already have been made. If the case is ruled egregious child abuse, the adoption process will be expedited. If not, the child will probably spend some time in a foster home.'"

Observed Prager: "Maybe those child welfare officials would consider it egregious if the parents had flushed the baby down the toilet."

### How to Defend Police Sodomy

Tuli Kupferberg on the official version of the rape of Abner Louima by New York cops:

Under detention for resisting arrest, the handcuffed, unprovoked Louima, while being kindly escorted to the restroom of the station-house by two police officers to answer a call of nature, in a desperate attempt to escape justice, grabs ambient toilet plunger and attacks officers.

In subsequent melee, plunger falls to floor and is accidentally discharged up detainee's ass, unfortunately rupturing his colon and bladder, then ricocheting into his mouth where it breaks several teeth.

Stunned officers, overcome with grief, collapse sobbing on the station-house couch, thus unconscionably but understandably delaying medical attention to the detainee for 2-1/2 hours.

### Tit for Tat on the Airwaves

Gregory Kohs in *The American Cynic*:  
Broward County radio station Zeta 94.9 recently played host to a Florida breast implant giveaway. They found both plenty of contestants willing to debase themselves for bigger boobs and plenty of protesters ready to point out the health risks of implants. Women lined up in droves to be ridiculed, poked, humiliated and lusted after as hundreds of men eyed them like meat.

"You may be the flattest woman I've ever seen," Zeta disc jockey Paul Castronovo told one woman. "Raisinette," the hefty DJ dubbed one woman. "Thimble," he called another. The women endured the taunts because the one who got the loudest cheers and wolf whistles from the predominantly male crowd won the ultimate guy-pleaser — big fake breasts courtesy of Boynton Beach plastic surgeon, Dr. Mark Schreiber, who agreed to do the free surgery in exchange for having his practice promoted on the radio.

After narrowly losing the contest, a disappointed 21-year-old Tara Bernstein said of potential health risks, "I'm not worried about it. As long as I'm happy, I don't care." Such an attitude troubles researchers who say there is ample evidence that implants, both silicone and saline, cause serious health problems. Yet, five years after the FDA banned silicone implants for cosmetic use, the saline sack business is booming. Between 1992 (the year of the ban) and 1996, the number of women getting breast implants nearly tripled.

When the actual operation is performed on the winner, Zeta plans to broadcast live from Schreiber's operating room.

### Filler Items

- *Redbook's* December issue cleaved into two covers — one cover for newsstands, with actor Pierce Brosnan and his wife, Keely Shaye Smith, nursing their son, Dylan Thomas, and the other cover for subscribers, with that same family portrait sans breastfeeding.

- A vintage photo of Simon & Garfunkel on the cover of their recent CD, *Old Friends*, shows Simon's left hand apparently greeting a Vulcan from *Star Trek*. But a source from Sony told *Ice* magazine that "a cigarette and smoke were removed from the photo, at Paul Simon's request." *New Times* columnist Rick Barrs passes along a rumor that "Simon was tempted to also airbrush from the cover the entire visage of former partner Art Garfunkel."

- A press release describing "an emotional catch . . . audible" in Sacramento Assemblywoman Barbara Alby's voice (when she spoke of her bill requiring a CD-ROM listing of sexual offenders) was distributed before she uttered a word.

- AP reports: "A new little French restaurant in Manhattan is serving up mild sado-masochism with the food, offering such fare as a birthday paddling, boot cleaning or the chance to eat from a dog bowl at the feet of a whip-wielding mistress."

- Nick Nolte in *Buzz Weekly*: "Bryant Gumbel asked me if I'd had one of those Hollywood face-lifts. It pissed me off, so I said that I'd had a testicle tuck, and he said goodbye. And that was the *Today* show."

- *The Wall Street Journal*: "For workers who like to surf the Internet at work, Tripod Inc.'s web site has a 'panic button' for use when the boss comes around. The screen suddenly switches to a nominating form for Boss of the Year, complete with laudatory comments about the user's employer."

- An exhibit at the Pacific Design Center, *Don't Be Scared*, was banned. The work included a performance piece of a naked man dancing while defecating an egg, and a photo of Batman being given oral sex by Robin.

- Mayor Rudy Giuliani tried to prevent *New York* magazine's ad campaign — "Possibly the only good thing in New York Rudy hasn't taken credit for" — but he ignored the New Yorkers for Cultural Freedom poster proclaiming, "Rudy Gives Disney Blow Jobs for Free!"

- Tally sheets: Harry Shearer on *Le Show* counts the number of times Tom Brokaw says "tonight" on *NBC News*. The record: 21. A *TV Guide* correspondent counts the number of times that Kirstie Alley brushes her hair from her face on *Veronica's Closet*. The record: 30. A book, *The Simpsons*, reveals that, at press time, Homer had said *Doh* 207 times. And the number of musicians who thanked God at the *Billboard* Awards . . . still counting.

- Kim Delaney got "quite a few angry letters" when her character on *NYPD Blue* was slow to accept Jimmy Smits' marriage proposal.

- The *British Express* reported that a woman chose her pony to be chief bridesmaid at her wedding.

- Some of the nation's largest insurance companies are refusing to insure battered women, arguing that domestic violence is a "pre-existing condition," like diabetes or heart disease.

- When Bob Dylan performed for the Pope, he did not sing *Everybody Must Get Stoned*.

- On a TV talk show, toe-sucking spin doctor Dick Morris called Paula Jones "a pervert."

- *N.Y. Times* headline: CIA Says It Has Found No Link Between Itself and Crack Trade.